

08 G11: Hypotheses and models – on the explanatory power of scientific suppositions in the life sciences

This course takes place over three afternoons of three hours each and provides an introduction to the principles that underlies scientific logic and scientific practice. Why do we test hypotheses? What is the relationship between hypotheses, predictions and research work? How much can we hope to achieve? To what extent does scientific research really provide an accurate reflection of the real world out there? In one sense the course covers similar topics as a standard introductory philosophy course to the theory of science or epistemology. In another sense it is unusual in that it reflects practiced research realities and introduces advanced concepts such as evolutionary epistemology which for life scientists is incredibly useful to understand what the purpose and achievements of life sciences might be. The course combines handouts, lectures and discussions and requires no preparations except a keen sense of interest.

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