

PHIL 160 Section 80, “Philosophy of Science”

Fully Online/Asynchronous  
Fall 2025, Aug 20<sup>th</sup> to Dec 8<sup>th</sup>

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Description:

Scientific methodology, explanation and verification; science and society. Varying topics from physical, biological and social sciences. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, democratic societies have become dependent upon the unquestionable (epistemic) authority of the scientific community. Following the pandemic and the resurgence of the “anti-vaxx” movement, however, contemporary philosophers ponder the social “crisis” of science in which non-scientific masses no longer respect the epistemic authority of science. Is this crisis real? Did the philosophy of science help create this crisis? If so, what should they do about it? Such questions are tied to a long list of other questions: Where does science come from? What does science do? Why does science do it (and *not* philosophy)? How does science do it? How do we distinguish science from pseudo-science? What is the relationship between science, fact, truth, nature, reality, language? What *is* the relationship between science and society? And what *ought* this relationship look like? These are some of the traditional questions associated with the philosophy of science that will be pondered in this course.

Satisfies: SJSU Studies area R: Earth, Environment, and Sustainability (upper-division GE area 5).  
3 units