



Direzione Ricerca,
Innovazione e
Internazionalizzazione

**UNIVERSITÀ
DI TORINO**

ID

VP_053_ECO

Visiting Professor Program Academic Year 2025/2026

TEACHING COMMITMENT: 14 hours

COURSE TITLE

Economics as Science

TEACHING PERIOD

II semester

SCIENTIFIC AREA

Economics

LANGUAGE USED TO TEACH

English

COURSE SUMMARY

"Economics is a collection of models that admits a wide diversity of possibilities, rather than a set of prepackaged conclusions" ... standard accounts "tend to miss the diversity that exists within the profession, and the many new ideas that are being tried out," and they often overlook the reality that "one can be part of the mainstream and yet not necessarily hold 'orthodox' ideas" (Rodrik 2015). Advanced by a leading and highly influential economist, this qualified defense of economics against accusations of dogmatism might imply that the landscape of the discipline is becoming increasingly fragmented, thereby raising the chances that a pluralist-in-essence economics might join social sciences in the construction of a transdisciplinary perspective on human behavior.

The laboratory introduces students to "economic methodology", namely the nature of assumptions, types of reasoning, and forms of explanation used by economists in their research work. The aim is to make students experience the variety of approaches populating the discipline and induce them to reflect upon the desirability of introducing further diversity within the discipline.

Topics to be covered:

- Economics and its critics: insularity versus openness to other social sciences;
- Monism and pluralism: on the amount of diversity within the discipline;
- Schools of thought: the kind of conversation required to build pluralism;
- Change in economics: how can economics become a pluralistic science.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion, students:

- will be able to recognize the most important debates on the nature and methodology of economics as science, having acquired knowledge of the appropriate terminology and of the theoretical foundations of such debates (knowledge and understanding);
- will be able to apply philosophy-of-science concepts to orient in the debate upon the evolution and current trajectories of economics as a discipline;
- will demonstrate awareness of the competition between alternative schools of thought and will be able to critically discuss the various research programs in today's economics, by retracing them back to key differences in theoretical foundations;
- will be able to critically grasp the main tacit assumptions concerning the structure of economics as discipline implied in the arguments sustaining or condemning pluralism in economics.

OTHER ACTIVITIES BESIDE THE COURSE

The visiting professor will have the opportunity to give a talk to Ph.D. students and research fellows of the Department of Economics and Statistics "Cognetti de Martiis".

Students are expected to work in small teams. They will analyze a specific school of thought, approach, or perspective, and make the case for its legitimacy and relevance in a pluralistic disciplinary environment.

VISITING PROFESSOR PROFILE

An economist, economic methodologist or historian of economic thought, or even a sociologist of philosopher of science, belonging to a foreign university, institution or organization, with proven scientific qualifications, and publications on topics related to economics as a discipline, also in historical perspective or in relation to other disciplines.

CONTACT REFERENT

Mario Aldo Cedrini
mario.cedrini@unito.it