



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](#).

Contemporary Theology

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| Course Code | G_BATRSPC304 |
| Credits | 6 |
| Period | P5 |
| Course Level | 300 |
| Language Of Tuition | English |
| Faculty | Faculty of Religion and Theology |
| Course Coordinator | prof. dr. D.A. Forster |
| Examiner | prof. dr. D.A. Forster |
| Teaching Staff | prof. dr. D.A. Forster |
| Teaching method(s) | Seminar, Lecture |

Course Objective

After finishing this course, the student:

- is able to identify the most important theological schools and positions that were developed in the modern context;
- is able to reproduce and distinguish the main characteristics of a diversity of theological schools and positions (both Protestant and Catholic and beyond), such as that of liberal theology, dialectic theology, fundamentalism, neo-evangelicalism, etc.;
- is able to understand and interpret theological texts from representatives of these theological positions;
- is able to apply the positions of these representatives to theological issues that are still relevant, such as the authority of Scripture, the role of natural theology and the implications of theological anthropology;
- is able to reflect on the relevance of the theological positions for contemporary issues, such as the ecological crises and the relationship between science and faith;
- is able to elaborate their own (theological) position on the basis of the discussed theological positions.

Course Content

The development of Christian theology in the modern context will be highlighted by discussing various theological positions. We will focus on the 19th and 20th centuries, starting with Schleiermacher and ending up with recent theological trends as postliberal theology, the theological interpretation of Scripture and the New Perspective on Paul.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

The student prepares the lectures by reading the specified literature. In the classes the content is critically assessed by means of a guided discussion. In one of the classes students will be asked to present a theological text of about 25 pages and explain how the text relates to the theological position of the specific theologian and the context. There are 6 ECTS for this course (= 168 sbu): 36 hours for classes, 20 hours for preparing the exam, and 12 hours for preparing the presentation. This leaves 100 hours for literature study (calculating with 6 pages per hour, 600 pages in the preparation for the classes).

Method of Assessment

Written exam (70%)

Oral presentation (30%)

Students are expected to attend all classes, only with a minimum of 80% attendance the final exam can be made. The exam will have the

form of a written exam or - in case the course is offered completely online - of an exam at home that has to be finished within a fixed period. The exam will assess the student's ability to a) interpret and analyse theological texts correctly, b) compare different positions within Christian theology and to articulate their own position, and c) to explain the relevance of systematic theology for theology in general and for societal issues.

The presentation will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- analysis of the primary source (the theological text);
- structure and clarity of the argument (consistency of introduction, argument and conclusion);
- use of secondary literature;
- presentation skills;

The assessment of the presentation will include the student's ability to articulate her/his position, reflect on it and relate to the feedback of others.