The philosophy of social science programme investigates the claims to truth, fact and meaning made by scientists and social scientists. Each week the ideas are introduced in the form of a debate, allowing students to explore different questions of meaning from within the dialogues that have posed them. Whilst historical material will be used, each debate will be brought into the confines of current social science concerns. The aim of the course is to provoke in students a critical awareness of any claims to knowledge made. As part of each session, the potential implications for conducting research in management will be introduced and discussed; both in terms of the bases that research approaches might adopt along with the political and ethical implications of specific methodologies.

Core reading:

Please read:


And one of the following (or at least relevant chunks of it):


Please, if you read:


Then be aware it (1) over-simplifies issues and (2) uses some non-standard characterisations of some philosophical positions (personally I think it just makes mistakes)

Part 1: Philosophical positions

What is philosophy?

- Epistomology: [http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/epist.html](http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/epist.html)
- *What is philosophy? A Tour*: [http://www.onu.edu/a+s/philosophy/philos.html](http://www.onu.edu/a+s/philosophy/philos.html)

Rationalism -v- empiricism

- M Hollis The Philosophy of Social Science, Ch 3
- von Wright, G. H. (1957), The Logical Problem of Induction, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Ch 4
- Theory of Knowledge: [http://www.philosophyonline.co.uk/tok/tokhome.htm](http://www.philosophyonline.co.uk/tok/tokhome.htm)
- Rationalism and Empiricism: [http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Philosophy/UG/Studyguide/rat&emp.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Philosophy/UG/Studyguide/rat&emp.html)
Constructivism -v- Realism

- T Benton (2001) The Philosophy of Social Science, Ch 7
- Constructivism: http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc_data/constructivism.html
- Epistemological Constructivism: http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/CONSTRUC.html

Positivism -v- Pragmatism

- Pragmatism archive: http://www.pragmatism.org/

Phenomenology and post-modernism

- T Benton (2001) The Philosophy of Social Science, Ch 9

The Linguistic Turn

- A Giddens, New Rules of Sociological Method, Ch 1

Part 2: Philosophical approaches

Institutionalism and new institutionalism

Ethics and organizational control

Aesthetic views of organization

Stakeholder theory

Classic books to which we (and many others) refer
- D Hume (1748) *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding.*
- I Kant (1781) *Critique of Pure Reason*
- E Husserl (1907) *The Idea of Phenomenology*
- B Russell (1912) *The Problems of Philosophy*
- L Wittgenstein (1952) *Philosophical Investigations*
- W van O Quine (1953) *From a Logical Point of View*
- JL Austin (1962) *How to Do Things with Words.*
- K Popper (1965) *Conjectures and Refutations*
- C Hempel (1966) *Philosophy of Natural Science*
- T. Kuhn’s (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*
- J Derrida (1972) *Words and Things*
- P Feyerabend (1975) *Against Methode*
- B van Fraassen (1980) *The Scientific Image*