

Historical Culture and Society (A005353)

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 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

lecture

seminar

independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Bevernage, Berber

LW03

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

[Bachelor of Arts in History](#)

5

A

[Master of Science in Teaching in Languages\(main subject African Languages and Cultures\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities \(main subject Archaeology\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities \(main subject Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Science in Teaching in Languages\(main subject East European Languages and Cultures\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Science in Teaching in Languages\(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures\(main subject China\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures\(main subject India\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures\(main subject Japan\)](#)

5

A

[Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures\(main subject Middle East Studies\)](#)

5

A

[Postgraduate Certificate Heritage and Society](#)

5

A

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

5

A

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

5

A

[Elective Set History](#)

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Public history, meta-history, collective memory, historical consciousness, historical culture, heritage(politics) use and abuse of history, historical representation, historical museums and memorials, history and ethics, civic education, heritage

Position of the course

This course aims to familiarize students with the diverse initiatives and debates concerning the use of history and memory in state and society. It teaches students to think on an advanced level about the ethical, political and societal aspects and implications of diverse forms of popular and academic uses of the past. This course closely connects to the core competences of the bachelor in history.

Contents

This course makes use of two approaches to analyse the use of history and memory in state and society.

First we will focus on the primary societal spheres in which history and memory are constructed or used. Among those societal spheres and corresponding 'user' of history and memory we will focus on: the state (government and parliament), the judicial sphere, educational institutions, museum and memorials, media, political

parties and religious groups, artists, the entertainment industry etc. Second we will focus on different 'relations' in which people can engage with the past and different aims which can be strived for through these relations. We will discuss the following relations and aims among others: the past as a source of identity and legitimation; the past as entertainment of hobby; the past as heritage, asset or commodity; the past as a realm of injustice and the use of history in courts and tribunals, the past as an object of therapy and reconciliation; the past as a teacher of life and the search for historical analogies; the past as an object of religious or ritual practices and discourses.

Initial competences

Final competences

- 1 Understand the place of history and historians in society
- 2 Interpret contemporary evolutions from a historically comparative perspective
- 3 Having knowledge about the current concepts and theories about the societal meaning of history, the expectations and societal needs.
- 4 Being able to understand societal problems and contemporary views with the necessary critical sense and historical background.
- 5 Being able to contextualize ones own historical research and actions and interpret it within a societal frame of reference.
- 6 Understand the functioning of archives and heritage institutions

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

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

'Hoorcollege': whereby students are expected to take notes and process the materials that are presented during the lectures.

'Begeleide zelfstudie': Students are expected to read a series of texts and process them independently

'Werkcollege': colleges with space for discussion

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: Reader Historical Culture and society (pdf)

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

References

Ashton, Paul & Hilda Kean, eds. *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

- Black, Jeremy. *Contesting History: Narratives of Public History*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2014.

- De Groot, Jerome de. *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*. London: Routledge, 2008

- Lowenthal, David. *The Past Is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985

- Samuel, Raphael. *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*. 2nd Revised edition edition. London; New York: Verso Books, 2012.

Course content-related study coaching

Individual supervision is possible after the classes, via Ufora or via an appointment through email

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

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

The evaluation of the participation will happen on the basis of the participation in discussions during the classes and on the basis of short preparatory reflections on the mandatory literature.

Calculation of the examination mark

Written exam: 80%

Participation throughout the semester: 20%

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
2. Alternative time for feedback

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