PHI 3207 **Philosophy of Social Sciences**

Course Code:

**Course Unit: 3**

**Course Description:**

The course is a philosophical investigation of the methodology of the social sciences, and problems encountered in the disciplines concerned with the person and society, like anthropology, sociology, political science, economics and social psychology. The course considers issues like the following: the possibility of a science of social life, the question and prediction of social phenomena, the types of explanations in social sciences; the nature of social reality, social change and history; the meaning of causation, of inductions, of ideological models in social studies; models of explanation in the social sciences and prediction as a goal of social sciences; scientific and social theory; testing data; social and natural sciences; truth and objectivity, hypothesis and explanation; causation and human action; values in social science, the logic of scientific explanation, implications of the quantitative study of behaviour; philosophical study of major theories of society like functionalism and structuralism. The course inquires into the relation between ideology and social sciences, and the limitations in contemporary social research.

**Course Objective :**

This course seeks to introduce students to the logic or rationale of social theorizing. There are difficulties that infect the theoretical reaches of social sciences, which in turn have immediate consequences for social life. This course aims to help learners appreciate that connection. This course will also seek to clarify the different theoretical formulations-theories, models, conceptual schemata, classifiable systems, typologies and the like.

**Learning Objectives**

1. At the end if the course students shall have gained knowledge about the emergency of social sciences as scientific disciples.
2. Students shall be able to apply philosophical tools in understanding the philosophical problems in the study of social sciences.
3. At the end of the course the students should be able to critically assess the methodological problems faced by the social sciences.
4. This course shall help students to critically appreciate the implications of the positive methodology on ethics and human rights.
5. At the end of the course students will be able to critically appreciate the feminist critiques of the social sciences.
6. Finally, at the end of the course students of philosophy of social sciences should be able to appreciate the research ethics challenges faced by the social sciences and the need for interdisciplinary research in social sciences.

**Course Outline**

1. General Introduction
2. Positivism and the social sciences
3. Methodology and the Social Sciences
4. Feminist Criticisms of Social Sciences
5. Social Science Research

**Reading Lists**

1. Martin Morris, The Philosophy of Social Sciences: An introduction, Cambridge, CambridgeUniversity press, 1994.
2. Chalmers A.F., What is this thing called Science? 3rded, New York, Open University Press, 2004.
3. Ted Benton, Ian Craib, Philosophy of Social Science: The Philosophical Foundations of Social Thought, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001)
4. Michael Martin and Lee C. McIntyre, eds., Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science, MIT Press, 1994.
5. Robert Brown, The Nature of Social Laws: Machiavelli to Mill, Cambridge, CambridgeUniversity Press, 1984.
6. Kincaid, Harold, Philosophical foundations of the Social Sciences: analyzing controversies in Social Research, Cambridge University Press, 1996.