

## Heuristics: Modern and Contemporary History (A004016)

**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

independent work

group work

seminar

### Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Vandersmissen, Jan

LW03

staff member

Roden, Dimitri

LW03

lecturer-in-charge

### Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

[Bachelor of Arts in History](#)

5

A

[Linking Course Master of Arts in History](#)

5

A

[Preparatory Course Master of Arts in History](#)

5

A

### Teaching languages

Dutch

### Keywords

19th-20th century, archives, Belgian society, actors, information sources and the places where these sources are found

### Position of the course

With this educational part we want to contribute to increasing the general scientific competences of students.

This is a basic introductory course and wants to enable students to:

- acquire in-depth knowledge of actors of society, information sources and their location within the Belgian context since 1789;
- be able to collect relevant data (analogue and digital) and to develop a research strategy regarding topics and fields of issues related to contemporary history and this both analogous and digital;
- learn to assess and value methodological problems, uncertainty and the limits of knowledge;

### Contents

The content of the curriculum consists of an as extensive as possible typological overview of:

- 1 the institutions of contemporary history, their relations and the context in which they acted and carried out duties;
- 2 the available analogue, digitized and born-digital information sources (independent of their form, structure or content) and their location.

### Initial competences

To have successfully completed the course "Introduction to Historical Research (or Historical Practise 1: general introduction to practicing history) and "Historical Practice 1: Exercise", or to have acquired the necessary skills by other means.

### Final competences

- 1 To be able to independently do research with respect to the Contemporary times and to develop an efficient research strategy.

- 2 To be able to critically reflect on the aspects of a given research subject and to identify, name, evaluate and elucidate the diversity of aspects of issues and topics within their historical context.
- 3 Be able to link aspects of societal issues to actors of society.
- 4 To be able to draw up a reasoned typology of the information producers and of analogue, digitized and born-digital sources of the Contemporary Times and their location
- 5 To be able to set up a simple research strategy (step by step plan).
- 6 To be able to identify simple methodological issues and challenges.
- 7 To apply digital methods, tools and strategies during a research process (discover, source criticism).

#### **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**

Group work, Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

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

- lectures (ex cathedra);
- one lecture that discloses the make-up and demonstrates the usage of the central learning instrument 'The Green Bible' (lecture: plenary exercises)
- solving cases and issues by the lecturer or together that are related to the taught subject matters (lecture: plenary exercises + seminar);
- archival source workshops during which students study given source types and at the end of which they give a brief presentation for their peers (group work + microteaching)
- discussing current historical research issues (seminar);
- feedback in class about reading carried out individually (guided self-study);
- collective solving of example final exams (lecture: plenary exercises + seminar)

#### **Study material**

Type: Handbook

Name: Bronnen van de studie van het hedendaagse België. 19e-21e eeuw  
 Indicative price: € 80  
 Optional: no  
 Language : Dutch  
 Author : Van Themsche, Guy  
 ISBN : 978-9-05718-894-7  
 Number of Pages : 1837  
 Oldest Usable Edition : 2019

Type: Syllabus

Name: Digital sources  
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty  
 Optional: no  
 Available on Ufora : Yes  
 Online Available : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: Slides  
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty  
 Optional: no  
 Language : Dutch  
 Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Handouts

Name: 'De belangrijkste gedrukte bibliografische instrumenten' (Romain Van Eeno)  
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty  
 Optional: yes  
 Number of Pages : 55  
 Available on Ufora : Yes  
 Online Available : Yes

Type: Audiovisual Material

Name: Online videos and images (course related)

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : Dutch

Online Available : Yes

## References

Websites and other digital sources mentioned.

## Course content-related study coaching

coaching during the lessons or by e-mail, consultation by appointment; supervision during the exercises

## 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

Participation

## Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

## Extra information on the examination methods

### ***Periodical assessment moment*** (100%)

Written exam. This is an open book exam. The first part consists of about 10 closed questions and is in line with the intended competences. Students are tested on knowledge several information producers, sources, the places where they are to be found and the usability for historical research. In the second part, the students have to demonstrate their insight into the course matter. Students are expected to be able to give the following elements of a given research subject: the diverse aspects of the subject, the organisations and persons which have possibly created information on these aspects, the sources of information and the places they are to be found and finally the possible methodological problems posed by the research.

## Calculation of the examination mark

100% periodical examination (open book)

## Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

- 1 Student attendance during educational activities is required
- 2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
- 3 Feedback can be given during an appointment after office hours

For more information contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and

Philosophy: <https://www.ugent.be/lw/nl/student/studiestudentenbegeleiding/trajectbegeleiding.htm>