窗体顶端

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**Trust and trustworthiness in modern society: an introduction from a Western Perspective**

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本科生    硕士生    博士生

Undergraduate    Master    Doctoral student

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English

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none

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Lectures, analysis of texts, class discussion, discussion and assignments in small groups

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Presentation in small groups (30%), Final paper (70%)  
A final paper ca. of ca. 3500 (excluding title + reference), language: English

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2 credits

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Curriculum Vitae  
Franck L. B. Meijboom studied theology and ethics at the Universities of Utrecht (NL) and Aberdeen (UK). As assistant professor he is affiliated to the Ethics Institute of Utrecht University (faculty of Humanities) and to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Utrecht University.   
His fields of interest are in agricultural and food ethics, ethics of animal use, ethics of biotechnology, and the role of public trust and debate in modern society. As a researcher and project leader, he has been involved in national and European funded research concerning topics such as the philosophical questions of trust and trustworthiness, the use of biotechnology, foundations for prevention and control of animal diseases, and ethical aspects of sustainable animal stewardship.  
Additionally, he is General Secretary of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe), Member of the Council on Animal Affairs (official advisory body to the Netherlands ministry of Agriculture), chair a number of ethics committees, Editor of the JournalsFood Ethics (Springer) and Agriculture and Human Values (Springer).

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Trust and trustworthiness in modern society: an introduction from a Western Perspective  
  
“You enter a food shop and buy some food.   
You apply for a driver’slicense at the government.   
You go to the bank for a cash withdrawal.  
You switch on your computer and connect to the internet”  
These are just four examples of activities from daily live that are hardly possible without some form of trust. Because of the complexity of our modern society, we cannot fully control or have full knowledge of the complete background of many activities.Consequently, we have to rely on many others, both individuals and institutions. The question is whether this is a problem.From philosophy and social sciences this question has been discussed and analyzed (e.g., Baier, Hardin, O’Neill). Some argue trust is an essential element for each society and an increased need of trust in modern society is no problem. Others argue that trust makes a society or individuals vulnerable and therefore should be addressed with suspicion. They argue that organized distrust is the best way to keep a society or institution running. This course aims to introduce the debate on trust and trustworthiness in four steps. First, the concept of trust is analyzed in order to have clarity on the central theme of the course. Second, the problem of trust is analyzed. Is there a real increase of the need to trust, is there a lack of trust and if so, is that to be considered as a problem? Third, a number of accounts to address the problems of trust are discussed, such as risk assessment, improved communication and transparency. Fourth, it will be argued that a promising way to deal with the question of trust is to start the analysis in the concept of trustworthiness. Finally, the course will apply the theoretical analyses to three field in which (problems of) trust play an important role: food production, (bio)technology and science.

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Part I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION: trust in modern society  
Session 1: Introduction to the problem of trust in modern society  
Session 2: Conceptual analysis of trust  
Session 3a: Trust as a philosophical notion: the position of trust in the history of philosophy  
Session 3b: Trust as a philosophical notion: the recognition of the individual agent  
Part II. THREE WAYS TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF TRUST  
These four sessions aim to answer the question how problems of trust can be addressed. Two general approaches are analyzed (risk and information). Next a third proposal is presented and discussed.   
Session 4: Trust and risk management  
Session 5: Why providing more information is not enough for building trust  
Session 6: From trust to trustworthiness: a matter of competence and motivation  
Session 7: Problems of trustworthiness on an institutional level  
Part III. BUILDING TRUST AND MORAL PLURALITY  
Session 8: Introduction to moral and ethical pluralism in the context of trust  
Session 9: Accommodation, compromises and dealing with plurality  
Session 10: Trust, trustworthiness and the importance of integrity  
Part IV. TRUST AND TRUSTWORTHINESS IN PRACTICE  
In these four sessions, the theoretical analyses will be explicitly discussed in the context of three practices in which (problems of) trust play an important role: food production, (bio)technology and science.       
Session 11: Food production  
Session 12: Biotechnology  
Session 13: Science   
Session 14: Closing session  
All sessions will require active input from students. This input can have different forms (a) presentation of the literature or additional literature, (b) presentation of case studies that link theory to practice and (c) formulating statements for class discussion.

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Central Books are:  
• Hardin, R., 2006, Trust, Cambridge: Polity Press  
• Meijboom, F.L.B., 2008, Problems of trust: A question of trustworthiness. An ethical inquiry of trust  and trustworthiness in the context of the agricultural and food sector. Utrecht University. (as pfd. available)  
• O’Neill, O., 2002, A Question of Trust, BBC Reith lectures, Cambridge: Cambridge  University Press

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In the course we aim to work with a reader with texts that will be made available electronically in advance. The reader will include texts such as:  
  
• Baier, A.C., 1994a [1986], ‘Trust and antitrust’, in: A.C. Baier, Moral Prejudices, essays on  ethics, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 95-129  
• Hardin, R., 2006, Trust, Cambridge: Polity Press  
• Hollis, M. 1998. Trust Within Reason. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press  
• Holton, R., 1994, ‘Deciding to trust, coming to believe’, Australian Journal of Philosophy, 72, pp. 63-76  
• Hume, D. 1737.A Treatise of Human Nature. Edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975 [1737].  
• Lahno, B., 2001, ‘On the emotional character of trust’, Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, 4, pp. 171-189  
• Lagerspetz, O. (1998). Trust: The Tacit Demand, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.  
• Luhmann, N. (1988). ‘Familiarity, confidence, trust: problems and alternatives’, in: Gambetta, D. (ed.), Trust: Making and breaking cooperative relations, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 94-107.  
• O’Neill, O., 2002, A Question of Trust, BBC Reith lectures, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press  
• Ruscio, K.P., 1999, ‘Jay’s Pirouette, Or Why Political Trust Is Not The Same As Personal  Trust’, Administration & Society, 31/5, 639-657

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