GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

German Debates (A006653)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)	Dutch, German	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Martens, Gunther	LW07	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Linguistics and Literature)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Spanish)	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

German, Dutch

Keywords

cultural-historical backgrounds to topical issues in German-speaking countries, advanced history and culture of German-speaking countries, German-speaking media, German-speaking countries from a comparative and intercultural perspective

Position of the course

The aim of this course is to help students acquire thorough insights into the topical issues, culture and history of the German-speaking countries from a comparative and intercultural point of view; this will provide background insights for the language and literature courses in the Master in Linguistics and Literature: German.

Contents

Topical issues and topics from the culture and history of the German-speaking countries are studied in-depth from a comparative and intercultural point of view. Special attention is given to "Erinnerungsorte", a dynamic form of memory that allows for a better understanding of current debates and aspects of contemporary culture in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland in a broader sense (media, geography, political structures, social debates, etc.). Topics such as politics, religion, visual arts, music, and architecture are also covered.
In this course, heuristic and interpretive skills are practiced, as students are expected to pay attention to the representation of historical events based on source research and connect them with transformations and shifts in ideology and memory politics. We also work with unstructured data (such as social media posts) and learn to visualize them using techniques from the Digital Humanities.
Topics related to current events, culture, and history of German-speaking countries are explored comparatively and interculturally.

The concrete list of texts and films to consult will be announced through Ufora.

Initial competences

Students have successfully completed the course "History and Culture of German-Speaking Countries" (Ba2) or have achieved the desired learning outcomes in a different way.

Final competences

1 Students have extensive knowledge of topical issues and of the culture and history of German-speaking countries, particularly (but certainly not exclusively) the Federal Republic of Germany.
2 To be able to critically explain structures and topical issues from a synchronic and/or diachronic and/or comparative/intercultural perspective.
3 To be able to make content connections with other curriculum courses (e.g. the language and literature courses in the Master in Linguistics and Literature: German).
4 To be able to conduct critical research into German-speaking media and other sources of information.
5 To have an extensive, established and active knowledge of the German language; exceptions can be discussed, e.g. for those wishing to take this course as part of another academic programme than the Master in Linguistics and Literature: German.
6 Independently compare, select, use responsibly, and critically evaluate digital visualization methods to conduct analyses or present research findings. To be able to use genAI in an advanced and responsible way to write texts.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

individual work: oral discussion and esay
seminars: topical subjects

Study material

Type: Slides

Name: six literary texts in German, mostly in paperback editions, complemented by scans on Ufora
Indicative price: € 50
Optional: yes
Online Available : Yes
Available in the Library : Yes
Available through Student Association : Yes
Additional information: The reading list will be communicated via Ufora. All texts are available in digital editions online. The recommended paper editions are convenient for page references in class and can always be found in the library.

References

As many German-speaking media and other sources of information concerning the German-speaking world as possible.
Class recordings are only made available upon request, but in principle can be made available to everyone.

Course content-related study coaching

Collective and individual supervision.

Assessment moments

continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Professional practice, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

permanent evaluation of in-class contributions & presentation on a topical issue in the German-speaking countries and cultural-historical backgrounds of debates, media, art forms; excursion-related professionalisation activities
individual paper, oriented towards both knowledge, insight and visualisation of data starting from unstructured data

Calculation of the examination mark

In-class interaction & presentation(s) 50 %
Individual paper 50 %
Participants can acquire a surplus credit (5%) by reporting on vocational activities as part of the 'Bonusprogramm'.

Students who participate in the bonus programme, can earn an extra bonus mark. Those with a failing grade for either of the two end-of-term forms of assessment cannot pass the course as a whole. If the final score would nevertheless be a mark of 10 or more out of 20, this will be reduced to the highest unsuccessful mark (i.e. 9/20). If one does not participate in the evaluation of one or more components, one can no longer pass the course unit as a whole and the final grade, if higher than 7/20, will be reduced to the highest non-deliberable grade (i.e. 7/20).
The extra bonus mark can only be awarded to students who pass the course as a whole.

Facilities for Working Students

1 Although attendance is highly desirable, working students may be exempted from attendance. For those classes where active participation is evaluated (e.g., tutorials), you will need to complete a substitute task that demonstrates your attainment of the intended competencies. The substitute task will be communicated to you by the instructors.
2 The exam can be scheduled at a different time within the academic year.
3 You can receive feedback at times other than those designated, preferably through conversations (on campus or online), both during and after office hours, or via email.

For additional information, please contact the responsible instructor or one of the co-instructors.
For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy