



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](#).

Global Religion

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| Course Code | S_GR |
| Credits | 6 |
| Period | P5 |
| Course Level | 300 |
| Language Of Tuition | English |
| Faculty | Faculty of Social Sciences |
| Course Coordinator | dr. P.G.A. Versteeg |
| Examiner | dr. P.G.A. Versteeg |
| Teaching Staff | dr. P.G.A. Versteeg |
| Teaching method(s) | Lecture |

Course Objective

Learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding. The student has acquired knowledge and understanding of:

1. the anthropological approach to religion.
2. religion as a contemporary global phenomenon.

Application. The student has acquired the competencies to:

1. ask anthropological questions regarding the religious practices that they encounter during this course.
2. critically assess different theoretical approaches in the anthropology of religion and their (in)ability to describe, interpret and represent religious praxis;
3. describe some of the methodological problems that are typical for anthropology of religion, i.e. the insider-outsider gap, embodied practice and interpretation, matter vs mind.

Critical attitude. The student is able to:

1. reflect on their assumptions and demonstrate an open and interpretive attitude vis-a-vis religious practices.

Course Content

The global and the local are the context and canvas for our understanding of contemporary religion. Our aim is to gain knowledge and insight into the forms of religion as a global practice. The starting point is the idea that any investigation of religious practice should begin with the concrete forms in which religion presents itself to us in a research setting. The anthropological approach of religion is a social-scientific angle which looks for the way in which religious practice and social processes are related. This basically boils down to two questions: how social structure influences religious practice, and how religious practice influences social processes. This question applies to both small-scale societies and groups and to large-scale societies, as well as to more network-like forms of social organization, for example, in digital media.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures and documentaries.

Method of Assessment

Assignments (individual and collective), midterm exam, and a written final exam

Literature

- Bielo, James (2015). *Anthropology of Religion: The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Articles (to be announced in the course manual).

Additional Information Target Audience

2nd-year bachelor students in Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology.

Recommended background knowledge

1st-year program Bachelor Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology.