

## Higher Institute of Philosophy


**FILO2240**    **Advanced Studies in the Philosophy of Natural Sciences**

[30h] 4 credits

This course is taught in the 2nd semester

**Teacher(s):** Bernard Feltz, Michel Ghins  
**Language:** French  
**Level:** Second cycle

**Aims**

The aim of the course is to allow the students to deepen their understanding of specific, and current, questions in the philosophy of science by opening a dialogue with contemporary science. The students should sharpen their analytical and critical skills and should be able to defend a personal position taken with regards to the central issues in Contemporary philosophy of science.

**Main themes**

The topics discussed change from year to year: we alternate between discussing questions linked either to the philosophy of physics or to the philosophy of the life sciences.

Concerning the philosophy of physics, in previous years we have studied the following topics: the status of models in the sciences, theories of causalities, scientific realism, the constructive empiricism of van Frassen. Concerning the philosophy of the life sciences, we have studied the following topics: reductionism, finality, time and self-organization, philosophy of neuroscience, conscience and intentionality, the question of qualia

**Content and teaching methods**

The topics of the cursus will be the contribution of philosophy of life sciences to philosophical anthropology. How can neurosciences contribute to the conception of human being as free being ?

This question will be analysed in relation with different points of view.

- The reductionist issue in the philosophy of science (E. Nagel, H. Wright, A. Rosenberg, S. Sarkar, W. Wimsatt...)
- The history of the concept of soul
- The concept of freedom in kantian tradition
- Neurosciences and the Mind Question (Dennet, Edelman, Damasio, Changeux, Th. Nagel, P. Churchland, W. Bechtel...)

**Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)**
**Pre-requisites**

An introductory Philosophy of Science course.

**Assessment:**

The exam bears on the material covered in class, preferably in the form of an essay composed by the student.

**Supporting material:**

A course outline and a bibliography will be distributed during the first class. Photocopies of the texts to be read will be distributed ahead of time.

**Course Holder/Course Supervision:**

By the lecturer.

**Programmes in which this activity is taught**

<b>ISLE3DA/IS</b>	Diplôme d'études approfondies en philosophie et lettres (philosophie)
<b>ISLE3DA/SO</b>	
<b>ISP20</b>	Licence à durée réduite en philosophie
<b>ISP20/A</b>	Licence à durée réduite en philosophie (A)
<b>ISPB9CE</b>	Certificat universitaire en philosophie (approfondissement)

**Other credits in programs**

<b>ISLE3DA/IS</b>	Diplôme d'études approfondies en philosophie et lettres (philosophie)	(4 credits)
<b>ISP20</b>	Licence à durée réduite en philosophie	(4 credits)
<b>ISP21</b>	Première licence en philosophie	(4 credits)
<b>ISP22</b>	Deuxième licence en philosophie	(4 credits)
<b>ISPB9CE</b>	Certificat universitaire en philosophie (approfondissement)	(4 credits)
<b>PSY2</b>	Licence en sciences psychologiques	(3 credits)