GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Conceptualizing Culture (A005897)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 1)	English	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Pieters, Jurgen	LW07	lecturer-in-charge
de Groote, Brecht	LW22	co-lecturer
De Roover, Jakob	LW07	co-lecturer
Fontaine, Johnny	PP09	co-lecturer
Mus, Francis	LW22	co-lecturer
Uhl, Christian	LW21	co-lecturer
Vanden Broecke, Steven	LW03	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	**crdts**	**offering**
Bachelor of Arts in East European Languages and Cultures	5	A
Exchange Programme Critical Perspectives on Culture	5	A
Elective Set Critical Perspectives on Culture	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Cultural theory, cultural analysis, philosophy of culture, cultural history.

Position of the course

This course is part of the 'ritical Perspectives on Culture'course cluster. It offers a survey of 20th-century and more recent contributions to the development of cultural theory and the different ways of conceptualizing culture. Each class focuses on (a) a specific 'chool'or movement, exemplified by prime representatives whose works are central to the class discussion, based on classic essays by the authors in question or (b) a single author who does not represent any 'chool'of thought. The texts are chosen for their conceptual contribution to the analysis of culture, as well as their practical implementation of this analysis. The course aims to introduce the students to reflective and theoretical thinking, without losing sight however of the more practical contribution of theoretical reflection to the analysis of cultural phenomena.

Contents

The course is organized as a more or less chronological survey of key movements, phases, and contributions.
The following movements or phases and authors will be dealt with:
1. Semiotics and anthropology / Clifford Geertz
2. Critique of anthropology / Ludwig Wittgenstein
3. Frankfurter Schule / Walter Benjamin
4. Sociology of culture / Pierre Bourdieu
5. Postwar Asian Cultural Criticism / Yoshimi Takeuchi
6. Post-structuralism / Michel Foucault
7. Postcolonial and Subaltern studies / Edward Said
8. Media theory / Friedrich Kittler
9. Actor Network Theory and modernity / Bruno Latour

10. Cultural and Cross-Cultural Psychology / Hazel R. Markus, Shinobu Kitayama

Initial competences

- Basic training in at least one of the disciplines in the humanities or social sciences.
- The ability to read academic writings on culture in English.

Final competences

1 To have gained in-depth understanding of major schools and thinkers and a specific set of issues and questions in the conceptualization of culture.
2 To be able to independently read and analyze texts in the relevant domains of study.
3 To have the capacity to formulate research questions in the study and theorizing of cultures.
4 To develop the skills required for writing and presenting research papers.

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

Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

No lecture recordings will be made available.

Study material

None

References

Course content-related study coaching

Support via Ufora. By appointment.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Oral assessment

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

Oral assessment

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

Calculation of the examination mark