

Historical Practice III: Research Assignment (A004035)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 10.0 Study time 300 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (Year)	Dutch	Gent	independent work peer teaching
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Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Van Nuffelen, Peter	LW03	lecturer-in-charge
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Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

Linking Course Master of Arts in History	10	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in History	10	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Research paper, historical practice and methodology

Position of the course

This is an advanced course. By writing, presenting, and defending a research paper the student integrates, practices, and perfects the core competences of the bachelor in history programme.

Contents

1° introductory plenary class on writing and presenting a paper and on the importance of scientific integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism.

2° Each student joins a thematic group of her/his choice, organised by staff members who are experts in that research theme. The supervisors are professors or post-doctoral staff members. Pre-doctoral staff-members can be involved as assistants. Every group consists of a maximum of ten students. An exception is possible for groups with more than one supervisor, providing the supervisors agree to this exception. No such group, however, may consist of more than 15 students. Each student chooses a specific research topic within the group's theme and writes an individual paper on this topic (max. 10,000 words, not including footnotes, bibliography, appendices). This paper consists of a critical assessment on the current state of research on a specific research problem and a preliminary identification and assessment of the sources (the primary information) on which this research is based. This paper is a research paper of limited scope in which the student demonstrates the ability to develop, under supervision, a research design with a relevant problem statement, sound source heuristics, a literature review and an analysis culminating in a synthesis

3° There are at least five contact moments during the academic year.

-15 October: choice of supervisor & preliminary choice of a topic
-Late November: preliminary problem statement, bibliography and possible sources
-Mid-December: elaborated question statement
-February: progress report: an elaborated problem statement and corresponding research questions, identification of source corpus that will be analysed, a draft structure of the paper and a complete bibliography of minimum 20 works

-April: submission of preliminary version & trial presentation; orientation discussion on follow-up research (MAP).

In between, the individual student can address questions to the supervisor and/or submit draft versions.

During these tutorials students discuss their progress towards the completion of their paper. They are given intermediate assignments appropriate to the specific requirement of the group's research theme and their individual topic (note: these may vary between groups).

4° Each student presents the results of her/his work in the last group-meeting.

5° Each student defends her/his work during the examination period. During the oral defense, the knowledge and insight of the student are tested.

Students starting the Research Paper after the January term will decide in consultation with the supervisor whether they wish to submit in the same academic year or in the next academic year (ev. January term). An appropriate calendar will be agreed. Students who need to retake this course will agree an appropriate calendar with their supervisor.

Initial competences

Students are expected to have acquired the learning outcomes of the two first years of the Bachelor in history programme at Ghent University.

Students are required to have acquired the learning outcomes of two courses of "Heuristics" and two courses of "Historical Practice II" of the UGent bachelor in history programme, or their equivalent at another institution.

For incoming Erasmus students, or students who want to follow this course as a preparatory or linking course towards the MA-programme, the curriculum committee and the titulary lecturer will ascertain, based on the individual dossier of each student, whether they have acquired the required skills.

Final competences

- 1 The student can set up a historical investigation, consisting of research question, source heuristics, literature review, analysis and synthesis.
- 2 The student communicates on the appropriate level about historical research, both orally and in written form. The paper has a clear structure and is correctly referenced.
- 3 The student has sufficient historical and methodological knowledge to analyse a given topic thoroughly.
- 4 The student can analyse critically sources and literature and identify and discuss historical debates.
- 5 The student can answer his research question using at least a motivated sample of sources, in dialogue with modern scholarship.
- 6 The results obtained reflect at least the current state of the art or offer new insights.
- 7 The student can set up a research plan for a larger research question.

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

Seminar, Independent work, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

For information on the teaching methods see the 'glossary of teaching methods' in the 'Education and Examination Code' of Ghent University, <https://www.ugent.be/student/en/class-exam-exchange-intern/class-exam/education-examination-code>.

The format of each seminar (e.g. online or on campus) may differ from group to group.

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: Reader

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Additional information: Every thematic group will be assigned its own reader.

References

Course content-related study coaching

Continuous coaching via the tutorials and if necessary ad hoc feedback; individually or in group, personally or electronically (via mail and/or the electronic learning platform).

Assessment moments

continuous assessment

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

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

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Oral assessment, Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

participation in the tutorials and intermediate assignments (permanent evaluation by the group tutors)

paper, presentation, and defense (evaluation by the group tutors and a second reader/examiner)

Calculation of the examination mark

participation in the tutorials and intermediate assignments: 30%

paper, presentation, and defense: 60% (= 30% evaluation by the group tutors + 30

% by second reader/examiner)

Research plan MA thesis: 10%

Passing for the paper is required for passing the course.

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance; a task is imposed in substitution after discussion with the lecturer

2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year

3 Feedback can be given by email, by telephone or during an appointment during or after office hours