Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Philosophy and Ethics

Course Code	X_400433
Credits	3
Period	P5
Course Level	200
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Science
Course Coordinator	dr. C.B. Ranalli
Examiner	dr. C.B. Ranalli
Teaching Staff	dr. C.B. Ranalli, dr. G. Löhr
Teaching method(s)	Lecture

Course Objective

At the end of the course, the students will be:

- familiar with basic knowledge of key theories in Moral philosophy, Philosophy of Mind and AI, and Epistemology [knowledge and understanding];
- able to apply these theories to moral dilemmas concerning new technologies [applying knowledge and understanding];
- trained to deal with moral dilemmas they might encounter in their future career [learning skills].

Course Content

Argument of the course:

1. New technologies (e.g. the ads we see, nudging us to make healthy and sustainable choices, writing texts, etc.) that influence our actions and ways of thinking are everywhere.
2. It is better if these technologies meet certain moral and epistemic standards.
3. Hence, those involved in the design or regulation of these technologies (i.e. you, in the future) should know about the main ideas in ethics, epistemology, and philosophy of mind/AI.

This course surveys and critically examines relevant issues in Philosophy and Ethics, including the philosophy of AI, algorithms and echo chambers, and the background moral and epistemological theories that help us to think critically about new technologies. You will learn about the main ethical theories (namely, utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, and theories of well-being), epistemological theories (evidentialism; epistemic paternalism), and in philosophy of mind/AI (functionalism; mind-brain identity theory; the ethics of AI), learning to utilize these theories and distinctions to resolve moral and social dilemmas in a justified and intelligent way.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures

Method of Assessment

Final exam (100% grade)

Literature

Selected textbook chapters:

All texts will be available online.

- Chapters from Rachels & Rachels The Elements of Moral Philosophy.
- Chapters from The Oxford Handbook of Ethics of AI.

Selected academic articles or chapters:
- Nguyen, C. Thi (2021). Echo chambers and epistemic bubbles. Episteme.

- Rubel, Alan; Clinton, Castro, and Pham, Adam (2021). "Agency Laundering and Information Technologies" Algorithms and Autonomy: The Ethics of Automated Decision Systems. Cambridge University Press.