

Higher Institute of Philosophy


FILO2600 **Advanced Studies in the Philosophy of Social Sciences**

[30h] 4 credits

This course is taught in the 1st semester

Teacher(s): Tom Dedeurwaerdere, Marc Maeschalck
Language: French
Level: Second cycle

Aims

The aim of this course is to determine more accurately the epistemological meaning of the role of social sciences in the context of the contemporary risk society.

The first part will outline, on a historical basis, the epistemological framework of the model of bounded rationality in the social sciences. The second part will tackle the application of this framework to the specific issue of the conditions for the development of a precautionary rationality.

Main themes

1. Genealogy of social sciences epistemology: the first part will be devoted to showing the stakes of going beyond the hermeneutical paradigm in the human sciences by challenging the concept of self-reflection (Dilthey) with that of the procedural limitations of reason (Simon).
2. Application to the stakes of theory of precaution: the second part will consider the meaning of this evolution from the standpoint of the development of precautionary rationality, in order to evaluate the transition from a theory of epistemic communities to a theory of hybrid fora in a network society.

Content and teaching methods

After a review of the essential philosophical and psychological discussions of the mind, the course will examine the evolutionary perspective, paying particular attention to primates. We shall examine the main causes for the mental evolution of primates: work, socio-political life. In particular, we shall study the problems revolving around the acquisition of language and the ability to understand the intentions of others. Finally, a hypothesis concerning the acquisition and development of intellectual powers will be put forward and examined.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)**Assessment**

In addition to the presentations, a reading file is available to the students. Each student is required to write 2 memos (short critical comment, appraisal), 5-10 lines in length, on one of the articles. These memos will be discussed during the corresponding class.

The evaluation consists of two parts:

1. Written assignment: a paper (5-10 pages) on one of the articles from the reading file.
2. By the end of May students will receive a question based on their paper; they may prepare it at home. The exam will consist of the answer to this question.

Programmes in which this activity is taught

ISLE3DA/IS	Diplôme d'études approfondies en philosophie et lettres (philosophie)
ISLE3DA/SC	Diplôme d'études approfondies en philosophie et lettres (philosophie des sciences, programme commun UCL/ULB/ULG)
ISP20	Licence à durée réduite en philosophie
ISP20/A	Licence à durée réduite en philosophie (A)
ISPB9CE	Certificat universitaire en philosophie (approfondissement)

Other credits in programs

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