

Philosophy (H000430)

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

Credits 3.0 **Study time 90 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2) Dutch Gent lecture

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Bleys, Kjell	LW01	staff member
Vervisch, Thomas	LW01	staff member
Focquaert, Farah	LW01	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Science in Psychology(main subject Clinical Psychology)	3	A
Bachelor of Science in Psychology(main subject Education)	3	A
Bachelor of Science in Psychology(main subject Personnel Management and Industrial Psychology)	3	A
Bachelor of Science in Psychology(main subject Theoretical and Experimental Psychology)	3	A
Bachelor of Science in Communication Science	3	A
Bachelor of Science in Psychology (Joint Section)	3	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

philosophy, concept of the human being, history, free will

Position of the course

The course Philosophy is a supportive course in the Bachelor Psychology. It offers students an introduction to (the history of) Western philosophy. Central themes include the search for reliable knowledge (truth) and self-knowledge (wisdom), the philosophy of free will, as well as philosophical reflection on the origins of human behavior.

The course is part of the module Models in Psychology, which focuses on understanding, explaining, and predicting human behavior.

Contents

In this course unit, we examine how different philosophical traditions reflect on the characteristics of human beings. Key questions include: What kind of being is the human? How do humans differ from (other) animals? How do nature and nurture interact in shaping human behavior? Do we have free will? In light of modernity and scientific developments such as behavioral genetics, neuroscience, and evolutionary theory, how can humans find meaning? On what basis can we lead an authentic and meaningful life? Is such a life even possible, considering the views of several thinkers who argue that human behavior is determined and that humans are perpetually prone to self-deception?

We critically examine a range of perspectives on these and related questions, drawing on authors such as Aristoteles, Kant, Freud, Nietzsche and Nageland working within diverse frameworks including free will skepticism, biopsychosocial sciences, philosophy of mind, philosophical psychology, etc.. Throughout, we assess the insights developed by these and other thinkers concerning the origins of human behavior and how one might flourish in life.

Initial competences

No specific prerequisites.

Final competences

- 1 To understand the specific nature of philosophical problems and types of analysis, with a particular focus on philosophical anthropology.
- 2 To be able to understand current philosophical thinking, based on a solid academically sound historical background.
- 3 To be able to critically define the most significant terms of philosophy.
- 4 To recognise the principal schools of thought and their proponents on an academic level.
- 5 Having an insight in and be able to critically think through the relations between philosophy, science and society.
- 6 General knowledge of the philosophical debate on free will and moral responsibility.

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

Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

There are no recordings of the lessons.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Thinking about thinking
Indicative price: € 25
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Author : Leslie Stevenson, David L. Haberman e.a.
Number of Pages : 288
Online Available : No
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Type: Handbook

Name: Beter Leven Zonder Vrije Wil
Indicative price: € 25
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Author : Farah Focquaert
Number of Pages : 233
Oldest Usable Edition : 2025
Online Available : Yes
Available in the Library : Yes
Available through Student Association : Yes
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive
Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time
Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : not

Type: Slides

Name: Slides
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Number of Slides : 250
Oldest Usable Edition : 2025
Available on Ufora : Yes
Online Available : No
Available in the Library : No
Additional information: The slides are primarily in Dutch, with some content in English.

References

- Required reading: Denken over denken (Pieter R. Adriaens, 2024)
- Required reading: 'Beter Leven Zonder Vrije Wil', Uitgeverij B&L, auteur: Farah Focquaert. 2025

Course content-related study coaching

- Interactive support using Ufora

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions

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

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

Multiple Choice

Calculation of the examination mark

Multiple choice 100%

Facilities for Working Students

During the teaching period, the teaching staff is available both on campus and online for questions or guidance, by appointment.