

German Literature I (A001947)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Benzing, Carolin Juliane	LW07	staff member
Biebuyck, Benjamin	LW07	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

crdts	offering
-------	----------

Teaching languages

German

Keywords

German, literary studies, 20th and 21st century literature, short historical survey of German literature, model analyses, prose, poetry, drama

Position of the course

Beginning students have little or no knowledge of German literature, and many of them have little or no experience with courses taught in German. The aim of this basic course is to familiarise the students with the most important tendencies in German literature, with a first set of techniques and methods of literary analysis and with historical and thematic aspects of 20th and 21st Century German literature.

This course can be taken up by exchange students.

Contents

In this course students are acquainted with the key questions of literary practice since the beginning of the 20th century and with the ways in which they can analyse and interpret literary texts from this period. We will be dealing with the big canonical authors such as Kafka, Brecht, Rilke, Grass, Bachmann and Thomas Mann. By using specific case studies, the lecturer tries to offer the students insight into the way in which contemporary problems such as the changing experience of language, industrial warfare, dealing with a traumatic past and the transformation of individual and collective ways of life are represented in German literature. A thorough analysis of selected texts is presented by the lecturer; students are expected to think along with the lecture, to discuss the topics and to develop their own interpretations in a substantiated manner, by means of which they can improve and refine their own analytical reading and writing competences. In the exercise part or "Tutorium", students make short writing exercises, by means of which they can learn basic literary research skills (a.o. with digital tools). These exercises will be discussed in class and thus enhance the students' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in German. As part of the "Tutorium" there is also a guided tour in the German literature library collection. During the breaks we make a relaxing walk through German music history, from Bach to present-day rap.

The reading list of this course will be announced well before the start of the semester via the UGent electronic learning platform.

Initial competences

Prior knowledge of German is not required. The lectures and the discussions take

place in German and hence required a lot of efforts from all participants, particularly in the beginning of the semester - participants need approximately 4 weeks to get used to the use of German as instruction language. This course aims at a first acquaintance with German literature and with the instruments of literary studies.

Final competences

- 1 To be able to master and apply a basic knowledge of German (reading: short and medium size German texts with medium complexity; listening: understand a spoken exposition fluently; speaking: to take part in a simple dialogue; writing: to develop autonomously a statement in good German, with limited complexity and by making use of the acquired conceptual apparatus).
- 2 To be able to apply a basic knowledge of German literary traditions while analysing literary texts and
- 3 To have basic knowledge of German literary history and to be able to situate texts in it.
- 4 To be able to put the basics of analysis into practice when investigating German literary texts; to be able to use simple digital tools for text analysis (such as Voyant).
- 5 To have a basic scientific insight in the specific characteristics of literary texts and the ways in which literature functions historically.
- 6 To be familiar at a basic level with scholarly methodology (sources, references, quotations, deontology).

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Lecture, Practical, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

- Lecture: 30h (= weekly lectures of 150 minutes)
- Seminar: 7.5h (= six exercises of 75 minutes, in which students make and discuss basic analytical exercises (speaking and writing) in German)
- Self-study: 7.5h (students perform research activities on themselves, under the supervision of the lecturer, i.e. for personalized feedback, intermediary questions etc.)

Notice: this course entails a total workload of 150h; this encompasses the preparation of the lectures (the reading), the attendance of the lectures and seminars, the preparation and the making of the exam, and the exercises; the workload for the exercises can be estimated on 15 to 20h).

Study material

None

References

A. Allkemper & N.O. Eke: *Literaturwissenschaft*. (UTB Basics; recentste uitgave); costs 19.90 euro

Course content-related study coaching

Individual and group tutoring; course-specific tutorials (seminar)

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment with open-ended questions

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

Assessment moment

Post-sessional (80%) and in-sessional continuous assessment (20%).

(If the student does not pass the post-sessional evaluation, a second chance is offered by means of a compensatory activity between the first and second exam period.)

Assessment form

- Written exam: open book with 4 questions testing insight and comprehension.
- Oral exam: 2 knowledge questions (literary history; 20C history) and 1 comprehension question (on the basis of the student's reading).
- Continuous assessment

Reaching the desired level of language proficiency is part of the learning competences of this course. This proficiency is supported by feedback on writing tasks, by self-study and self-testing, and by participation in the tutorials.

Calculation of the examination mark

Post-sessional assessment

Exam: 80%; the students receive a mark with a maximum of 16 on the written exam (which consists of 2 analytical questions (each 1/3 of the mark) and two synthetic questions (each 1/6 of the mark); the oral exam adds to that a mark that varies from -1 (for the worst possible performance) to +1 (for the best possible performance).

In-sessional assessment:

Portfolio (with three assignments): 20% (4)

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities for working students:

- 1 Although attendance is highly desirable, working students may be exempted from attendance; students can make use of the recordings of the classes and of additional learning materials (on Ufora). 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.

Extra information:

Participation of the Tutorium is highly recommended; it offers the students the opportunity to train those competencies crucial for this course, under the supervision of a lecturer.

For more information contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy: <https://www.ugent.be/lw/nl/student/studiestudentenbegeleiding/trajectbegeleiding.htm>