

Amsterdam Business Research Institute

**Philosophy of Science for Business Administration**

Course Manual

Academic year 2026 – 2027



**Course title** Philosophy of Science for Business Administration

**Coordinator(s)** Prof. dr. C.M.J. Wickert

**Lecturer(s)** Prof. dr. C.M.J. Wickert

**Study period** September 2026 – October 2026 (Period 1)

**ECTS** 3 ECTS

**Tuition** €750  
20% discount on early bird registration: €600

**Course Objective** Upon successful completion of this course, students will

- Know key concepts and problems in the philosophy of science in relation to business studies.
- Have developed the capacity to critically evaluate and defend concepts and approaches in management and organization theory with regards to fundamental problems in the philosophy of science.
- Have started developing their capacity to employ different research traditions in their own research projects.

**Course content** This course aims to explore questions in the philosophy of science and to discuss them in relation to examples from different areas of business studies, with a particular focus given on understanding differences and similarities of the positivistic, interpretative, and critical approaches to management and organizational research. Among the key questions addressed and discussed within the course are:

- What is science? How do we decide what is scientific and what is not?
- How can we demarcate science from other activities?
- What are the ontological foundations, goals and epistemological interests of different scientific paradigms?
- What are the philosophical problems that are particular to business research?
- Can science be objective and value-free? What are the implications for theory development?

**Teaching Methods** Weekly: One 2-hour session during 6 weeks of interactive lectures and discussions including student team presentations. Students need to come prepared (reading literature and writing a short essay each week).

**Schedule**

| Date                        | Time          | Room               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Wednesday 2 September 2026  | 15:30 - 17:15 | Forum 4            |
| Wednesday 9 September 2026  | 15:30 - 17:15 | Forum 4            |
| Wednesday 23 September 2026 | 15:30 - 17:15 | Forum 4            |
| Wednesday 30 September 2026 | 15:30 - 17:15 | Novum 4 (NU-02A53) |
| Wednesday 7 October 2026    | 15:30 - 17:15 | Forum 4            |
| Wednesday 14 October 2026   | 15:30 - 17:15 | Forum 4            |

**Assessment**

- Individual essays (6) written by students based on the literature (50%)
- Presentation of different articles in groups and leading of discussion during class (1-2 per team of 2-3 students, depending on class size) (15%)
- Final assignment (individual essay) (30%)
- Participation in class (5%)

**Conditions to pass the course**

- The score for each individual essay, as well as the other assignments, must be 5.5 or higher, and the final grade is the average of all essays, and must be higher than 5.5.
- Attendance is mandatory. Students who miss more than one class will not pass the course.

**Resit**

- In the case of a resit only the individual assignments can be retaken;
- Results obtained for the group presentations will remain valid.

**Literature**

A complete list of literature will be provided by the instructor at the beginning of the course.

**Target Audience**

This course is only available for research master and PhD students. All participating students are expected to be proficient in English.