GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Capita Selecta in Modern and Contemporary Philosophy: Analysis of Texts (A001994)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)	English	Gent	lecture
			seminar

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Cambi, Alice	LW01	staff member
Haeck Gormez, Levi	LW01	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Philosophy)	5	A
Master of Arts in Philosophy	5	A
Research Master of Arts in Philosophy	5	A
Exchange Programme Philosophy and Moral Sciences	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

- study of texts
- modern philosophy
- Kant
- contemporary Kant scholarship
- transcendental philosophy
- modern epistemology
- modern ontology
- anthropology (including philosophy of language and 'raciology')
- reception of Kant in non-Western traditions

Position of the course

- This advanced course assists the students in interpreting, firstly, one of the most fundamental texts within the Western philosophical tradition, namely Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. Secondly, it brings the insights from Kant's Critique in relation to his anthropological views on language(s) and (his deeply problematic views on) 'race'. Thirdly, the course engages with the reception of Kant in Chinese philosophy.
- Thus, the course attempts to situate Kant's philosophical system in its context and relate it to contemporary interpretations and current scholarly issues.
- In addition, this course fosters communication, research, and writing skills by means of (a) interactive class discussions, (b) a focused written assignment, and (c) participation in an Oxford-style debate.
- The students are provided with a list of scientific literature. In all course assignments, students must show the capacity to critically deal with said literature.
- The content of this course reflects the expertise of the two instructors.

Contents

At least one fundamental text from the modern philosophical tradition is read and discussed, namely Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. In addition, other primary texts will be studied.

Initial competences

Knowledge of English is required; knowledge of German and French is advised.
General philosophical knowledge and skills are required, as offered in courses covering general scientific and/or philosophical methodology, and in BA courses focusing on the history of (modern) philosophy and the analysis of texts.

Final competences

1 To have advanced and up to date knowledge about Kant's transcendental philosophy and to creatively apply this knowledge in the treatment of philosophical issues.
2 To understand and appropriately use specialized philosophical terminology.
3 To understand the relationship between specific issues within Kant's transcendental philosophy and its historical context.
4 To understand the strengths and weaknesses of Kant's transcendental philosophy.
5 To analyze philosophical arguments and to expose conceptual gaps. To construct convincing arguments for or against certain philosophical positions advanced by Kant and related thinkers.
6 Insightfully analyze texts translated into English, summarize them, and compare them with the original text.
7 To be familiar with key international literature on Kant's works (the Critique of Pure Reason in particular), to actively follow the latest developments in contemporary transcendental philosophy, and to integrate them into one's own reflection and research.
8 To draft a research strategy by both detecting complex problems on the basis of theoretical models and accurately formulating them.
9 To interpret and communicate about the results of existing and tentative own research.
10 To integrate, within one's own analysis of Kant's transcendental philosophy, opposite opinions regarding Kant's theories and problems.
11 To constructively debate about philosophical and social problems about which the correct formulation is still not clearly defined.
12 To understand the possibilities and limitations for philosophy to take a position in contemporary social contexts.
13 To independently conduct philosophical research and to fit into the dynamic of a philosophical research group.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

Every first hour of class, a section of the Critique of Pure Reason (and/or any other work of Kant) is explained and presented by the instructors.
The students are expected to read the texts beforehand and to formulate and send 'reading questions' to the instructors.
Every second hour of class, students are invited to discuss the text and present their reflections to each other and the teachers.
During the final class of the semester, the students need to participate in an Oxford-style debate on Kant.
Classes will not be recorded.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Critique of Pure Reason
Indicative price: € 45
Optional: yes
Language : English
Author : Immanuel Kant

Number of Pages : 650
Alternative : The students will find the relevant passages in English and German through Ufora.
Oldest Usable Edition : /
Online Available : Yes
Available in the Library : Yes
Available through Student Association : Yes
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive
Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : intensive
Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : intensive
Additional information: Kant's oeuvre is available online in German through the Akademie Ausgabe's website.

References

An extensive list of secondary literature is to be found on Ufora.

Course content-related study coaching

Intensive supervision by the main lecturer as well as by a PhD researcher, during class and by appointment.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Presentation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

1. Participation:
1.1. in the discussion in the seminars (preceded by the submission of reading questions)
1.2. in the Oxford-style debate
2. Individual written assignment: Theoretical preparation, per student (not per debate group), of the Oxford Style Debate: 1500-2000 words not including citations and references. AI use, if any, has to be made explicit by the student via a separate statement.
3. Oral examination on the content of the discussed texts.

Calculation of the examination mark

- Participation in the discussions during the course: 10%
- Participation in the debate: 20%
- Written debate preparation: 20%
- Oral examination: 50%

If one does not participate in one or more of these subparts of the course, one cannot pass the course as a whole. If a student has mathematically passed the course but has not taken part in all of its subparts, the total grade will be reduced to the highest non-deliberable grade.

Facilities for Working Students

CLASSES: In general, class attendance is mandatory and will be included in the calculation of the final score. However, in certain well-motivated cases, exemption from this requirement is possible. Yet, lectures take place on campus without recordings or live-streaming facilities.
EXAM: It is possible to take the exam at a different time within/outside the regular exam period (Note: we suggest that working students should at least consider taking their catch-up exam on the catch-up day for students who were ill during the exams.)
Possibility to receive feedback at another time: by appointment