



Teacher(s)	Bernard Diane ;Roux Jeanne-Marie ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Main themes	<p>In this course, the «#problems#» encountered by philosophers of the past – as well as the concepts they developed in response – serve as a foundation for constructing our own answers to the challenges we face today, particularly within the legal domain. Issues such as justice, the exercise of power, the definition of will, and our responsibility for our actions are thus explored.</p> <p>The course also fosters the development of skills essential to any lawyer. Through the analysis and comparison of classical and contemporary philosophers, and through close attention to philosophical texts and terminology, students are trained in careful reading and rigorous interpretation—skills that are indispensable to the practice of law.</p> <p>Given that legal phenomena are inseparable from broader reflections on human nature and society in all their complexity, this course is closely linked to the courses in legal theory and natural law, as well as to those in sources and principles of law, constitutional law, and even Roman law.</p> <p>In all these respects, and through the inherently interdisciplinary approach it promotes, this course is fully aligned with the Faculty of Law's Manifesto (<i>RIEJ</i>, 2016/74, pp. 169-175) and with the intellectual tradition of Saint-Louis.</p>
Learning outcomes	<p>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</p> <p>This course contributes to the development and acquisition of the following skills (as defined in the program's learning outcomes framework, cited in quotation marks).</p> <p>It contributes to the acquisition of «#general knowledge#», particularly through the development of a solid grounding in the humanities and social sciences so that they are able to decode legal phenomena in a comprehensively interdisciplinary perspective#. By drawing on a broad philosophical heritage, the course aims not only to provide students with a robust intellectual education, but also to help them understand that philosophical thinking – however original or innovative – is always shaped by a specific socio-historical context, by events and/or problems to which it responds or within which it was developed. By the end of the course, students will be familiar with a range of philosophical positions, will be able to situate them within the history of ideas, and will be equipped to draw upon them in reflecting on contemporary legal issues.</p> <p>The course also seeks to foster the development of key «#transferable skills#», notably the cultivation of «#critical analytical skills#», which are intrinsic to the philosophical method, as well as the «#command of the French language#». Both the lectures and «#monitorats#», as well as the exams, are designed to refine students' ability to read and interpret complex texts of varied styles, and to handle a range of concepts with precision. The reading and interpretation of philosophical texts, along with the understanding of the specialised terminology used throughout the course, represent a valuable exercise in the training of future lawyers – who must be capable of grasping the full nuance and complexity of legal language.</p>
Evaluation methods	<p>Assessment takes the form of a written examination.</p> <p>In line with the intended learning outcomes of the course, the examination consists of multiple-choice questions (MCQs) that require nuanced reading skills and a sound understanding of the course's main conceptual frameworks, the philosophical texts on which it is based, and the key notions discussed throughout. Students may, for instance, be asked to situate a philosophical excerpt within the broader context of the author's works, to compare different philosophical positions, to clarify specific concepts in relation to a particular topic, or to apply them to a new context or problem (such as through the analysis of a film).</p> <p>Three optional in-class tests are organised throughout the year and may lead to the awarding of bonus marks.</p> <p>First, a "solidarity MCQ", covering material taught up to that point, is held mid-way through the first term. If more than two-thirds of enrolled students participate and more than one-third of those achieve a score equal to or above 10/20, all students receive one bonus point for the January exam, regardless of whether they took the test.</p> <p>A second MCQ is held during the last class of the first term and covers the entire first part of the course. All students who pass this test (i.e. score equal to or above 10/20) receive one personal bonus point for the January exam.</p> <p>A third test, consisting of a short written reflection, is organised during the second term. Students who pass may receive up to 2 bonus points for the June exam.</p> <p>As this is a year-long course, the mark obtained in the January exam may exempt students from the first part of the course and count for half of the final grade in June and September, provided it is equal to or above 10/20. Students who pass the January exam are therefore only assessed on the second-term material in June (or September); their January mark is retained for the final average. Students who score below 10/20 in January must retake the full-year material in June (and/or September), as their January result is disregarded.</p> <p>Bonus points are not transferable between exam sessions: the first two apply only to the January exam, and the third only to the June exam.</p>

Teaching methods	<p>The course is delivered <i>ex cathedra</i> in a large lecture hall. On three occasions, it includes an optional test which may earn students a bonus mark.</p> <p>The course materials made available on <i>moodle</i> are not mandatory: students' personal notes may suffice. In fact, such notes will usefully complement the slides, which outline the course structure in a concise but non-exhaustive manner.</p> <p>Support is provided through weekly tutorials (« monitorats ») given by a teaching assistant.</p> <p>A forum is also available on <i>moodle</i>, where students may post questions to the professors.</p> <p>In the first term, two collaborative sessions are organised in an « inverted classroom » format. These sessions aim to apply concepts introduced in previous lectures to the analysis of a film. As students are expected to watch the relevant films in advance, the first lecture of the academic year (in 2025, on Septembre 19th) is cancelled and replaced by the viewing of these two films.</p> <p>In the second term, two additional sessions are held (at the beginning of two separate lectures), inviting philosophical reflection based on a fictional film and a radio broadcast. As in the first term, students are expected to watch the film or listen to the broadcast beforehand; class time is freed up during the term to allow for this.</p> <p>Although attendance at these interactive sessions is not compulsory, it is strongly encouraged, as the critical analysis of the films and broadcast will be assessed in the final examination.</p> <p>Both lectures and assessments are held on university premises.</p>
Content	<p>This course falls within the domain of general philosophy but is specifically tailored for law students. In order for these future jurists to meaningfully engage with the vitality of philosophical inquiry, the course is structured around two central themes. During the first term, it focuses on justice – more precisely, on the conditions of judgement. In the second term, attention shifts to the moral nature of the human being, considered both as a subject and as a person, i.a. in relation to notions of freedom and responsibility.</p>
Inline resources	<p>The course materials (powerpoints) are made available on <i>moodle</i>.</p> <p>The films and/or radio broadcasts that students are expected to watch or listen to – in place of the very first lecture and during the second term – are available via <i>moodle</i> as well.</p>
Bibliography	<p>Les éléments bibliographiques pertinents sont indiqués dans les supports de cours.</p>
Other infos	<p>A strong command of French is required to follow this course.</p>
Faculty or entity in charge	<p>DRTB</p>

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)				
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Law	DROB1BA	8		
Bachelor in Law (French-English)	DRAB1BA	8		
Bachelor in Law French-Dutch (and French-Dutch-English)	DRNB1BA	8		