

# Syllabus

**Philosophy of Management Research  
Teacher Training Workshop  
December 5– 9, 2024  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong China**

## **A Brief Description of Workshop and Course**

This workshop is to prepare faculty colleagues who are interested in learning and teaching about this doctoral level course on the Philosophy of Management Research.

The Philosophy of Management Research course is to introduce doctoral students to the nature of scientific work in organizations and management. It focuses on a few of the key issues related to philosophy of science and principles of scientific research. These issues play a pivotal role in guiding researchers' understanding and explanation of important phenomena in our natural and social world. Understanding these issues will help participants gain clarity on the role of scientific research in advancing the practice of management, which plays an important role in linking insights from business research and the advancement of humanity. Failing to have a proper understanding of the role of science or of the scientist can impede scientific work, undermine knowledge creation and accumulation, and stall scientific discoveries. The primary purpose of this course is to develop a new generation of social scientists for business schools.

This training is timely and urgent due to the movement toward responsible research in business and management. Journals are making new rules about submissions to improve the credibility and replicability of the results. End users (students, practitioners in all kinds of organizations) and resource providers (public and private funders) are expecting business research to contribute credible knowledge that is useful for practice and to develop responsible business for a better world (see [rrbm.network](http://rrbm.network)). Understanding the philosophy of science underlying our research is foundational to our role as responsible social scientists.

The course explores some of these questions: What is scientific reasoning and explanation? What are the unique challenges in social science relative to natural science? How does progress and development in scientific knowledge come about? What is the development of science in the management and organization discipline? What role do values play in science? How does science contribute to both the progress and the demise of the human condition? How can we as scientists contribute to the progress in the science of management and organizations, and hence humanity? What does it mean to pursue a career in organization science?

## Potential Participants for this Workshop and Commitments

The workshop is intended for business school faculty colleagues who are interested in potentially teaching this course to doctoral students in their schools, or for their own learning even if they do not plan to teach this course in the near future. Therefore, we welcome faculty members who are interested in learning more about the philosophical foundations of our science to join the workshop. The faculty who intends to apply should have some empirical research experience with some empirical research publications in English language international journals. Knowledge of philosophy is not necessary even though an interest in the nature of scientific work, history and progress in science would be helpful. **Faculty colleagues in this workshop must commit to completing the readings and pre-work before attending the workshop.** Attendance in all 4.5 days is required.

## Residence Requirements

Due to the tight workshop schedule, we require all participants to stay at the designated hotel near the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, **including those who live in Hong Kong.** Undivided attention is essential to gain the most benefits from this workshop.

## Course Materials

Books (participants must buy these books)

1. Kuhn, Thomas.(1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions.3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 0-226-45808-3, paper)
2. Okasha, Samir. (2002). *Philosophy of science: A very short introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
3. Risjord, Mark. (2014). *Philosophy of social science: A contemporary introduction*. New York: Routledge.
4. Tsui, et al. (2018). *Responsible research in management: Philosophy and practice* (in Chinese). Peking University Press.

Selected Articles (See Appendix 1)

## Language

Most of the reading materials are in English except the book by Tsui, et al. (2018) which is in Chinese. However, most of the chapters are translations from original English article. Participants who prefer to read them in English may download them from their university libraries. If they are not available, they may request them from the TA of the course. We strongly recommend participants to read the English version of the materials.

The class discussion will be bilingual, both Chinese and English are used as necessary or preferred.

## Workshop Assignments

All the participants need to finish the following three assignments designed for this workshop:

1. Participants will read a total of 24 articles or chapters from four books – 8 articles each day. The team responsible for leading the discussion writes a one-page summary of the two assigned readings for each of the days of the workshop. The summary should include all the important ideas in the article or the book chapter. Then, they should write two questions related to the ideas in the chapter or article that they would like the class to discuss. It should be no more than 500 words and no more than one page, single-spaced. Participants should send the summary to everyone by 9:30 pm the evening before the class session. Everyone should read the summaries before class. During class, other teams will be invited to elaborate on the answers or raise additional questions. We will devote 20-25 min to each reading. Please see Appendix 1 for reading assignment and summary instruction.
2. There will be three class debates. The participants will be put into six teams. Two teams will participate in one debate. Each team will write the 10-minute opening statement and send to everyone by 8:30 am the morning before the debate session. Please see Appendix 2 for detailed instructions.
3. Visioning statement. Each participant will prepare a “Vision” statement about your career progression in the future 20 years. Imagine that it is now December 2044. There is a story about you in *Management Insight* (管理視野) – a popular bi-lingual magazine that is read by scholars, students, and executives in and out of China. It is a story of your life including your research, teaching, and consulting as well as the personal side of you. You are now in a reunion of your December 2024 workshop when you learned to teach the Philosophy of Management Research course. You are sharing your life of the past 20 years with each other. Please see Appendix 3 for detailed instructions on this “visioning statement”.

**PMR 2024 Schedule Overview (Suggest Schedule for workshop in HK)**

	<b>Dec. 5, 2024 Thursday</b>	<b>Dec. 6, 2024 Friday</b>	<b>Dec. 7, 2024 Saturday</b>	<b>Dec. 8, 2024 Sunday</b>	<b>Dec. 9, 2024 Monday</b>
		<i>Issues in natural and social sciences</i>	<i>Scientific progress and change</i>	<i>Management scholarship and values</i>	<i>A career in science</i>
9:30-11:00 (1.5 hr)		Reading discussion	Reading discussion	Reading discussion	Vision statements
11:00-11:15 (15 min)		Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break
11:15-12:45 (1.5 hr)		Reading discussion	Reading discussion	Reading discussion	Vision statements
12:45-14:00 (1.25 hr)		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14:00-15:30 (75 min)	3-4 pm Facilitators meeting	prepare readings & debate 1	prepare readings & debate 2	prepare readings & debate 3	Special debate (TBD)
15:30 – 17:00 (1.5hr)		Debate 1 (Team 1, 2)	Debate 2 (Team 3, 4)	Debate 3 (Team 5, 6)	Syllabus and teaching issues
17:00-17:15	5-6 pm Orientation (All students and facilitators) Group photo	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Community formation and conclusion
17:15-18:00 (45 min)		Open discussion of topic	Open discussion of topic	Open discussion of topic	
18:00-19:30 (1.5 hr)	Welcome Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Ending Dinner	
19:30-21:30 (3hr) at Hotel	Prepare readings and debate 1	Prepare readings and debate 2	Prepare readings and debate 3	Prepare vision statement (individual)	

## Facilitator Responsibilities

(Temp.)

Tutor of Group 1	Melody, Jun ZHANG
Tutor of Group 2	Man-nok WONG
Tutor of Group 3	Siting WANG
Tutor of Group 4	Wen CHEN
Tutor of Group 5	Xinyi BIAN
Tutor of Group 6	Yifan ZHONG
MC of Reading discussion on Dec. 6	Fuli LI, Liangding JIA, Changjun LI
MC of Reading discussion on Dec. 7	Jian LIANG, Tao WANG
MC of Reading discussion on Dec. 8	Zhi YANG, Song CHANG
MC of Debate on Dec. 6, 7, & 8	Wu LIU, Xu HUANG

## Group and Tasks

Group	Members	Dec. 6 Task	Dec. 7 Task	Dec. 8 Task	Discussion Room
1		Debate 1	Readings 9&10	Readings 17&18	
2		Debate 1	Readings 11&12	Readings 19&20	
3		Readings 1&2	Debate 2	Readings 21&22	
4		Readings 3&4	Debate 2	Readings 23&24	
5		Readings 5&6	Readings 13&14	Debate 3	
6		Readings 7&8	Readings 15&16	Debate 3	

## **Detailed Workshop Schedule**

### **Pre-work Preparation**

It is critically important that the workshop participants will have read all the materials for the workshop before they come to the workshop. To facilitate the preparation, we ask that you prepare a series of summaries and submit them to us. Appendix I listed three groups of materials for the three respective debates. You need to write a summary for each of the chapters/papers. For example, before September 1, 2024, you should submit 8 summaries for the 8 chapters for Debate 1. Each summary should not be longer than 250 words (about half-page, single-line spaced). In this brief summary, you should include the key ideas of the chapter/paper and discuss the insights you gain from these materials. You must read all the readings before you prepare the summaries. In total, you will prepare 24 summaries (about 12 pages). Please send the summaries for each debate to [pmr2024hk@126.com](mailto:pmr2024hk@126.com) by the due date indicated below:

- a. Review 1: Sept 1, 2024
- b. Review 2: October 1, 2024
- c. Review 3: November 1, 2024

### **Day 1, December 5, Thursday: Orientation**

Introduction to workshop objective, schedule, and preparation

5-6 pm	Orientation to the workshop
6-7 pm	Dinner
7-10 pm	Prepare debate 1 (teams 1 and 2) and write article summaries and discussion questions (teams 3 to 6, 2 readings per team)

### **Day 2, December 6, Friday: Introduction to the Philosophy of Natural and Social Sciences**

Induction-deduction, logical positivism, realism, constructionism, explanation, prediction, reductionism, normativity, naturalism

2 chapters from Okasha (2002) and 6 chapters from Risjord (2014)

9 -12:30 pm	Discussion of eight readings (led by four teams)
12:30-3 pm	Lunch and prepare debate
3-4:30 pm	Debate 1 (teams 1 and 2)
4:30-5:30 pm	Discussion of clarification of key concepts and issues
6-7 pm	Dinner
7-9 pm	Prepare debate 2 (teams 3 and 4); write summaries of 8 articles by teams 1, 2, 5 and 6 (2 readings per team)

Debate 1: “Social science is not different from natural science in terms of the goals of explanation, prediction, and seeking truth, as well as epistemology, ontology, and observational methods.” Take a position either FOR or AGAINST this statement and present your best arguments (citing relevant literature or evidence) to defend your position.

### **Day 3, December 7, Saturday: Scientific Progress and Change**

Scientific revolution, normal science, research programs, competition, history and education

10 chapters from Kuhn (treated as 6 readings); Popper and Lakatos chapters from Godfrey-Smith book

- 9 -12:30 pm Discussion of eight readings (led by four teams)
- 12:30-3 pm Lunch and prepare debate
- 3-4:30 pm Debate 2 (team 3 and 4)
- 4:30-5:30 pm Discussion of clarification of key concepts and issues
- 6-7 pm Dinner
- 7-9 pm Prepare debate 3 (teams 5 and 6); write summaries of 8 articles by teams 1 to 4 (2 reading per team)

Debate 2: “Scientific change and scientific progress is slow because normal science and paradigms constraint the vision and worldview of scientists. They ignore anomalies due to the paradigmatic perspective.” Take a position either FOR or AGAINST this statement and present your best arguments (citing relevant literature or evidence) to defend your position.

### **Day 4, December 8, Sunday: Management Scholarship and Values in Science**

Progress and great theories in management, current status, epistemic and social values in science

8 chapters from Tsui et al. (2018)

- 9 -12:30 pm Discussion of eight readings (led by four teams)
- 12:30-3 pm Lunch and prepare debate
- 3-4:30 pm Debate 3 (team 5 and 6)
- 4:30-5:30 pm Discussion of clarification of key concepts and issues
- 6-7 pm Ending Dinner
- 7-9 pm Prepare visioning statement

Debate 3: “According to the value-free ideal, science should be judged on epistemic values alone. Social (or contextual) values should be avoided and are unnecessary to guide good science.” Take a position FOR or AGAINST this statement and present your best argument (citing relevant literature or evidence, and examples in management research) and defend your position.

### **Day 5, December 9, Monday: A life in Science and Society, Visioning**

Career, roles and duties of a management professor/scholar, vision of future 20 years

- 9 am-12 noon Participants present visioning statement
- 12-1:30 pm Lunch
- 1:30-3 pm Special debate (TBD)
- 3-4:30 pm Discussion of course syllabus and teaching issues
- 4:30-5:30 pm Community formation, continuing support/networking, and workshop conclusion

Special debate (TBD): “Does true love exist?” Take a position FOR or AGAINST this statement and present your best argument (citing relevant literature or evidence, and examples in management research) and defend your position.

## **Appendix 1: Reading assignments for summaries and discussion leadership**

### **Day 2, December 6, Friday**

1. Okasha, Chapter 2 – Scientific reasoning
2. Okasha, Chapter 3 – Explanation in science or Chapter 4 – Realism and anti-realism
3. Risjord, Chapter 1 – Introduction to philosophy of social science
4. Risjord, Chapter 3 – Theories, interpretations, and concepts
5. Risjord, Chapter 4 – Interpretive methodology
6. Risjord, Chapter 6 – Reductionism: structure, agents, and evolution
7. Risjord, Chapter 7 – Social norms
8. Risjord, Chapter 9 – Causality and law in the social world

### **Day 3, December 7, Saturday**

9. Kuhn, Chapter 2 & 3 – The route of normal science; The nature of normal science
10. Kuhn, Chapter 4 & 5 – Normal science as problem solving; The priority of paradigms
11. Kuhn, Chapter 6 & 7 – Anomaly and emergence of scientific discoveries; Crisis and emergence of scientific theories
12. Kuhn, Chapter 8 & 9 – The response to crisis; The nature and necessity of scientific revolutions
13. Kuhn, Chapter 10 – Revolution as changes of world view
14. Kuhn, Chapter 11 – The invisibility of revolutions
15. Popper: Conjecture and refutation. Chapter 4 in Godfrey-Smith, P. 2003. *An introduction to the philosophy of social science: Theory and reality*. The University of Chicago Press.
16. Lakatos, Lauden, Feyerabend and frameworks. Chapter 7 in Godfrey-Smith, P. 2003. *An introduction to the philosophy of social science: Theory and reality*. The University of Chicago Press.

### **Day 4, December 8, Sunday (#17 to #23 in Tsui et al., Chinese book, 负责任的管理研究)**

17. Zhong & Jin. 2018. Introduction to values in management research.
18. Ghoshal, S. 2005. Bad management theories are destroying good management practices. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*. 4(1): 75-91.
19. Hambrick, D. 2007. The field of management’s devotion to theory: Too much of a good thing?. *Academy of Management Review*, 50(6): 1346-1351.
20. Merton, R. 1973. The normative structure of science.
21. Douglas, H. 2014. The moral terrain of science.
22. Tsui, A. S. 2016a. Reflections on the so-called value-free ideal: A call for responsible science in the business schools. *Cross Cultural and Strategic Management Journal*, 23(1): 4-28.
23. Li & Jia. 2018. Voice of editors of leading journals on credibility.
24. A Vision of Responsible Research in Business and Management: Striving for Useful and Credible Knowledge, 2020 (download from rrbm.network).



## **Appendix 2: Instructions for debate (in teams)**

The pro team will make a 10-minute argument in favor of the given statement. The con team will make a 10-minute argument against the statement. Then, the Con team and the class can question the Pro team for 10 minutes, followed by questioning of the Con team by the Pro team and the class for 20 minutes. The class will take a 10-minute caucus while the two teams prepare a 5-minute closing statement to summarize their key arguments (taking into account the information emerged from the questioning period). Each debate team will put your basic arguments in writing and send to everyone by 9:30 pm the evening before the debate session.

## **Appendix 3: A visioning statement (individually) - December 9, 2024, Monday**

The statement is a reflection back on your career 20 years from now (2044). You are at a reunion of the participants of this course. Your *Management Insight* article about you just came out. Each person is invited to share his or her life as summarized in this *MI* article. Each of you will have 8-10 minutes to tell your story. You do not have to cover all the point in the story (or the questions in the instructions below), just share the most meaningful ones for you. Then, your fellow participants may ask you some questions (5 minutes). Participants should honor the confidentiality of the vision statements. We are your friends to listen to your story, give you support and congratulate you on your successful life, as a scientist, a teacher, and as a person.

Part 1: Overview of your career before Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> 2024 (1 PPT slide)

Please give a brief summary of your most important experiences since you started your academic career till Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> 2024. What were your major accomplishments and challenges during those years?

Part 2: Your research (1-2 PPT slides)

Reflect on how learning about the Philosophy of Management Research and teaching this course has changed how you approach research. What issues in the philosophy of social sciences were most meaningful or relevant for your research? What kind of epistemology and ontology underline the research that you have done, why? What were your major intellectual contributions to date? What were your most frustrating challenges? How has your research lived up to the idea of “good science” – reliable knowledge that contributes to a better society?

Part 3: Your teaching, service, and consulting (1-2 PPT slides)

How did you approach your teaching of research to your students (this course or other courses)? How did the PMR course affect your approach to education in general? Did it affect your approach to consulting or writing of papers or books for managers? What ideas are you known for in the management world? How do your students describe you as a teacher? What kind of professional services (e.g., association leadership, editing, etc.) did you engage in? How did you manage your time between research, teaching, consulting, and service? How did you manage your work-family demands?

Part 4: A portrait of you as a person (1PPT slides)

What are your passions in life driving you to become the person you are in 2044? What would you like to be remembered for, personally and professionally?