Freie Universität Bozen
Libera Università di Bolzano
Università Liedia de Bulsan

Syllabus
Course description

Course title	Philosophy of Science
Course code	29051
Scientific sector	M-FIL/03
Degree	PhD Economics and Finance
Semester and academic year	a.y. 2021-22
Year	1
Credits	3
Modular	n/a

Total lecture hours	12
Total lab hours	n/a
Total exercise hours	n/a
Attendance	recommended
Prerequisites	none
Course page	n/a

Specific educational objectives	The course focuses on the acquisition of analytical abilities and the development of critical thinking with regard to basic epistemological problems. It combines various theoretical and methodological approaches in view of fostering the students' awareness and capacity for autonomous judgement in methodological and ethical questions related to scientific research.

Lecturer	Ivo De Gennaro, office E3.04, Ivo.DeGennaro@unibz.it, tel. 0471 013481, http://www.unibz.it/en/economics/people/StaffDetails.html?personid=5188&hstf=5188
Scientific sector of the lecturer	M-FIL/03
Teaching language	English
Office hours	please refer to the lecturer's web page
Lecturing assistant	n/a
Teaching assistant	n/a
Office hours	n/a
List of topics covered	Following a consideration on the incentives to do "bad science" in the system of academic publishing, the module introduces to a fundamental reflection on scientific explanatory models and, more generally, on hypothetical thinking. Taking as a starting point Keynes's article "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren", the following questions will be asked with respect to economic theory: What is a hypothesis or basic

	assumption? What is an operative concept? What is the scope and what are the implications of a scientific definition? To what kind of temptation is model building exposed? The discussion of these questions aims, not least, at raising the awareness of the scientist's responsibility in society. Topics: - good science vs. bad science - welfare- and scarcity-based definitions of economics - the structure of hypothetical knowledge - explicit and implicit assumptions - model building and experienced reality - motivations for model building - operative ends and ends in themselves - operative concepts of needs, the human being, time - scientific responsibility
Teaching format	The course will be taught in a seminar style. Students will be provided with readings and asked to prepare these readings in view of class discussion.

Learning outcomes	Knowledge and understanding: 1. knowledge and understanding of the scope and task of scientific research; 2. knowledge of the structure of hypothetical knowledge; 3. knowledge of basic ethical issues of scientific research. Applying knowledge and understanding: 1. development of the capacity for distinguishing between scientific performance and scientific truth; 2. development of the ability to discern between relations of cause and effect and the truth of a phenomenon; 3. development of the capacity for critically assessing the formulation and implementation of a research endeavour. Making judgments: 1. understanding the peculiarity scientific judgments; 2. understanding and applying the difference between making a judgment and evaluating; 3. understanding and applying the difference between making a judgment and expressing an opinion. Learning skills: 1. autonomous reasoning; 2. interpretive abilities exercised on economic texts; 3. oral and written expression of autonomous thinking.

Assessment	Short essay based on course readings and/or class discussion.
Assessment language	English

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks	The short essay should consist in an exercise of autonomous reflection on one of the course topics. It will be assessed based on the capacity of interrogating seemingly obvious assumptions

Required readings	All texts, as well as further readings and lecture notes, will be made available through the digital course repository.
Supplementary readings	Will be indicated upon request.