

## Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy (A001513)

**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 2023-2024**

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

lecture

**Lecturers in academic year 2023-2024**

Van Dyck, Maarten

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2023-2024**

[Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy](#)

**crdts**

5

**offering**

A

**Teaching languages**

Dutch

**Keywords**

Metaphysics, natural philosophy, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger

**Position of the course**

This introductory course offers a thorough introduction in the views of a number of influential metaphysical authors.

**Contents**

Metaphysics is the attempt to give an overarching image of the general structure of the world, and of the place of humans in it. We will discuss a few of the most influential of such attempts, coupled with the lecture of primary texts. The goal is to come to non-canonical readings of canonical authors. We pay attention to both the resulting image and the methods used to construct these images. We will pay special attention to the relation of metaphysics to on the one hand an everyday and on the other hand a scientific (or natural philosophical) perspective on reality. We also consider the relations between the discussed authors and the underlying historical evolutions.

Authors discussed: Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger. Texts read: fragment from *The Republic* (Plato); fragments from *Metaphysics* (Aristotle); *Méditations Métaphysiques* (Descartes).

**Initial competences**

Sufficient knowledge of the history of philosophy to place the authors discussed.

**Final competences**

- 1 Being able to comment the primary texts read from the history of metaphysics.
- 2 Having knowledge of a number of crucial basic concepts and arguments from metaphysics.
- 3 Having insight in historical developments within metaphysical thinking.
- 4 Being able to correctly assess the possible views concerning the relation between everyday experience, natural philosophy, and metaphysics.
- 5 Having insight in the specific nature of metaphysics as a discipline.

**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, Independent work

### **Extra information on the teaching methods**

In preparation for the lectures the students read assigned passages from the primary literature.

### **Learning materials and price**

- Primary literature: complete text of the *Méditations métaphysiques* (Descartes); fragments from the *Metaphysics* (Aristotle); fragments from *The critique of pure reason* (I. Kant).
  - Secondary literature: fragments from "Aristotle, the desire to understand" (J. Lear); "Descartes and the Meditations" (G. Hatfield); further texts are made available during the lectures.
- Estimated costs: 30 EUR.

### **References**

### **Course content-related study coaching**

By appointment with the lecturer.

### **Assessment moments**

end-of-term 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**

### **Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

not applicable

### **Extra information on the examination methods**

The examination tests for:

- knowledge of some key concepts and arguments;
- insight in the main themes being treated;
- the capacity to comment on fragments from the studied primary literature.

### **Calculation of the examination mark**

### **Facilities for Working Students**

Facilities:

- 1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance
- 2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
- 3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during and after office hours

Extra information:

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