

# **Prospectus**

## **MSc Philosophy, Politics and Economics**

**2023-2024**

Faculty of Philosophy  
Oude Boteringestraat 52  
9712 GL Groningen  
phone +31 (0)50 363 6161  
fax +31 (0)50 363 6160  
[www.rug.nl/filosofie/](http://www.rug.nl/filosofie/)

Opening hours for *students*

Monday to Friday 08.30 - 17.30.

Opening hours for *staff*

Monday to Friday 08.00 - 22.30.

Saturday and Sunday 09.00 - 17.00.

Course schedules

The course schedules can be found at [roosters.rug.nl](http://roosters.rug.nl).

# Prospectus MSc Philosophy, Politics and Economics 2023-2024

## **1 Practical information**

All practical information on the academic year, course enrolment, schedules, tuition fees, housing etc. is available in the Study Guide of Philosophy 2023-2024 and on the Student Portal at <https://student.portal.rug.nl/infonet/studenten/>. For international students there's the Handbook for international students which is available on the Student Portal.

The Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) and other information for students can be found on the Study Info tab in the Student Portal under Student Regulations.

## **2 Aims and objectives of the Philosophy Politics and Economics programme**

The world today faces many complex problems and challenges. These challenges can be met most effectively by collaborative efforts within an interdisciplinary approach. Philosophical, political and economic dimensions of today's problems are fundamentally interconnected and must be studied in a unified way.

The goal of the programme is to impart to students the knowledge, insight, and skills in the field of PPE that will thoroughly prepare them for careers in organizations as diverse as national or international public administrations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, private businesses and banks, think tanks and research institutions. The programme equips students with the necessary attitudes, insights and skills to allow them to combine the knowledge and understanding from Philosophy, Politics and Economics with a creative and solution-focused approach to complex problems. Students will learn to review the political and economic complexities of organizational structures and theories on concepts like democracy, political power, collective decision-making, social deliberation and economic growth. In the PPE programme, critical reflection and applicability go hand in hand.

### *Learning outcomes*

The general vision and objectives described above generate a number of qualifications that have to be attained by the graduates of the programme (see appendix 1). The learning outcomes of the programme are presented within the framework of the Dublin descriptors. The learning outcomes are in line with international standards and comparable to the learning outcomes of other PPE Master's degree programmes.

### *Knowledge and understanding*

This first set of learning outcomes focuses on the students' acquisition of advanced knowledge and understanding of key concepts, theories, conceptual and formal methods of the field of PPE, as well as their history. This knowledge and understanding builds upon, extends and enhances a level of knowledge typically associated with a Bachelor's degree programme. Students have reached a level that provides a basis for originality in developing and applying ideas within a research context.

### *Applying knowledge and understanding*

The second set of learning outcomes focuses on providing students with the skills needed to apply their knowledge and understanding. Students use insights from PPE to analyze, for example, conceptual and normative assumptions of arguments, to probe political legitimacy and power in decision-making and to assess how to implement policies efficiently and equitably.

### *Communication*

Graduates are able to clearly communicate results, as well as the background knowledge and insights that have produced these results, to both specialist and non-specialist audiences. They are able to report on research in an academically standard way both orally and in writing and present opinions clearly to an audience of both colleagues and non-specialists. Graduates possess strong oral and written skills in English.

### *Learning skills*

Graduates have acquired learning skills that allow them to further develop themselves in an autonomous and self-directed fashion. They have the ability to perform in the labor market, to conduct work of high academic quality within the appropriate work environment and to function in a group in a subject-related work environment. They are able to independently integrate new knowledge and understanding from the field of PPE into existing expertise in the context of continuous learning. Moreover, they have the ability to plan and implement activities independently, to learn effectively, to organize the time available and to keep deadlines.

### *Attitudes*

Graduates have developed a critical, independent, creative, pro-active and resourceful attitude and will approach research with scientific and methodological rigour. Graduates are able to work together in multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural settings and are able to work with deadlines and with feedback. Graduates have developed an academic attitude that demonstrates academic integrity.

## The PPE Programme

The one-year Master consists of nine modules of 5 ECTS each and a 15 ECTS Master's (thesis course and) thesis. Three of these nine modules constitute the academic core of the programme: History of PPE, Theories of PPE, and Methods of PPE and the two PPE Policy Seminars. Four electives and the Master's thesis complete the programme.

	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</i>
<i>Academic core</i>	Theories of PPE (5 ECTS)	Methods of PPE (5 ECTS)		
<i>PPE Seminars</i>	History of PPE (5 ECTS)	PPE Policy Seminar 1 (5 ECTS)	PPE Policy Seminar 2 (5 ECTS)	
<i>Electives</i>	Elective 1 (5 ECTS)	Elective 2 (5 ECTS)	Elective 3 (5 ECTS) Elective 4 (5 ECTS)	
<i>Thesis</i>			MA thesis course and thesis (15 ECTS)	

### *Core Modules*

In the module **History of PPE** students learn to understand and critically reflect on the main historical traditions relevant to PPE. This course provides an in-depth reading of some key texts from the 'long' history of PPE. We will look at some highly influential thinkers who have shaped current ideas and debates. Themes include Aristotle's ideas on political naturalism, Machiavelli on forms of government and 'Realpolitik', Hobbes' political philosophy and Hume's critique, Adam Smith's groundbreaking work on economics, Marx and Marxism, Ricardo's and Mill's ideas on capital and labor, and Keynes and Von Hayek on macro-economics and "social engineering". In this way we hope to deepen our understanding of some key debates in the 19th and 20th centuries about politics and governance, economic growth, structural and social change, capital and labor, uncertainty and private property, the state and democracy.

In the **Theories of PPE** module students learn to develop an interdisciplinary perspective on liberal democracy and learn to be able to apply these to contemporary problems using insights from economics, political science and philosophy. Liberal democracies are characterized by political institutions such as the state, citizenship and elections and by economic institutions including property, money and the market. This course examines what institutions are as well as how they should be structured in order to secure liberal values such as equality, freedom and autonomy. To this end, it employs insights from philosophy, political science and economics.

In the **Methods of PPE** module students gain insight in a number of key methods in PPE research and are able to critically assess these methods and apply them judiciously in a variety of domains of application. The course places a number of important research tools into the PPE context: decision theory, statistics, causal analysis, social

choice theory, impact analysis and causal modeling. The course focuses on evidence-based policy making, and thereby on various aspects of individual and collective decision making, and on epistemic considerations about the social sciences that inform policy.

### *Policy Seminars*

The aim of these modules is to give students the opportunity to apply PPE methods and theories to concrete policy issues, deepening their understanding of the tools from decision theory, game theory, social choice and public choice theory to design models of particular policy issues, as they will collect, combine and analyze background data as well as retrieve and interpret relevant social scientific research using, among other things, methods from behavioral economics and political science that they have encountered in the other modules. In addition, students will study policy issues in terms of rationality, utility, efficiency, fairness, productivity, collective action, etc.

The **first PPE Seminar** focusses on the role of beliefs and other cognitive attitudes of citizens, consumers, organizations, etc. This may include research in economics on 'motivated belief', testimonial injustice, epistemic virtues, etc. Applications will partly be decided on the basis of events that make headlines during the course of the module. The **second PPE Seminar** focusses on two policy issues in depth, namely economic inequality and democracy. The aim is to understand relevant social and economic phenomena empirically, apply the normative and conceptual tools learned in previous classes and to discuss policy proposals aimed at tackling inequality or improving democratic institutions. In the final third, students present policy reports on related policy issues.

### *Electives*

The electives provide students with the opportunity to explore PPE topics of their choice. Students can choose courses from a list of electives especially designed for the PPE programme, in which philosophical, political and economic perspectives are combined. They enable the students to deepen and/or broaden their knowledge of particular multidisciplinary PPE topics and areas of their interest. Students can also choose disciplinary electives from a predetermined list of master courses offered by the participating faculties or select their own electives, in consultation with the programme coordinator (Andreas Schmidt) and the study advisor (Janine Weeting). These can be courses on philosophy, political theory or economics or other courses relevant to PPE. For some courses outside the Faculty of Philosophy department there can be specific entry requirements. Please check before enrolling if you meet these requirements.

Overview core modules and electives

Quarter	Course code	<b>PPE Core modules</b>	ECTS
1	FI174PPEH	History of PPE	5
1	FI184PPET	Theories of PPE	5
2	FI174PPEM	Methods of PPE	5
2	FI174SEMP1	PPE Policy Seminar 1	5
3	FI174SEMP2	PPE Policy Seminar 2	5
4	FI174S15	Master's thesis course (FI194TH2) and thesis	5

Quarter	Course code	<b>Electives</b>	Offered by	ECTS
1	EBM043A05	Business Ethics	EC	5
1	EBM200A05	Financial Management for Multinationals	EC	5
1	FI234HR	Hegel's Philosophy of Right	FI	5
1	EBM085A05	Emerging Markets (MSc)	EC	5
1	PSMSB-2	Environmental psychology	PS	5
1	EBM096A05	International Banking and Finance	EC	5
1	THM-RCGI5	Religion, Conflict and Globalisation	TH	5
1	SOMASN02	Theories of networks and sustainable cooperation	SOC	5
1-2,3-4	FI19PPEIR	Research Seminars International Relations	IR	10
2	FI194TS	Marx and contemporary political philosophy	FI	5
2	FI224CC	Philosophy of Climate Change	FI	5
2	GMCSIB15	Cultural Psychology	PS	5
2	THM-GDLC5	Global Dynamics	TH	5
2	EBM150A05	Global Finance and Growth	EC	5
2	EBM195A05	Health Economics and Policy	EC	5
2	EBM678A05	Personnel Economics	EC	5
2	PSMAB-7	Power and Leadership	PS	5
2	EBM164B05	Theory of Monetary Policy	EC	5
2	EBM097A05	Trade, Environment and Growth	EC	5
2	EBM101B05	World Economy in Historical Perspective	EC	5
2	EBM198A05	International Financial Institutions and Governance	EC	5
2	SOMASN07	Network Methods for Policy Research	SOC	5
2	EBM069B05	Inclusive Finance	EC	5
2	THM-GRSN5	Gender, Religion and Sexual Nationalism	TH	5
3	EBM167A05	Energy Transition & Innovation	EC	5
3	PAMAY107	Participation and Policy	PS	5
3	FI224FE	Feminist Epistemology	FI	5
3	EBM083A05	Comparative Corporate Governance	EC	5
3	FI184AS	Consequentialism	FI	5
3	EBM093A05	Country Studies	EC	5
3	EBM094A05	Economic Geography	EC	5
3	FI234PE	Introduction to Political Economy	FI	5
3	FI234SC	Social Contract theory	FI	5
3	FI204JL	Fallacies	FI	5

3	EBM194A05	Fin. & Econ. Org. of Healthcare Markets	EC	5
3	EBM107B05	Monetary Policy, Strategy and Operations	EC	5
4	EBM148B05	Regulating Energy Markets	EC	5
4	EBM149B05	Sustainability in Global Value Chains	EC	5
4	FI234MR	Human Rights and Minority Rights	FI	5
4	FI214SE	Social Epistemology of Science	FI	5
4	EBM806C05	Behavioral Finance	EC	5
4	FI234LA	Latin American Philosophy	FI	5

Electives are offered by: the PPE programme, the Master programs of Philosophy (FI), of Economics and Business (EC), of Psychology (PS), Sociology (SOC), Spatial Sciences (SS), Theology and Religious Studies (TH) and International relations (IR). This list of electives is not comprehensive. Students may also choose other electives.

Detailed information on the course units can be found in the online course catalogue OCASYS: <https://ocasys.rug.nl/2023-2024/catalog/programme/69321>.

#### *Registering for courses*

Progress WWW is the official internet application for enrolment for courses and exams and for the registration of study results. You find ProgressWWW by going to <https://progresswww.nl/rug/>, or by logging in to My University. You use your student number and password to log in to Progress WWW.

This is how you register for modules in ProgressWWW:

- If necessary, click 'Switch to English Language'
- Log in with your student number and password
- Click 'enrolling' at the top
- Select the faculty on the left
- Click on the right phase: Master
- Now a list of available courses appears
- Check the box of the courses you want to take and click on 'enroll'.

**Please register for the course well before the start of the course.** The periods during which students can register are set annually by the Faculty. In principle, fulltime students can register for up to 40 ECTS per semester. If you want to register for a course in the first quarter and you are not yet able to do so, or if you have other questions concerning course registration, please contact the study advisor, Janine Weeting at [fil-study-advisor@rug.nl](mailto:fil-study-advisor@rug.nl).

To de-register for a course, you check the box of a module in your course overview on the right side of the screen and click 'deregister'. Your enrolment/deregistration will be confirmed by e-mail to your student e-mail account.

If you have any difficulties enrolling for one or more courses, please contact the study advisor, Janine Weeting at [fil-study-advisor@rug.nl](mailto:fil-study-advisor@rug.nl).



### *Research Orientation*

Over the course of quarters 1 to 3, students attend a minimum of two research talks (lectures/ other activities/ ESPF colloquia) organised by the Centre for PPE in Groningen, so as to get an impression of how cutting-edge PPE research can be conducted, presented, and discussed. A list of the (at least) two research talks attended is to be submitted at the start of the Master thesis course (see below), where students will reflect on possible research topics for their PPE thesis.

In exceptional circumstances when a student cannot attend any of the research talks organised by the Centre for PPE in Groningen, students can substitute those lectures with alternative PPE-related lectures elsewhere in person or online, in which case they submit the list with those alternatives and short descriptions of the content of these lectures (together not more than one page).

### *Master's thesis course and thesis*

The Master's thesis course and thesis are compulsory and conclude the Master's degree programme. In the Master's thesis, students demonstrate their ability to carry out research independently in the field of PPE and to produce a written report on their research. They show that they possess sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills in the field of PPE to take part in an academic discussion and make a contribution to the discipline. Students show they are able to formulate and delimit a problem and that they can gather, study, evaluate and structure relevant material as well as choose and substantiate a suitable research method and formulate a clear and systematic argument. Students demonstrate their ability to draw conclusions from their own research; to apply bibliographical skills and to communicate orally as well as in writing on the various aspects of the thesis.

The thesis course is offered in both Semester I and Semester II. Please note that each edition of the thesis course will be prepared in an obligatory meeting that takes place about two weeks after the start of the semester. In order not to miss any announcement about this meeting, it is important to timely enroll for the Master's thesis course.

The student takes the initiative with regard to the Master's thesis by seeking contact with a lecturer as the prospective first supervisor. This can be a PPE lecturer in the Philosophy Faculty or a lecturer from one of the participating faculties (Philosophy, Business and Economics, Behavioral Sciences, etc.). In case the student chooses a non-PPE first supervisor outside the Philosophy Faculty, they should contact the programme coordinator (Andreas Schmidt) before starting the thesis. The student, in consultation with the supervisor will ask an additional assessor to be assigned. In case of a non-PPE first supervisor, the additional assessor will act as a second supervisor. The student submits a thesis proposal (setting out the subject, approach and sources) to the supervisor(s) for approval. Once the proposal has been approved by the supervisor, the student and supervisor draw up a supervision plan. Once the thesis has

been approved by the supervisor, the additional assessor assesses the thesis and grades it as either 'Acceptable' or 'Unacceptable'. When the additional assessor has given his or her approval, the examination can be requested and the thesis discussion (between the student and both the supervisor and additional assessor) can be organized. The strict deadline for submitting the thesis is at the end of the fourth quarter. Students are advised to start early in thinking about a thesis topic and approaching supervisors, particularly if they would like to work with a supervisor from a faculty other than Philosophy.

A detailed description of the Master's thesis regulations and procedures can be found in the Master's Thesis Protocol, available on the Study Info tab on the Student Portal: <http://student.portal.rug.nl/infonet/studenten/>.

#### *Focus Area Sustainable Society*

As of 2022-2023, the PPE Master's programme offers students the possibility of specialisation in the so-called "Focus Area Sustainable Society". PPE-Students receive an annotation "Focus Area Sustainable Society" on their diploma supplement, if they have met the following requirements:

- Successful completion of at least two electives related to sustainable society;
- They write their Master's thesis on a topic related to this focus area;
- Students have to proactively get in touch with the PPE programme coordinator with a list of their relevant electives and the title and abstract of their thesis. The decision about suitable electives and thesis topics lies with the programme coordinator, on behalf of the Board of Examiners of the Faculty.