UCL Study programme 2026 - 2027

Minor "Decentering History: Subalternities and postcolonial Studies"

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MINDHIS - Introduction

Introduction

Introduction

Find out more about the minor in...

Today, all too often, the implicit analytical frameworks of past and present societies are based on a hegemonic "white, neoliberal and patriarchal" model. This model is now being questioned by large sections of civil society and by the scientific world. There is an urgent need to reinterpret any historical period in the light of these issues. But how can we go about re-reading phenomena such as slavery, colonisation, globalisation, capitalism and gender relations in a *different* way today? How can we decentralise our view as historians and citizens?

Since the middle of the 20th century, with the emancipation of women and the anti-colonial movements, several currents and theories have renewed the way of writing history and decoding current societies: connected history, history from below, subaltern studies, postcolonial studies, decolonial studies and gender history. These critical and analytical tools invite a geographical, mental and temporal 'decentring' and allow us to understand past and present systems of thought and action, here and elsewhere, from new perspectives.

Your programme

The 'Decentring History' minor offers students :

- A theoretical foundation on the different currents allowing for 'decentring' in history: connected history, Subaltern studies, Postcolonial studies, Decolonial studies and gender history;
- A transversal and interdisciplinary approach in order to diversify the ways of practicing "decentering" in the humanities and social sciences;
- The opportunity to study the history, ways of thinking and social and cultural practices of non-European societies;
- Concrete tools to decode past and contemporary societies from the perspective of power relations in a critical and nuanced way.

MINDHIS - Teaching profile

Learning outcomes

In the face of the preponderance of dominant models and patterns of thought in European university curricula, this "Decentring History" minor brings history into dialogue with knowledge produced in other parts of the world and with other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, literature, philosophy and the study of religions. This approach values other ways of thinking and seeing the world, integrating the points of view of actors who are invisible in the dominant narratives in order to develop new analytical and critical reflexes.

On successful completion of this programme, each student is able to :

1. Acquire and demonstrate an understanding of the different currents allowing for 'decentring' in history and the social sciences and humanities, in order to grasp the specificities and rigour of each discipline, in the perspective of an interdisciplinary approach.

2. Question and discuss the approaches of connected history, history from below, Subaltern studies, Postcolonial studies, Decolonial studies and gender history, taking care to adopt a critical and nuanced posture with regard to the contributions and limitations of each current and their interrelations.

3. Use theoretical tools from various disciplines to analyse a phenomenon/issue/system in the social sciences and humanities in a decentralised way.

4. Mobilise these theoretical tools to deconstruct demagogic and simplifying discourses on the past and the present.

5. Value other ways of thinking and seeing the world, from non-European societies.

6. Develop one's own critical thinking and to be able to question one's own preconceptions as a Western European trained student.

Programme

DETAILED PROGRAMME BY SUBJECT

The minor includes on the one hand, two compulsory courses (10 credits) to acquire basic knowledge (theoretical frameworks and analytical tools) and to practice concretely the "decentring" in history and social sciences. The two courses are:

- LHIST1728 *Subalternities and postcolonial criticism: introduction through history* (5 credits)
- LHIST1420 *Introduction to cultural and anthropological history* (5 credits)

On the other hand, as a complement, students will have the possibility to choose a series of courses (20 credits) allowing them to apply and deepen the use of these tools and methods to the themes that interest them more specifically: either by choosing a module of courses that mobilise a decentred perspective to analyse global issues, or a module focused on various extra-European areas and cultures, or a module focused on philosophical and religious issues.

From the following list of courses, students will take one to two courses in module 1, and two to three courses in modules 2 or 3.

Please note that some courses require language skills!

- Mandatory
- Optional
- Not offered in 2026-2027
- Not offered in 2026-2027 but offered the following year
- Offered in 2026-2027 but not the following year
- Not offered in 2026-2027 or the following year
- Activity with requisites
- Open to incoming exchange students
- Not open to incoming exchange students
- [FR] Teaching language (FR, EN, ES, NL, DE, ...)

Click on the course title to see detailed informations (objectives, methods, evaluation...)

Content:

Compulsory course (10 credits)

				Year 2	Year 3
LHIST1728	Subalternities and postcolonial critiques: an introduction through history	Silvia Mostaccio Françoise Van Haeperen	[1] [q1] [22.5h] [5 Credits]	x	x

				Year 2	3
LHIST1420	Introduction to Cultural History and Anthropology *Si ce cours est choisi dans la mineure et que les crédits sont valorisés dans le cadre de la mineure, l'étudiant de bachelier en histoire ne pourra pas les valoriser dans le cadre de son bachelier. Il choisira dès lors un autre cours repris dans la liste « Connaître l'Histoire ».*	Caroline Sappia	FR [q2] [22.5h] [5 Credits] *> English-friendly*	x	x

Optional courses (20 credits)

Students should choose one to two courses in module 1 and two to three courses in modules 2 or 3.

MODULE 1. Enjeux globaux et approche décentrée

LESPO1121	Economic and Social History	Emmanuel Debruyne	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LEURO1301	Europe and the world: current challenges	Vincent Laborderie (compensates Anne-Sophie Gijs)	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LPOLS1319	Introduction to geopolitics	Tanguy de Wilde d'Estmael	FR [q1] [30h+15h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LPOLS1330	Comparative approach to national and international democratic challenges *Prerequisites: good knowledge of English (writing and speaking)*	Stefano Camatarri (compensates Benoît Rihoux)	EN [q2] [15h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LSPED1213	Contemporary issues in development policy	Joseph Amougou (compensates Benjamin Chemouni)	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x

MODULE 2. Aires géographiques et cultures extra-européennes

LARKE1553	Arts and civilisations: Ancient Egypt and the Ancient Near East	Gaelle Chantrain Jan Tavernier	FR [q1+q2] [45h] [5 Credits] ∅	x	x
LANTR1300	Chinese Worlds in Question: Histories and Anthropologies	Frédéric Laugrand	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits] ∅	x	x
LANTR1301	Asian and Austronesian worlds (1)	Lionel Simon (compensates Frédéric Laugrand)	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits] ⊕	x	x
LENG1125	American Landscapes and Memory	Véronique Bragard	EN [q2] [22.5h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LGLOR1514	History, culture and societies: Ancient Egypt and the Near East	Gaelle Chantrain Jan Tavernier	FR [q1+q2] [45h] [5 Credits] ⊕	x	x
LENG1225	British cultural history *Prerequisites: Good knowledge of English (writing and speaking)*	Ben De Bruyn	EN [q1] [22.5h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LGLOR1534	History of the Arab-Muslim civilisation	Jean-Charles Ducène (compensates Godefroid De Callatay)	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits] ⊕	x	x
LESP1283	The Hispanic American short story from modernism to the present day *Prerequisites: Good knowledge of Spanish (writing and speaking)*	Geneviève Fabry	ES [q2] [30h+15h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LGLOR1101	Introduction to Indo-European Comparative Studies		FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits] ∅ *> English-friendly*	x	x
LGLOR1524	Introduction to the Byzantine World	Véronique Somers	FR [q1] [22.5h] [5 Credits] ⊕ *> English-friendly*	x	x
LGLOR1523	Introduction to the medieval Near East	Emmanuel Van Elverdinghe	FR [q1] [22.5h] [5 Credits] ∅ *> English-friendly*	x	x
LENG1324	Rewriting the canon: the (graphic) novel *Prerequisites: good knowledge of English (writing and speaking)*	Véronique Bragard	EN [q2] [22.5h+12h] [5 Credits]	x	x

MODULE 3. Enjeux philosophiques et religieux

LFILO1360	Philosophy of Culture and Intercultural Dialogue	Marc Maesschalck	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits] *> English-friendly*	x	x
LPOLS1329	Sociology of Religion	Lionel Remy (compensates Brigitte Maréchal)	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1251	History of Christianity: Antiquity		FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits] ∅	x	x
LRELI1252	History of Christianity: Modern Times	Jean-Pascal Gay	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits] ⊕	x	x

				Year 2	3
LRELI1253	History of Christianity: Middle Ages		FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1310	Judaism	Joachim Yeshaya	FR [q1] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1320	Introduction to the History of Religions	Frédéric Pain	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1321	History of Christianity: the Contemporary Period	Jean-Pascal Gay	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1347	Hinduism		FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x
LRELI1348	Buddhism	Frédéric Pain	FR [q2] [30h] [5 Credits]	x	x

THE PROGRAMME'S COURSES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

For each UCLouvain training programme, a reference framework of learning outcomes specifies the the skills expected of every graduate on completion of the programme. Course unit descriptions specify targeted learning outcomes, as well as the unit's contribution to reference framework of learning outcomes.

MINDHIS - Information

Access Requirements

This programme is open to all Bachelor students if their main programme permits (list of Bachelors offering this minor). There are no specific terms or conditions of admission for this minor.

Evaluation

The evaluation methods comply with the Academic regulations and procedures . More detailed explanation of the modalities specific to each learning unit are available on their description sheets under the heading "Learning outcomes evaluation method".

Contacts

Curriculum Management

Entity

Structure entity	SSH/FIAL/EHAC
Denomination	(EHAC)
Faculty	Faculty of Philosophy, Arts and Letters (FIAL)
Sector	Human Sciences (SSH)
Acronym	EHAC
Postal address	Place Cardinal Mercier 31 - bte L3.03.13 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve Tel: +32 (0) 10 47 48 50

Academic supervisor: silvia.mostaccio@uclouvain.be

Useful Contact(s)

- For further information: info-fial@uclouvain.be