



## Bachelor's courses Faculty of Social Sciences

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019



# Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy

<b>Course code</b>	S_CSPP ()
<b>Period</b>	Period 4
<b>Credits</b>	6.0
<b>Language of tuition</b>	English
<b>Faculty</b>	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
<b>Coordinator</b>	drs. B. Slijper
<b>Examinator</b>	drs. B. Slijper
<b>Teaching staff</b>	prof. dr. B.J.J. Crum, drs. B. Slijper, dr. P. Overeem, dr. E. van Roekel
<b>Teaching method(s)</b>	Lecture
<b>Level</b>	300

## Course objective

This course is part of the bachelor programs Sociology (leerlijn: Sociale Vraagstukken), Political Science, and Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology.

The course is designed to introduce students into the normative and ethical debates about contemporary challenges to society. The central idea of the course is that students in the social sciences should not only be able to analyze and research social issues and developments, but also be capable of critical reflection on the normative aspects, dilemmas, and positions in debates about these issues.

## Learning objectives

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

- (1) the types of ethical dilemma's that are part of current social, political, and cultural tensions and disputes, such as sociocultural diversity, issues of inequality, and democratic political participation;
- (2) the various approaches and theories addressing these normative questions and dilemma's.

Application. The student has acquired the competences to:

- (3) recognize the ethnical quandaries underlying the positions and proposals in and on societal problems and social, political, and cultural interests constituting them; and
- (4) apply normative theories to concrete contemporary contested issues.

Making judgements. The student is able to:

- (5) critically reflect upon the normative dimension of contemporary contested issues, in particular on cultural diversity, social inequality, and political participation.

Communication. The student has acquired the skills to:

- (6) write a short opinion piece on a contemporary contentious issue, addressing a non-academic audience.

## Course content

After an introduction to the foundational debates on the notion of 'justice' in normative theory (e.g universalism versus relativism, deontology versus consequentialism, monism versus value pluralism) we

concentrate on the following contemporary contested issues (both nationally and internationally):

(1) Cultural diversity and moral universalism: How to reconcile the claim of 'universal human rights' with the fact of cultural, ethnic and religious diversity?

(2) Social equality: What is a 'fair' and 'just' distribution of socio-economic goods?

(3) Democracy: What are the challenges of (neoliberal) globalization and populism to the idea of democracy?

### **Form of tuition**

Lectures.

### **Type of assessment**

Written assignment (op-ed piece) (30%) and final exam (open essay-questions) (70%).

### **Course reading**

To be announced in the course manual (see CANVAS).

### **Target group**

3rd year bachelor students in Sociology; 3rd year bachelor students in Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology; 3rd year bachelor students in Political Science.

Open as an elective course for Exchange students.