

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

Credits 3.0

Study time 90 h

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Mortier, Freddy

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

[Postgraduate Certificate Practical Humanism](#)

crdts

3

offering

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

secular humanism, practical ethics, autonomy, empowerment

Position of the course

The course Practical humanism was about implementing secular humanist values in the practice of secular humanist counselors. The present course is about the application and elaboration of secular humanist viewpoints to a number of policy domains ridden by ethical dilemma's.

Contents

The starting point of the course is an empowerment approach to collective and personal self-determination (grounded in respect for autonomy). Secular humanist values, such as fact-orientedness, secular embedding of the arguments, empathy, protecting human dignity, securing argumentative power and balancing everyone's legitimate interests and perspectives, impose limits to acceptable solutions to the dilemma's. The domains explored are (provisionally): reproductive rights and abortion; end-of-life decisions for specific groups, personal obligations toward nature and the environment; full automatisisation of decision making ((ro)botisation); inter-faith conflict (genital mutilation as a topic).

Initial competences

General Ba-competencies in the SSH

Final competences

- 1 • The student is able to distinguish different types of protection and promotion of self-determination in divergent situations
- 2 • The student is able to formulate the main dilemma's in the domains treated
- 3 • The student is able to identify alternatives compatible with secular humanist values and to weigh them against other approaches.
- 4 • The student is able to find professional and academic information on the subject treated and to use that information correctly in an ethics presentation.

Conditions for credit contract

This course unit cannot be taken via a credit contract

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Extra information on the teaching methods

Two introductory lectures present the empowerment approach to self-determination. They are followed by two series of two (interactive) casus presentations and discussions. Series 1 is about reproductive rights and about the global ethics of food. Series 2 is about (ro)botisation and about interfaith conflict. Each topic is linked to an essay assignment. The student chooses one topic out of each series and submits two provisional versions of the required essays. Four seminars (one on each topic) are dedicated to the submissions. The student finalises one of the essays.

Study material

None

References

Zie UFORA

Course content-related study coaching

Freddy Mortier and yet to designate others

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**

Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

The essays are evaluated according to criteria that will be presented orally and on UFORA. Presence at the interactive sessions is required.

Calculation of the examination mark

30% of the end score is based on the essay only submitted in a provisional version;
70% on the paper submitted in both an initial and a final version.

Facilities for Working Students

The program is meant for students combining studies with work.