

Philosophy in Society (A005208)

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 (Year)

Dutch

Gent

independent work
seminar
lecture

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Delanote, Broos

LW01

staff member

Segers, Seppe

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

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Philosophy and moral science in theory and practice; philosophy and moral science in society; activism; reflection; critique; argumentation and debate; social embeddedness; engagement; positionality; interdisciplinarity and intermediality; ..."

Position of the course

The objectives of this course unit include:

- acquiring the skills to participate in public debate as a philosopher/moral scientist and to critically reflect on the role of philosophy/moral science in society/public debate;
- questioning the position(s) of philosophy and moral science as expressions of epistemic authority;
- exploring, anchoring, questioning, and criticizing philosophical and moral-scientific methodologies through concrete and current societal debates;
- practicing writing, speaking, listening, reading, argumentation, and presentation skills in order to engage in public debate as a moral scientist/philosopher.

Contents

Throughout this course unit, students critically reflect on the role that moral science and philosophy can/should play in society (and on what the theme/relationship 'philosophy – society' presupposes).

Students are encouraged and guided to concretely develop skills through:

- (i) the analysis and discussion of current and relevant societal debates, including through the discussion of topical issues based on publications in (inter)national newspapers;
- (ii) speaking, writing, and listening exercises focusing on morally and philosophically relevant themes;
- (iii) active participation in class through discussions, reading groups, debates, etc.;
- (iv) undertaking a concrete form of engagement by participating in a self-chosen project outside the strictly academic context (e.g.: Philosophy Month, philosophy sessions with children or adults in care contexts, symposiums, sustainable development goals);
- (v) attending relevant performances, interventions, exhibitions, etc.

Attention is also given to the history of the department and the program, and to the role that social engagement and philosophy have played within it. Intersections of power and value (spanning knowledge, morality, art - and other forms) are thematized and discussed through concrete case examples.

Initial competences

Basic knowledge of the history of philosophy, epistemology and the philosophy of science.

Final competences

- 1 To be able to reflect critically on the role of philosophy in the social debate.
- 2 The ability to recognize, analyze and problematise the role of philosophical methodology in the field of the (human) sciences.
- 3 To be able to put this methodology to the test in the context of actual societal problems.
- 4 To develop the necessary argumentative skills, both orally and in writing, to be able to participate in society's actual philosophical problems.
- 5 Being able to write a publishable opinion piece.
- 6 To be able to analyze/put into practice adequate genres, styles and media in order to contribute, from within philosophy, to what happens in society.
- 7 To realize and make tangible the possibilities of a proper philosophical engagement.

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, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lecture and interactive discussion on the relationships between institutions, academic philosophy, public opinion, neutrality, activism, etc.; topical discussions on morally and philosophically relevant issues; seminars in which the aforementioned skills are practiced.

Participation in the classes and completion of assignments require independent (preparatory) work.

This course actively encourages students' social engagement as philosophers/moral scientists. Opportunities for such engagement are explored together.

The sessions contribute to philosophical multiperspectivism through guest lectures by speakers with rich and diverse experiences.

Study material

None

References

Subject to change every year (see Ufora).

Course content-related study coaching

By the lecturers (by appointment) and teaching assistant.

Collective feedback and possibility of individual feedback (by appointment).

Interactive support through Ufora (Forum, e-mail).

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous 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, Peer and/or self assessment, Assignment

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

Periodical evaluation: writing an essay (1500-2000 words) based on a question (various options) offered during the exam that fits in with the lessons.

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodic (30%) and non-periodical (70%) evaluation

Breakdown for non-periodical evaluation

- continuous assessment: 20%
- opinionating work: 20%
- Reflection report practical part: 30%

Participation in all components is mandatory.

Facilities for Working Students

1 The examination cannot be rescheduled.

2 Feedback can be given by email or during an appointment during office hours

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