GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Society and Current Affairs: South Asia (A005505)

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 2)	Dutch, English	Gent	lecture	0.0h
			seminar	0.0h

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Vekemans, Tine	LW21	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	**crdts**	**offering**
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (China Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (UGent Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject India)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in History	5	A
Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context	5	A
Exchange Programme Global Studies and World Societies	5	A
Exchange Programme History	5	A
Exchange Programme Oriental Languages and Cultures	5	A
Elective Set Culture and Society	5	A
Elective Set Languages of Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe	5	A

Teaching languages

English, Dutch

Keywords

Society, current affairs, conflict, decolonisation and transition, development, social change, South Asia

Position of the course

This introductory course gives students an insight into the modern social and political realities in South Asia.

Contents

This course aims to provide the students with the necessary background to interpret contemporary South Asia through a social scientific lense. By focussing on a number of key issues (e.g. urbanity, caste, democracy, violence, gender) this introductory course aims to provide the students with points of reference to gain insights in the political, social and economic realities of South Asia. South Asia is understood in this course to be a historical formation against which the contemporary dynamics have to be understood. The focus will be on what used to be British India: Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Initial competences

None

Final competences

1 To have a thorough insight into the contemporary social and political realities and evolutions of the Central and South Asian regions.
2 To be able to situate specific social and economic developments in a broader global framework.

3 To be able to formulate a founded opinion on the social, political and legal problems of the South Asian region based on facts and trends.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

After an introductory session, this course will be organized around a number of big themes (eg. caste politics, violence and democracy, gender relations, migration, nationalism). Most themes will be covered in two classes. The first takes the form of an ex-cathedra lecture, which provides students with an overview of the social-scientific state of the art regarding the specific theme, its historical background and its importance in contemporary south Asia. The second session is a seminar consisting of an introduction and a discussion of the theme based on a selection of readings or visual materials. Students work through the materials for these seminar sessions beforehand. Materials can include social-scientific literature (articles or book chapters), (historical) documents, media-fragments, documentaries, etc. This course is organized on-campus.
The ex-cathedra classes are recorded, and the recordings are made available to all students. Exercises and discussions are not recorded.
20% of the final grades are given for participation. Throughout the semester, students are expected to create at least four forum posts using relevant newspaper articles, videoclips, or social media content, and frame these within the context of the topics discussed in class.

Study material

None

References

No specific recommended reading.

Course content-related study coaching

The lecturer-in-charge is available for specific questions or tutoring by (electronic) appointment only.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Written assessment open-book

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

Written assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is not possible

Extra information on the examination methods

The open book exam will interrogate the understanding of the students of the themes developed in the course (10/20). Secondly, students will be asked to operationalize their understanding of the course's themes by contextualizing two recent news articles or media fragments within South Asian current affairs (6/20).
THe NPE will be graded on meaningfull participation during class, more specifically on the online forum (4/20)

Calculation of the examination mark

16/20 PE
4/20 NPE

Facilities for Working Students

To be discussed with the lecturer.