# Bachelor's Thesis

PPS

3 (BA)

2022-2023 Semester 2

*This course manual provides further details on the course description in the prospectus.*

| Course code | FTR-FIPPSB350-2 |
|---|---|
| Study load | 10 |
| Lecturers | Dr. Manja Kisner (Nature and Ecology) Pauline Chew, MA (Emotions and Well-being) Dr. Andreas Lammer (Islamic Philosophical Tradition) Dr. Anya Topolski (Decolonising Academic Knowledge Production) Tim Miechels, MA (course coordinator and secretary of the Bachelor's thesis committee) |
| E-mail | manja.kisner@ru.nl; pauline.chew@ru.nl; andreas.lammer@ru.nl; anya.topolski@ru.nl; tim.miechels@ru.nl; |
| Timetable | www.ru.nl/rooster |

Radboud Universiteit

- **General description of the course**

Each department assigns a lecturer who presents a theme that falls within the current practice of philosophy. Under the overarching theme of the group, you choose your own research question, which you work out in a series of steps. Please note that the thematic focus of each of the four groups is strictly maintained. This means that you, guided by supervisor of your group, will develop a question that fits within the theme of the group. In this way, groups of students are formed who work on their individual thesis, but also explore a specific philosophical theme together at the same time. Through intensive, interactive guidance during the semester, you will write your bachelor's thesis in several steps (development of the question, overview of the structure, first draft, final version). Peer feedback is an important part of this course. The quality of the peer feedback will be critically reflected on. The course will be taught in the form of a *practicum*, and students must attend 80% of the sessions. Failure to meet the attendance requirements will result in exclusion from further participation in the course.

- **Position and role in the curriculum**

The Bachelor's thesis is the aptitude test that concludes the Bachelor's programme. The student shows that they can conduct research under the supervision of a lecturer.

- **Learning objectives of the course and the relationship with the learning outcomes of the degree programme**

Once you have completed the course, you will be able to:
- formulate a problem statement;
- collect and process relevant literature;
- incorporate the collected material into a clearly structured argument;
- substantiate a choice or position with arguments;
- draw logical conclusions from an argument;
- write a paper that meets common requirements in terms of style, design, and references;
- provide feedback on the structure of fellow students' paper.

- **Literature**

All groups are expected to use the *Academic Skills guide*, which can be found on Brightspace. The other literature differs per group.

- **Interim assignments**

There are several interim assignments:
- research question;
- the overview of the structure;
- introduction;
- first, second, and third section;
- complete first draft.

Deadlines are agreed in consultation with the lecturer.

- **Testing and assessment**

The bachelor's thesis is assessed at the end of the semester during a session of the bachelor's thesis committee consisting of the four project group lecturers under the supervision of the programme coordinator. Assessment will be made based on the Rubric (see Appendix). The final thesis must be submitted by **June 20th, 2023, 9 a.m.** via Brightspace. The theses are then forwarded to the bachelor's thesis committee. In this committee, the papers are jointly assessed by all the lecturers involved in the various bachelor's theses. **Your supervisor will not be able to give you an estimate of your grade.** Only an unsatisfactory thesis can be resubmitted. A thesis that received a passing grade **cannot** be resubmitted. The deadline for resubmitting the thesis is **August 19th, 2023, 9 a.m.** The student can access the assessment via Brightspace. **Note:** the student is the sole person responsible for checking the assessment.

<u>Formal requirements and criteria</u>
Formal requirements are the requirements that must be met for the assessment to be recorded in OSIRIS. If a bachelor's thesis does not meet the formal requirements, the student must submit a formally correct version to have the grade recorded.

The Bachelor's thesis:
1. is typed in A4 format;
2. contains the following components:
    a. Title page with the following, correct information:
        i. Title
        ii. Name
        iii. Student number
        iv. Submission date
        v. Name of the first reader
        vi. The following statement: "Bachelor Thesis for the Bachelor programme Philosophy, Politics and Society at the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies at Radboud University, Nijmegen"
        vii. Total number of words
    b. The following statement should be included on the page after the title page: "Hereby, I, NN, declare and ensure that this bachelor thesis titled TITLE, has been entirely written by me, that I have not used any other sources or tools than mentioned here, and that the passages in this work of which the verbatim content or meaning – including from electronic media – has been taken, have been referred to." We trust that this statement reflects the truth.
    c. Table of contents
    d. An introduction presenting the problem statement, subject definition, explanation of the research question, and the research path or approach.
    e. A statement in which a reasoned argument is made, in which divergent points of view are discussed, and in which a position on the material is determined.
    f. A conclusion indicating the results of the study.
    g. Bibliography
3. uses a line spacing of at least 1.5;
4. has a minimum length of 5.000 words and a maximum length of 6.000 words. Including: title page, footnotes, table of contents and references. Excluding: bibliography;
5. has the following file name: [Last name] [First name] [V1 or V2] [Thesis title]. For example: Vermeer Joyce V1 Robots are just like people;
6. uses one of the two systems described in the Chicago Manual of Style (see appendix) consistently and correctly; refers to printed material if available;
7. is written in correct, English sentences;
8. is submitted as a .docx file;
9. has page numbers.

Criteria are the requirements to be met in order to be considered for a passing grade. These criteria are specified in the Rubric (see appendix).

The Bachelor's thesis:
1. has fellow students from another discipline within philosophy as its target group, i.e. students from a different Bachelor's thesis group;
2. has a clear structure: content and form are aligned with each other;
3. is the result of careful research in a defined area;
4. demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter of the philosophical study;
5. demonstrates the ability to take the various steps necessary for a philosophical study, specifically formulating a problem statement and research question, collecting and processing the relevant literature, substantiating a choice or point of view with arguments, and drawing conclusions;
6. demonstrates careful handling of consulted literature (in references and bibliography, in summaries, in the way in which the texts are placed in their relevant historical context).

These criteria are assessed based on the Rubric (Appendix 1).

- **Rubrics**

See the appendix for the rubrics.

- **Exam assessment**

The grades for the these will be posted on Brightspace by July 11th at the latest. If your thesis does not adhere to the formal requirements, you can come to the office hours of the coordinators of this course, on July 12th from 10 until 11. They can explain which formal requirements are insufficient. If you hand in a correct version by July 13th, 09.00, than your result will be registered in OSIRIS. If you hand in a formally correct version after July 13th, we will check this version at the date of the resit in August.

- **Study load**

The bachelor's thesis consists of 10 EC, or 280 hours. There are 18 weeks from the start of the lecture until the submission date. This means that you spend an average of 15.5 hours per week on your bachelor's thesis.

| Component | Time spent (in hours) |
|---|---|
| Contact hours | 24 |
| Finding a theme | 10 |
| Collecting literature | 30 |
| Formulating the research question | 15 |
| Literature study | 40 |
| Overview of the structure + introduction | 20 |
| First draft of the thesis | 55 |
| Final draft of the thesis | 45 |
| Providing feedback | 41 |
| **Total** | **280** |

- **Work method/schedule**

The way the meetings are structured will be discussed during the first meeting. The schedule for the semester will also be discussed during the first meeting.

- **Reflection**

This course is evaluated positively by students and will therefore carry on along the lines of previous years.

- **Additional supervision**

Radboud Writing Lab

As a student, you can also use the services of the Radboud Writing Lab free of charge. Whether you're writing an essay, a paper or a master's thesis, the Radboud Writing Lab (RWL) can give you writing advice and constructive feedback. Our specially trained tutors are happy to help. You can contact them to discuss various aspects of the writing process, from structure and syntax to defining your theme and establishing the right tone.

The RWL offers:
- free and accessible coaching for all students;
- one-on-one tutoring sessions;
- targeted writing skills sessions;
- the ability to focus on your own text.

Make an appointment online via www.ru.nl/writinglab/ .
The RWL also organises workshops. If you're interested, check our website for topics and dates or like us on Facebook to receive updates about useful writing tips.

Student Support

Student support organizes a lot of courses, trainings and workshops. Some activities are specifically aimed at writing your thesis, but there are also activities about personal development or time management. There is also mental support if you are suffering from (the consequences of) corona (measures). For more information, visit the website: https://www.ru.nl/currentstudents/during-your-studies/overview-counsellors-advisors/student-support/

<u>Student advisor</u>

Please do not hesitate to contact the student advisor with questions regarding:

- general information on educational matters and requirements
- advice in choosing your study and/or change of study
- composition of your study programme

- support for the planning of your study

- identifying and helping to solve (personal) problems that might affect your study
- contribution to solving complaints from students
- advice in the event of a study delay
- mediation between student and teacher
- information about job opportunities

If necessary, the student advisor can redirect you to other people or parties (e.g. teachers, international office, student dean, etc.). For more information, visit the website:
https://www.ru.nl/courseguides/fftr/contact/student-advisors/

<u>Information- and collection specialist Daan Keij (UB)</u>
You can contact Daan Keij (daan.keij@ru.nl) for any questions about literature. Some examples:
- A certain source is not available in the UB
- You have found too much or not enough literature on a certain topic
- You are having trouble with reference and want to use Zotero

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**For reference**

*Plagiarism monitoring*
All texts submitted as part of a course are checked for plagiarism by the lecturers using Urkund.

*Course evaluation*
At the end of the course, the course will be evaluated. On the basis of the completed evaluation forms, the course is evaluated by the lecturer in particular and the faculty in general. The students receive feedback from the lecturer on the evaluation forms via Brightspace.

## Appendix 1 Rubric

| Grade | Excellent (10) | Good (8) | Satisfactory (6) | Insufficient (4) | Very insufficient 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Structure of the thesis 30%** | *The introduction:*<br>- introduces the subject in an appealing way;<br>- contains a clear research question;<br>- describes the structure of the text;<br>- clearly indicates the relevance of the research question.<br><br>*The middle section:*<br>- has a clear argumentative structure linking the research question and conclusion.<br><br>*The conclusion:*<br>- summarises the middle section;<br>- clearly answers the research question.<br><br>*Sections*<br>- adequately divided into sections with relevant headings;<br>- clear introduction and conclusion of each section.<br><br>*Paragraphs*<br>- one idea per paragraph;<br>- each paragraph has a core sentence;<br>- connecting sentences between paragraphs;<br>- systematic use of signal words. | *The introduction:*<br>- introduces the subject;<br>- contains a clear research question;<br>- describes the structure of the text;<br>- indicates the relevance of the research question.<br><br>*The middle section:*<br>- has an argumentative structure linking the research question and conclusion.<br><br>*The conclusion:*<br>- clearly answers the research question.<br><br>*Sections*<br>- adequately divided into sections with relevant headings;<br>- introductory sentences at the beginning of the sections.<br><br>*Paragraphs*<br>- one idea per paragraph;<br>- most paragraphs have a key sentence;<br>- regular use of connecting sentences and signal words. | *The introduction:*<br>- introduces the subject;<br>- contains a clear research question;<br>- indicates the relevance of the research question.<br><br>*The middle section:*<br>- has no clear argumentative structure.<br><br>*The conclusion:*<br>- answers the research question.<br><br>*Sections*<br>- adequately divided into sections with headings.<br><br>*Paragraphs*<br>- one idea per paragraph;<br>- most paragraphs have a key sentence;<br>- sufficient use of connecting sentences and signal words. | *The introduction:*<br>- does not contain a clear research question;<br>- does not clearly indicate the relevance of the research question.<br><br>*The middle section:*<br>- has little structure.<br><br>*The conclusion:*<br>- does not clearly answer the research question;<br>- does not entirely summarise the middle section.<br><br>*Sections*<br>- sections do not have headings;<br>- not adequately divided.<br><br>*Paragraphs*<br>- multiple ideas in each paragraph;<br>- usually no key sentence;<br>- occasional use of connecting sentences and signal words. | *The introduction:*<br>- does not contain a research question;<br>- does not indicate the relevance of the research question.<br><br>*The middle section:*<br>- has no structure.<br><br>*The conclusion:*<br>- does not answer the research question;<br>- does not summarise the middle section.<br><br>*Sections*<br>- there are no sections.<br><br>*Paragraphs*<br>- there are no or poorly structured paragraphs;<br>- connecting sentences and signal words are not used. |
| **Contents and argumentation 30%** | - the views of the authors discussed are presented correctly and adequately (nothing is presented excessively nor insufficiently);<br>- no contradictions;<br>- terms are always used consistently;<br>- terms are explained clearly and precisely;<br>- each step of the reasoning is provided with good and convincing argumentation;<br>- relevant research literature has been selected independently and is linked to the problem definition in a content-based, in-depth manner. | - the views of the authors discussed are presented correctly and adequately;<br>- a single contradiction;<br>- terms are used consistently;<br>- the inconsistencies do not lead to confusion;<br>- terms are explained clearly;<br>- most steps of the reasoning contain good argumentation;<br>- the relevant information from the literature has been selected and incorporated into an argument. | - the views of the authors discussed are presented somewhat correctly and adequately;<br>- few contradictions;<br>- terms are mostly used consistently;<br>- the inconsistencies sometimes lead to confusion;<br>- terms are mostly explained clearly;<br>- most steps of the reasoning contain argumentation;<br>- relevant literature is summarised adequately;<br>- literature is used to answer the problem definition. | - the views of the authors discussed are not presented correctly or adequately;<br>- some contradictions;<br>- terms are not used clearly or consistently;<br>- terms are unclear;<br>- there is far too little argumentation for the steps of the reasoning;<br>- literature is not sufficiently used;<br>- the information from the literature is not entirely represented correctly or adequately. | - the views of the authors discussed are presented *incorrectly* and *inadequately;*<br>- many contradictions;<br>- terms are not used consistently;<br>- terms are not defined;<br>- the steps of the reasoning do not contain argumentation;<br>- hardly any secondary literature is used;<br>- the information is not displayed correctly or adequately. |
| **Distance and personal voice 20%** | - there is a critical distance from the authors discussed;<br>- the author has a clearly discernible voice of their own. | - there is a distance from the authors discussed;<br>- the author has a distinctive voice of their own. | - there is some distance;<br>- the author has a distinctive voice of their own. | - there is sufficient distance;<br>- the author has a barely discernible voice of their own. | - there is no distance;<br>- the author has no discernible voice of their own. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **20%** **Style** | - clear, well-formulated sentences;<br>- sentences always have a compact structure;<br>- appropriate style for the target group;<br>- quotes are embedded properly in the text;<br>- good use of secondary literature. | - sentences are almost always well formulated;<br>- sentences almost always have a compact structure;<br>- appropriate style for the target group;<br>- quotes are fairly well embedded;<br>- good use of secondary literature. | - sentences are sometimes vaguely formulated;<br>- sentences sometimes do not have compact structure;<br>- reasonably appropriate style for the target group;<br>- quotes are sufficiently embedded;<br>- sufficient use of secondary literature. | - sentences are often vaguely formulated;<br>- sentences often do not have compact structure;<br>- inappropriate style for the target group;<br>- quotes are insufficiently embedded;<br>- limited use of secondary literature. | - sentences are usually vaguely formulated;<br>- sentences usually do not have compact structure;<br>- inappropriate style for the target group;<br>- quotes are not embedded;<br>- no use of secondary literature. |