

Faculty of Economic, Social and Political Sciences



COPS1124 Philosophy

[30h] 3 credits

Teacher(s): Heinz Leonardy
Language: French
Level: First cycle

Aims

This Philosophy course is particularly intended to equip students (who will never, within the Belgian system at least, have had any specific teaching in Philosophy and the history of Philosophy) with a basic grounding in the history of Philosophy. This history is not studied as an end in its own right, nor is it studied chronologically, but instead provides information which should enable students to situate in time the various answers which have been given to the key question on which the entire course is based: "What is man?"

In summary, this introduction has three objectives:

- to equip students with the knowledge they need to examine issues raised within the disciplines taught in the Faculty within a philosophical perspective:
- to show how the philosophical approach to these issues operates within a conceptual framework which combines ontological, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic considerations
- to give students the knowledge they need to describe, in outline at least, how these questions entered into the history of western Philosophy

Main themes

The different aspects of human society studied within the Faculty (Economics and Management, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science and Communication) can only reasonably be studied within the framework of a comprehensive approach to the issue of "What is man?". It is this comprehensive approach that is provided by the Philosophy course. For this reason, Philosophy will be taught as a partially constitutive dimension of issues in the Social Sciences and not as a specialized discipline, separate from the Human and Social Sciences.

This course deliberately chooses not to use the examine the same basic concepts as the specialist Philosophy courses given later on in the degree course and in a range of Masters' courses, concepts related for example to epistemology in the Social Sciences, Ethics, Political Philosophy and Philosophy of Communication. Given the availability of these later specialized courses, this first year Bachelor's course will adopt a general perspective, introducing students to a particular way of questioning and a body of specific references.

Content and teaching methods

The course will examine the main elements of human existence: desire, work, creative works, power, knowledge, intersubjective communication, language and freedom. The exact subjects studied and the way they are presented will be up to the lecturer, who will take particular care to ensure that the subjects chosen are relevant to the subjects taught in the Bachelors' degree and to show how philosophical reflection can contribute to an understanding of the issues dealt with in these subjects. Students will also be shown in passing how certain philosophical options still persist in the Social Sciences (for example anthropological aspects of the explanation/understanding issue in Social Science epistemology; the persistent issue of Hobbes' Prisoner's Dilemma and the persistence of machiavellian intelligence in socio-anthropological actor strategy theory. In each case, it is the links between themes that will be highlighted, rather than the detail. The teaching makes direct use of philosophical argumentation as it is intended not to be viewed as a body of out-dated knowledge but rather as an act of rational exploration carried out by a living knowledge base. It is fundamental that the course itself be seen as an act of philosophical questioning.

The historical genesis of these issues will be brought to light through commentaries on important contributions made by classical philosophers. Students will be shown that it is impossible to answer philosophical questions, particularly the most burning issues of the day, without reference to traditions in thinking.

The course should also include some introductory reading of philosophical texts: the choice and number of these texts is at the lecturer's discretion.

Other credits in programs

ANTR1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en anthropologie	(3 credits)	
COMU11BA	Première année de bachelier en information et communication	(3 credits)	Mandatory
CRIM1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en criminologie	(3 credits)	Mandatory
ECGE11BA	Première année de bachelier en sciences économiques et de gestion	(3 credits)	
GRH1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en gestion des ressources humaines	(3 credits)	
HUSO11BA	Première année de bachelier en sciences humaines et sociales	(3 credits)	Mandatory
SOC1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en sociologie	(3 credits)	
SOCA11BA	Première année de bachelier en sociologie et anthropologie	(3 credits)	Mandatory
SPED1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en sciences de la population et développement	(3 credits)	
SPOL11BA	Première année de bachelier en sciences politiques	(3 credits)	Mandatory
TRAV1PM	Année d'études préparatoires au master en sciences du travail	(3 credits)	