

Philosophical Ethics: Systematics (A001452)

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

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Sterckx, Sigrid

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

[Bachelor of Arts in Moral Sciences](#)

crdts

offering

5

A

[Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy](#)

5

A

[Bachelor of Science in Sociology](#)

5

A

[Elective Set Culture and Society](#)

5

A

[Elective Set Philosophy and Moral Sciences](#)

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Theories of normative ethics, utilitarianism, social contract theory, relationship religion and morality, natural law, cultural relativism, Kantian ethics, virtue ethics.

Position of the course

A systematic introduction to philosophical ethics and an overview of some influential contemporary theories in normative ethics. This course serves as the basis for the ethics courses that figure further on in the curriculum.

Contents

1. What is ethics?
2. The challenge of cultural relativism.
3. Does ethics depend on religion?
4. The idea of a social contract.
5. Utilitarian ethics.
6. Kantian (deontological) ethics.
7. Feminism and care ethics.
8. Virtue ethics.
9. What is a satisfactory moral theory?

Initial competences

No particular advance knowledge required. Active knowledge of Dutch and English. Being interested in ethical problems.

Final competences

- 1 Insight into the diversity and complexity of ethics as a philosophical field of inquiry.
- 2 Knowledge, insight and understanding of important ethical strands of argument
- 3 Knowledge, insight and understanding of various important current theories and concepts in normative ethics.
- 4 The capacity to critically evaluate these theories and apply them to specific cases.

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

Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lectures with opportunity and encouragement to take part in group discussion.
Compulsory attendance of the first lecture.

Study material

None

References**Course content-related study coaching**

Via the e-learning platform or by appointment.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Written assessment

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

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

Written exam with open questions.

Calculation of the examination mark

100 % period bounded evaluation

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
 2. Alternative time for feedback during an appointment during office hours
- For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy