COURSE DETAIL

BETWEEN OPINION AND TRUTH: THE ART OF REASONING IN A WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND POPULISM

Country
France

Host Institution
Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po)

Program(s)
Sciences Po Paris

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
Statistics Political Science Economics

UCEAP Course Number
105

UCEAP Course Suffix
P

UCEAP Official Title
BETWEEN OPINION AND TRUTH: THE ART OF REASONING IN A WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND POPULISM

UCEAP Transcript Title
ART OF REASONING

UCEAP Quarter Units
4.50

UCEAP Semester Units
3.00

Course Description

At a time when liberal democracies are weakened by ideological polarization and the rise of populist movements challenging institutional checks and balances as well as the foundations of rational debate (Trumpism, the Bolsonaro episode, the AfD, etc.), it is becoming vital for future political, administrative, and academic leaders—who are often unfamiliar with scientific fundamentals, particularly in statistics—to acquire a basic grasp of such tools in order to define a framework for contributing to informed debate and evidence-based decision-making. This course provides them with that foundation through the lens of mathematical modeling. Concretely, it offers a rigorous methodology and a practical introduction to statistical modeling, taught through its logical application in structuring arguments and fostering debate. The objective is to equip students with practical tools that will allow them to analyze, interpret, and critically assess the use of data in their future professional environments, whether in strategy, economics, consulting, or public affairs management. With the help of AI-assisted applications, students learn to build, and interpret simple economic models, while developing a critical stance on the limitations and biases inherent in these models. The econometric article by Daron Acemoglu, recipient of the 2024 Nobel Prize, serves as one of the course's central threads, alongside more operational examples drawn from the corporate world and public sector. Through these applications, the course also offers students keys to understanding the mathematical foundations behind how artificial intelligence operates. The overarching ambition of this course is to enable students to become autonomous, clear-sighted, and critical actors in the use of data—capable of shaping the framework of public debate and decision-making at a time when perceptions of reality are increasingly influenced and polarized by the subjective interpretations of both populist opinion leaders and the prophets of artificial intelligence and big data.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
DECO 25A43

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BETWEEN OPINION AND TRUTH: THE ART OF REASONING IN A WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND POPULISM

Host Institution Course Details
https://syllabus.sciencespo.fr/fr/?202510/286215

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree
Seminar

Host Institution Department
Economics

Course Last Reviewed
2025-2026

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