

Uncovering the Ancien Régime: Auxiliary Sciences (A006709)

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 2)	Dutch	Gent	seminar	0.0h
			lecture	0.0h
			excursion	0.0h
			peer teaching	0.0h

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

De Paermentier, Els	LW03	lecturer-in-charge
Dumolyn, Jan	LW03	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
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

Auxiliary historical sciences (chronology, diplomatics, palaeography [thematic], sigillography, metrology, financial and monetary systems), source criticism, administrative and bureaucratic writing practices in secular, ecclesiastical, and monastic contexts, pragmatic literacy, Middle Ages, Early Modern Period.

Position of the course

This course offers an in-depth overview of the principal auxiliary historical sciences relevant to the study of the medieval and early modern periods.

Through theoretical explanations and practical exercises, students will become familiar with these methods and learn to apply them —particularly in terms of authenticity criticism— to typologically diverse edited and unedited sources (primarily archival material) from the Ancien Régime.

Contents

The course consists of thematic lectures and practical seminars structured around several interrelated modules with substantive cross-fertilization: chronology (calendrical systems), documentary writing practices and pragmatic literacy, palaeography and diplomatics (the study of charters), archival history, sigillography (the study of seals), financial and monetary systems, and metrology.

Initial competences

Knowledge of Latin can be useful but is not compulsory - alternative source texts in vernacular language will also be used.

Final competences

- 1 Have insight into the methodology of history.
- 2 Have proficient knowledge of historical conceptual frameworks (also in another language than Dutch), and of the most important historical facts, and historical explanations.

> Applied to the specific course content: Possess practical knowledge of the terminology relating to the substantive structure, material characteristics,

institutional production context, and ideological background of administrative and bureaucratic (documentary) sources from the Ancien Régime."

3 Have insight into the epistemology and academic practice of historiography.
 > Applied to the specific course content: Have the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the history of the auxiliary historical sciences as academic disciplines, and the relevance of their mutual interdisciplinarity.

4 Have a referential framework for various historical periods: the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Period.

5 Have knowledge of the variety of sources and academic literature (also in another language than Dutch) used in historical research and the specialist skills required to read and interpret such sources (also in another language than Dutch).

6 Have the ability to initiate problem-oriented historical research.
 > Applied to the specific course content: Have the ability to translate knowledge of the textual, contextual and material formal features of documentary sources into concrete research questions related to the course content on documentary writing practices.

7 Have the ability to apply quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as authenticity criticism, to edited and unedited (documentary) source material from the Ancien Régime.

8 Have insight into how archives and heritage institutions work.

9 Have the ability to collaborate on a project basis with peers, for example, in exercises and oral presentations based on literature and archival source material.

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, Excursion, Lecture, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

- (theoretical) lectures
- lectures with plenary exercises
- microteaching
- excursion
- guest lecture (I@Home)

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Writing, Government and Administration in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
 Optional: yes
 Language : Dutch
 Number of Pages : 150
 Available on Ufora : Yes
 Available in the Library : No
 Available through Student Association : No
 Additional information: Only a selection of theoretical chapters must be studied for the exam.

Type: Slides

Name: Writing, Government and Administration in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
 Optional: no
 Language : Dutch
 Available on Ufora : Yes
 Available in the Library : No
 Available through Student Association : No
 Additional information: The slides serve as a guideline and visual support for the syllabus.

Type: Reader

Name: Thematic selection of articles

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : No

Additional information: Selection of the reader may vary for each academic year.

References

- O. Guyotjeannin, J. Pycke, B.-M. Tock, *Diplomatique médiévale* (Turnhout, 1993).

- M. M. Cárcel Ortí, *Vocabulaire international de la Diplomatique* (Valencia, 1997).

Course content-related study coaching

Via Ufora, e-mail and in person after appointment

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods**Written and oral exam (80%)**

- written examination: exercises related to the teaching modules of 'chronology', 'diplomatics', 'financial and monetary systems', and 'metrology'.

- oral examination (with written preparation time): questions related to the theoretical teaching modules and the reader

Participation, group presentation (20%)

- participation during classes, participation in class discussions
- thematic oral group presentation based on literature and sources

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodical assessment (80%): Written and oral examination

Non-periodical assessment (20%): Participation, presentation and group work

Students must take all forms of examination.

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

- 1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance, allocation of a substitute task
- 2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
- 3 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