

German Geistesgeschichte (A006654)

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 2)	English, German	Gent
B (semester 2)	English, German	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Biebuyck, Benjamin 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
Virtual Mobility	5	B
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 Cultures and Languages in Context	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

German, English

Keywords

German intellectual history, Philosophy and Essays, Analysis of seminal texts

Position of the course

The MA-programme does not only focus on scholarly specialisation, but also on broadening our perspective. One means to that end is to study intensively important texts from the German intellectual history. We chew and ruminate the texts, until we have understood them thoroughly and we try to use the insights we get from them to have a better understanding of our own world.

Students who take part in this course in their German language curriculum, perform the assignments in German. The German proficiency is part of the expectations about the performance.

Students who take this course from another curriculum, perform the assignments in English or, on condition that this is understandable for all participants, in Dutch or French.

This course is open to exchange students and students from the Enlight European University Consortium. Passive knowlegde of German (reading, understanding) is necessary.

Contents

This course aims to discuss texts (of a limited length) that were written by thinkers who occupied a key position in the development of the German Geistesgeschichte and intellectual history in general, ranging from the late 18th century up till today. Authors that are likely to be taken into account are a.o. Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud, Marx, Simmel, Kraus, Husserl, Benjamin, Buber, Bloch, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Adorno, Canetti, Blumenberg, Habermas, Arendt, Gerhard, Frank, Enzensberger, Luhmann, Sloterdijk, Szondi, Frevert, Busch, Rosa, Vogl. Students and instructor decide jointly which texts will be read. The professor will introduce the students to each of the authors and supervises the joint discussion of crucial passages from the texts. With respect to each of the texts one or more students will make an actualisation exercise, by means of which they will demonstrate how the text can help us obtain a deeper comprehension of our own time. If the number of participants to do so, the actualisation exercise will be done jointly by one UGent and one Enlight or exchange student. All texts are available on the elektronik learning platform. Students go through one text of their own choice autonomously in preparation of the exam.

Initial competences

Bachelor of Arts

Final competences

- 1 To have a profound insight into advanced issues from the German Geistesgeschichte
- 2 To be able to report orally and in writing one's own research results; to be able to handle (digital) resources in a responsible and transparent manner; to be able to have a specialist discussion about research results.
- 3 A profound familiarity with the German intellectual and philosophical tradition
- 4 A profound insight into the discursive and communicative specifics in the German Geistesgeschichte.
- 5 To be able to go through and discuss autonomously one text from German intellectual history.

Conditions for credit contract

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

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Group work, Seminar, Independent work, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

Seminar (25h): introductory questions; group discussion of 10 cases out of German intellectual history; concluding discussion
Independent work (15h): preparation of an actualisation exercise with respect to at least one text; preparation of the discussion of the other texts.
This course is a hybrid seminar; students can either attend the seminar on campus or online (via Teams).

Study material

None

References

Modern German Thought from Kant to Habermas. An Annotated German-Language Reader. Hg. Henk de Berg & Duncan Large. Rochester (N.Y.): Camden House, 2012 (or a more recent edition)
Burkard, Franz-Peter, and Peter Precht. *Metzler Lexikon Philosophie : Begriffe Und Definitionen.* 3., erw. und aktualisierte Aufl. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2008

Course content-related study coaching

collective and individual tutoring

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

Oral assessment, Participation, Peer and/or self assessment, 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

Students write an essay of appr. 1000 words, in which they articulate their own insight with respect to one of the questions that emerged during the semester in a compact and sharp way. Students who take up this seminar as part of a German studies programme are expected to write the essay in German. Other students can write the essay in English, French or Dutch.

The "oral exam" is a dialogue of 20 minutes, in which the essay is discussed before the background of all texts read and discussed in class. Students have made themselves familiar with the line of argument of each of the texts and are able to make connections flexibly. We also discuss the students have selected and gone through autonomously. The language requirements of the "oral exam" are consistent with those of the other sections of this course.

The presentation is to make an actualisation of one or more of the texts that are read in class.

Participation: participation in the discussion.

Students can participate in classes online upon simple request. Recordings are also made upon simple request and will then be made available to all students. Of course, these recordings do not replace active participation in class; if necessary, students who were absent from a particular class may complete a make-up assignment.

Calculation of the examination mark

In-session evaluation (40%):

- Presentation updating exercise: 20%

- participation in discussion: 20%

Extra- and post-session evaluation (60%):

- Paper: 20%

- "Oral examination": 40%

The oral exam has a twofold objective: 1) to assess how thorough participants have assimilated the content of the course (open questions about the authors and texts discussed, and about the actualisation exercises), and 2) to question the students on substantive and methodological aspects of their paper. Therefore, the assessment of the paper depends in part on the student's performance in the "oral exam".

Failure to participate in the evaluation of one or more components will result in failure to pass the entire course unit; the final grade, if higher than 7/20, will be reduced to the highest non-deliberable grade (7/20). Those who fail the periodic evaluation will obtain a maximum of 9/20 for the course as a whole, even if the calculated final score is higher.

Students who have a calculated final score of 10/20 or more and voluntarily participate in professionalization assignments as part of the "Bonus Program" and report on them in a favorably evaluated manner will acquire an additional credit (1/20) for this. If the reporting is not evaluated favorably, they will be given the opportunity to rework and resubmit it after feedback.

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities for working students:

1 Although attendance is highly desirable, working students may be exempted from attendance; to obtain the learning goals, students can make use of additional learning materials (on Ufora) and, if required, of class recordings. 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 contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy: <https://www.ugent.be/lw/nl/student/studiestudentenbegeleiding/trajectbegeleiding.htm>