

510007

EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Teacher responsible: I. Mavridis

compulsory (C) or selection (S) course	year	winter (W) or spring (S) semester
C	3rd	W

This course is an introduction to some basic issues in the epistemology of the social sciences. After a brief introduction to epistemology in general, we will place our emphasis on social sciences, their epistemological foundations and the particular problems these pose (as opposed to natural sciences). We will examine a set of themes and problems in social science epistemology through the reading of some basic texts from different thinkers and diverse theoretical approaches. In this way we will attempt to answer, at least provisionally, important issues such as relativism and dogmatism, the objectivity and validity of social sciences, criteria of comparison between different theories, the goals of social science, the “universality” of truth claims, differences between description, interpretation and understanding, the “neutrality” of social science and the role of values, etc.

Reading list: - Kouzelis, G. & Psychopedis, K., ed., 1996. *Epistemology of the Social Sciences*. Athens: Nissos (in Greek).