

History and Philosophy of Biology (C004083)

Due to Covid 19, the education and evaluation methods may vary from the information displayed in the schedules and course details. Any changes will be communicated on Ufora.

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)
Credits 3.0 Study time 90 h Contact hrs 30.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2020-2021

A (semester 1)	English	Gent	lecture	10.0 h
			seminar: coached	5.0 h
			exercises	
			self-reliant study	15.0 h
			activities	

Lecturers in academic year 2020-2021

Braeckman, Johan	LW01	lecturer-in-charge
De Tiège, Alexis	LW01	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2020-2021

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Science and Technology (main subject Biology)	3	A
Master of Science in Biology	3	A
Exchange Programme in Biology (master's level)	3	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

biology, history, philosophy, Aristotle, Descartes, Lamarck, Darwin, zoology, fysiology, taxonomy, morphology, evolutionary theory, genetics.

Position of the course

To survey the most important topics within the fields of the history and philosophy of biology.

Contents

It is the main aim of this course to survey the most important developments in the history of biology, by making use of the work of 'the great authors' (Aristotle, Descartes, Ray, Linnaeus, Cuvier, Lamarck, Darwin, Haldane, and so on). Special attention will be given to the origin and growth of several biological subdisciplines (zoology, taxonomy, morphology, physiology, evolutionary theory, genetics), within the broader cultural and scientific historical contexts. The philosophical problems related to these specific subdisciplines will be systematically dealt with (discussions on natural kinds, universals versus particulars, criteria of classification, levels of selection, interaction genes and development, ...). In particular, the meaning of the Darwinian revolution will be clarified in relation to the historical and contemporary development of biology and to the philosophy of the life sciences.

Initial competences

None

Final competences

General knowledge of the history of biology and of the specific problems discussed in the philosophy of biology.

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

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture, self-reliant study activities, seminar: coached exercises

Learning materials and price

Articles on the history and philosophy of biology (written by contemporary authors and the teacher) Cost: 15 EUR

References

E. Mayr: *Towards a new Philosophy of biology*; E. Mayr: *This is Biology*; D. Hull & M. Ruse, eds.: *The philosophy of biology*.

Course content-related study coaching

By the teacher.

Evaluation methods

end-of-term evaluation

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

Written examination with open questions

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

Written examination with open questions

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

not applicable

Calculation of the examination mark

Facilities for Working Students

1. Student attendance during educational activities is required
 2. Possible oral examination on 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