



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2024

### 8,743: Verantwortung/Responsibility: Economics and Ethics

ECTS credits: 3

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (50%)

Examination time: Term time

central - Digital written examination, Digital, Individual work individual grade (50%, 90 mins.)

Examination time: Lecture-free period

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,743,1.00 Verantwortung/Responsibility: Economics and Ethics](#) -- English -- [Kolmar Martin](#)

#### Course information

#### Course prerequisites

None

#### Learning objectives

- Understanding and critically reflecting the value judgments and normative principles underlying mainstream economics, business administration, law and economics, and political science in the rational-choice tradition.
- Understanding and critically reflecting alternative ethical as well as methodological views.
- Understanding the relationship between theories and our perception of a "good" society or economy by means of case studies (digitalization and AI, climate crisis, globalization, ...).

#### Course content

Mainstream economics, business administration, law and economics, as well as political theories in the rational-choice tradition are built on epistemic as well as normative principles that are often not sufficiently reflected in standard courses. Given that most of the courses taught, especially in the economics programs, follow the same scientific paradigm, it makes sense to understand and critically reflect these principles in a separate course that allows the students to better understand the implicit and explicit normativity of the mainstream "take" on the social sciences. The main topics of the course are outlined below. The philosophical material will be introduced with a focus on economic theories, and specific emphasis will be given to case studies that illustrate the implications of a deeper reflection of normativity on our view of society. The course gives also room for ideas and specific interests of the participating students.

**1. Expounding the roadmap: normativity and ethics, teleology, deontology, and virtue ethics, and what all this has to do with economics.**

**2. A short reminder of Homo Oeconomicus in positive and normative economics: preferences, utility, the revealed-preference approach, and the legacy of behaviorism and positivism.**

2.1 Beyond revealed preference: The role of different anthropologies for our view on the relationship between the individual and society.

2.2 More of the same? Quantitative growth, autonomy, and the role of assumptions about preferences.

2.3 Lessons for the good life and the role of economic institutions.

**3. Normativity more generally: positive versus normative economics, Hume's is-ought-problem, and Moore's naturalistic fallacy.**



- 3.1 Critical rationalism and the problem of deduction.
- 3.2 Putnam's critique of mainstream economics.
- 3.3 Spheres of normativity.
- 3.4 Why does epistemology matter? The normative consequences of epistemic assumptions.

#### 4. What are consequences at first place?

- 4.1 A short reminder of Bayesianism and choice under uncertainty
- 4.2 The epistemic critique of consequentialism.
- 4.3 Transformative experience: what is it like to be a bat?

#### 5. Beyond anthropocentrism

- 5.1 "The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?" Should we take animals and other life-forms into consideration? And if so, on which grounds?
- 5.2 Deep Ecology: the ethical status of ecosystems.

#### 6. Coming back to the mainstream: what have we learned?

## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course will take place on a weekly basis. We will alternate between the discussion of key concepts and theories and the discussion of more specific topics in the form of term papers and presentations. The idea is to have a relatively open format that allows for open discussions and creativity.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

## Course literature

The mandatory reading list will be available on StudyNet by January 15, 2024.

## Additional course information

Martin Kolmar is Professor of Economics at the University of St. Gallen and Director of the Institute for Business Ethics. He is interested in normative economics and the relationship between decision making, perception, and well-being.

## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/2)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	50%
Duration	--



## Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

## Remark

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## Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

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## 2. Examination sub part (2/2)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Digital written examination
Responsible for organisation	central
Examination form	Written exam
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Lecture-free period
Examination execution	Synchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	50%
Duration	90 mins.

### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

### Remark

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### Examination-aid rule

Open Book

Students are free to choose aids, apart from the following restrictions:

- pocket calculator models which are not part of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series, as well as any programmable electronic devices that are capable of communication such as electronic dictionaries, notebooks, tablets, smartphones, headsets, additional screens, etc. are not admissible;
- there is an option for faculty members to explicitly define exceptions under supplementary aids.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

### Supplementary aids

The examination will be conducted as a digital examination with the following admissible media:

- **Private notebook** (compulsory) – no tablets!
- **Mains adapter** (compulsory)



- External computer mouse (optional)
- External computer keyboard (optional)

We would like to point out explicitly that the examination cannot be taken with tablets/iPads.

You will need the following for the examination:

- Appliance and system requirements: [cf. StudentWeb](#)
- Special software: [LockDown Browser](#)
- HSG log-in including access modalities
- WLAN – operational access to Eduroam

Please make sure that

- all the updates have been carried out before the examination.
- In the run-up to digitally conducted examinations, technical tests (mock examinations without grades) are carried out. Participation is urgently required!
- You yourself are responsible for the perfect working order of your appliance, [cf. also StudentWeb](#).
- Keyboard stickers in the language in which the examination is conducted (such as English, German, as well as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, etc. in language examinations) are permitted. The stickers must be identical with the original characters of the language concerned.

Any use of additional appliances that are not listed above will be strictly prohibited throughout the examination.

Any necessary actions with another software or additional appliances require the express prior approval of the persons in charge of the examination and are only permitted under supervision.

Any infringement of these rules of conduct may be sanctioned as an infringement of the rules of the University.

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## Examination content

The final grade consists of a **centralized exam (50%)** and a **group presentation plus term paper (45 minutes, 50%)**.

The oral presentation plus term paper can be negotiated individually, but I will provide a list of potential topics and basic literature. Presentations take place during the second half of the semester.

## Examination relevant literature

The mandatory reading list will be available on Studynet by January 15, 2024.



## Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 25 January 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 18 March 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2024);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: Starting with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 08 April 2024).