

Metaphysics (A001227)

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 2024-2025

A (semester 2)

Dutch

Gent

lecture

independent work

seminar

Lecturers in academic year 2024-2025

Weber, Erik

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2024-2025

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

[Master of Arts in Philosophy](#)

[Research Master of Arts in Philosophy](#)

crdts

offering

5

A

5

A

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

metaphysics of science, scientific realism, natural kinds, essentialism, conventionalism.

Position of the course

In this specialised course the students get insight into the aims and methods of contemporary metaphysics of science by means of a cluster of debates on 'natural kinds'.

Contents

(1) Study of theories and debates on the topic of 'natural kinds':

- the most important theories of natural kinds (essentialism, conventionalism and 'homeostatic property cluster').

- dividing technical artefacts into kinds: natural division or depending on human interests?

- (psychiatric) diseases as natural kinds (or not)?

- social science categories (social class, caste ...) as natural kinds (or not?).

(2) Students focus on one of the debates, theories and/or domains, develop their personal view and argue for it.

Initial competences

Basic knowledge of philosophy of science.

Final competences

1 Understanding complex debates in the metaphysics of science (their aims and methods, the positions taken).

2 Defending your own position regarding the philosophical debates discussed during this course.

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, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Week 1: introduction (lecture).

Week 2-6: study of texts (seminar).

Week 7-10: develop personal views (guided self-study).

Week 11-12: presentation and discussion (seminar).

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: Natural Kinds

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

References**Course content-related study coaching**

Individual help is offered by the lecturers.

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

Skills test, Participation

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

See below.

Calculation of the examination mark

70% periodic evaluation (oral exam).

30% non-periodic evaluation (participation + presentation).

Facilities for Working Students

None.