

Advanced Research Issues in Philosophical Anthropology (A001008)

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 2025-2026

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

lecture

seminar

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

De Vries, Bouke

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

[Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities \(main subject Philosophy\)](#)

crdts

offering

5

A

[Master of Arts in Philosophy](#)

5

A

[Research Master of Arts in Philosophy](#)

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Philosophical and existential problems related to free will (skepticism), moral responsibility (guilt and merit) and human flourishing; Philosophical questions concerning criminal behavior, criminal law and retribution, moral education and society, the rights of offenders and victims, and biopsychosocial approaches to morality and immoral behavior.

Position of the course

The study of philosophical anthropological approaches to questions related to free will (skepticism), moral responsibility, the criminal law, forensic psychiatry and moral education. We do this by analyzing the role of philosophical and scientific views concerning free will, responsibility, the self, rationality and human moral behavior.

Contents

The course material builds on on the bachelor-introductory course Philosophical Anthropology. We read and analyse contemporary, influential views within the field of philosophical anthropology. The course material belongs to the central discussion themes in the field and will further familiarise students with the active pursuit of research in the discipline.

This course provides in depth knowledge of the contemporary philosophy of free will debate by providing an in-depth analysis of the different positions and critically discussing the impact of these views on the criminal justice system and our society.

Initial competences

Students fulfill the prerequisite of a basic introduction in philosophical anthropology and/or introduction to philosophy.

Final competences

- 1 Familiarity with the current lines of approach in philosophical anthropology.
- 2 Being able to identify research topics in the field.
- 3 Being able to compare internationally important authors.
- 4 Being able to demonstrate the relevance of scientific and philosophical traditions, views and authors for specific philosophical anthropological problems.
- 5 Being able to demonstrate the ethical, ideological and societal relevance of

certain philosophical anthropological problems and views.

6 Thorough knowledge of the philosophical free will debate and its implications for the criminal law.

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

In preparation of some of the classes you will be asked to read articles and comment on these by means of the online platform. During the classes and via the online platform, we will critically discuss the articles.

Due to COVID19 the format of the classes may change if deemed necessary.

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: Philosophical articles on free will and punishment

Indicative price: € 5

Optional: no

Additional information: the cost relates to the print cost if the student chooses to print the reader

References

Daniel C. Dennett, Gregg D. Caruso: *Just Deserts: Debating Free Will*. Wiley (2021).

Michael McKenna & Derk Pereboom. *Free will: A contemporary introduction*. Routledge (2015).

John M. Fischer and M. Ravizza: *Responsibility and control. A theory of moral responsibility*. Cambridge University Press (2008).

Paul Russell & Oisín Deery (Eds.): *The philosophy of free will* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Bruce Waller: *The stubborn system of moral responsibility* (MIT Press, 2014).

Thomas Nadelhoffer (Ed.): *The future of punishment* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Michael S. Gazzaniga: *Who's in charge? Free will and the science of the brain* (2011).

Andrea L. Glenn & Adrian Raine: *Psychopathy: An introduction to biological findings and their implications* (NYU Press, 2014).

Course content-related study coaching

by the lecturer

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Written assessment with open-ended questions

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

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

The assessment tests to what extent the student has mastered the final competencies. The student can achieve a good final score if he answers the questions pertinently, correctly and completely and demonstrates insight into the subject matter. He must also be able to correctly and insightfully apply theoretical concepts to practical cases. The student is also expected to present his answer in a well-structured and clear manner.

Due to COVID19 the examination form may change if deemed necessary.

(Approved)

Calculation of the examination mark

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

- 1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
- 2 Possible examination on a different date.
- 3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during office hours.

Extra information:

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy