



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](#).

History by Numbers

Course Code	L_GABAGES225
Credits	6
Period	P3
Course Level	200
Language Of Tuition	Dutch / English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. H.M.E.P. Kuijpers
Examiner	dr. H.M.E.P. Kuijpers
Teaching Staff	dr. H.M.E.P. Kuijpers, dr. L. Viola
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Lecture

Course Objective

At the end of this course, students will have:

- Knowledge and understanding of the traditional quantitative approaches in historiography as well as new tools and methods in data analysis in the field of computational history
- Knowledge of recent developments in the field of data digitisation and research by archives and in historical research
- Knowledge and understanding of the statistical methods and visualisation techniques that are regularly used in historical research
- The ability to critically reflect on how historians use and present (quantitative) data
- The ability to select, structure and manipulate numeric data critically by themselves: creating pivot tables and simple data visualisations such as graphs and maps, and to use them for analysis in their papers and presentations

Course Content

This course aims to familiarise you with basic data analysis techniques for historical research. Traditionally, socio-economic historians often worked with numbers. They conducted research on, for example, demographic developments and wages and prices in the past, or they analysed social characteristics of groups of people. In recent decades, we have seen the rise of new quantitative methods thanks to the rapidly growing availability of digitised historical sources. Within the field of digital humanities, for instance, quantitative approaches are also used to analyse large text corpora.

In this course, you will learn what is necessary to understand such research, and how to critically and responsibly assess, visualise, and interpret quantitative data yourself. These skills can be used in the continuation of your studies, in your own research, but they are also useful in various other societal fields. Basic knowledge of statistics and digital technology also helps you to better assess the value of certain claims (both in academic literature and more broadly).

Students who get a taste for Digital Humanities and want to delve further can opt for the [Digital Humanities and Social Analytics Minor](#) in their third year

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Seminars, practical workshops, group work, presentations. 12 x 2 hours

Method of Assessment

- Portfolio containing several small assignments 50%

- Participation in discussions and presentations 20%
- Written examination 30%

Literature

Hudson, Pat, and Mina Ishizu. *History by Numbers: An Introduction to Quantitative Approaches*. Second edition. London ; Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017.

This book can be purchased in paperback and is also available as e-book via the VU Library

Other readings will be made available on CANVAS

Additional Information Target Audience

BA students History/Geschiedenis

Additional Information

For this course you need a computer with a working internet connection and MS Office