

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social challenges in the philosophy of 21st century

Academic year 2025-2026

1. Programme-related data

1.1. Higher Education Institution	Babeş-Bolyai University
1.2. Faculty	Faculty of History and Philosophy
1.3. Department	Doctoral School of Philosophy
1.4. Field	Philosophy
1.5. Level of study	Doctoral
1.6. Degree programme / Qualification	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (Level 8 CNC/EQF)
1.7. Form of education	Full-time, Part-time

2. Course-related data

2.1. Course title	Social challenges in the philosophy of 21st century			Course code	SDF10
2.2. Course coordinator	Prof.univ.dr. Ciprian Mihali				
2.3. Seminar coordinator	Prof.univ.dr. Ciprian Mihali				
2.4. Year of study	1	2.5. Semester	1	2.6. Type of assessment	Exam
2.7. Course status	Optional			2.8. Course type	Specialisation subject

3. Total estimated time (hours per semester of teaching activities)

3.1. Number of hours per week	3	of which: 3.2. course	2	3.3. seminar/ laboratory/ project	1
3.4. Total of hours in the curriculum	36	of which: 3.5. course	24	3.6. seminar/ laboratory	12
Time allocation for individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)					hours
Learning from textbooks, course materials, bibliography, and notes (IS)					70
Additional research in the library, on subject-specific electronic platforms, and on-site					60
Preparing seminars/ laboratories/ projects, assignments, reports, portfolios, and essays					40
Tutoring (professional guidance)					30
Examinations					6
Other activities [two-way communication with the course coordinator/tutor]					8
3.7. Total hours of individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)				214	
3.8. Total hours per semester				250	
3.9. Number of credits				10	

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1. curriculum-related	
4.2. skills-related	

5. Specific conditions (where applicable)

5.1. course-related	
5.2. seminar/laboratory-related	

6.1. Competencies resulting from the completion of the degree programme

Professional competencies



Competency code	Competency
PC1	Acquiring advanced knowledge in the field
PC2	Developing the ability to identify, formulate and solve research problems in a creative manner
PC3	Acquiring skills to document and capitalize on scientific papers and the ability to write scientific papers and other academic materials at an advanced level, in a style appropriate to the field of study Philosophy and in compliance with its specific rigors at national and international level
Transversal competencies	
Competency code	Competency
TC1	Developing written and oral communication skills in the field of contemporary science and philosophy Acquiring knowledge of critical thinking, including the ability to analyse, interpret or formulate reasoning in different contexts
TC3	Developing written and oral communication skills in the field of contemporary science and philosophy Acquiring knowledge of critical thinking, including the ability to analyse, interpret or formulate reasoning in different contexts

6.2. Learning outcomes relevant to the degree programme

Learning outcomes targeted by the subject		
Competency code	Knowledge and comprehension	Specific academic skills
PC1	1. The doctoral student demonstrates knowledge at the most advanced level in the field of study Philosophy.	1. The doctoral student possesses and applies the most advanced and specialized skills and techniques, including the ability to synthesize and evaluate, necessary for solving critical research problems in Philosophy
PC2	2. The doctoral student demonstrates advanced knowledge at the border between different socio-human fields	2. The doctoral student possesses and applies innovation skills for the extension and redefinition of existing knowledge or professional practices in the socio-human fields
TC1	1. (Responsibility and autonomy) The doctoral student demonstrates a high level of authority, innovation, autonomy, scientific and professional integrity.	1. (Responsibility and autonomy) The doctoral student demonstrates a sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of a work or study situation, including research.

7. Subject-specific learning outcomes

Knowledge and comprehension
1. Exploring contemporary theories of punishment as a starting point in the individual research of doctoral students
2. Establishing connections between philosophical theories of punishment and legal theories
3. Identifying relevant examples for theories of punishment in cinema, art and literature
4. Research into the transformations of surveillance and punishment mechanisms in the digital world and artificial intelligence
Specific academic skills
1. The ability to deconstruct complex concepts, such as "punishment" in Foucault or "surveillance" in Zuboff, by identifying cultural contexts and political, economic and technological transformations
2. Ability to situate concepts from theories of punishment related to the application and bearing of punishments in multidisciplinary contexts
3. Integrating philosophy with social sciences or digital media, by developing multimedia presentations that explore intersections such as technology and digital ethics

8. Contents

8.1. Course	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks ¹
1. Introduction to modern theories of punishment. What does it mean to punish? Why do we punish? Who do we punish?	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
2. Foucault's Punitive Society: Authority, Power, and Punishment	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
3. Imprisonment and the production of illegalities	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
4. What does the humanization of punishment consist of? The modern penalty and the "civilized" punishment	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
5. What does it mean to be guilty? Innocence and guilt: who sets the line between them?	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
6. Punishment: violence, humiliation, cruelty, torture, massacre	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
7. Bearing the punishment: victims, traumas, sufferings	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
8. Debate on the death penalty	Dezbateri pornind de la exemple cinematografice (Decalog)	Inviting a cinema expert
9. Punishment and forgiveness	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
10. Punishment and revenge	Master Lecture, Powerpoint Presentation and Text Interpretation	
11. Surveillance and carceral power in the digital world	Master Class, Powerpoint Presentation and Use of Social Media Examples	Inviting an expert in digital and media studies
12. Network criminalization – digital crimes and punishments. Is digital a social world?	Masterclass, Powerpoint presentation and use of examples from the digital space	
<p>Bibliography</p> <p>Punitive society</p> <p>Michel Foucault – <i>A supraveghea și a pedepsi</i>, partea a doua, „Pedeapsa” și partea a patra, cap. II, „Illegalisme și delincvență”</p> <p>Illegalisms</p> <p>Michel Foucault – <i>În loc de închisoare</i>, Curtea Veche, 2022</p> <p>Guilt and innocence</p> <p>Krzysztof Kieślowski – <i>Decalog</i> (A cincea poruncă)</p> <p>What are the mechanisms of punishment?</p> <p>Friedrich Nietzsche – <i>Genealogia moralei</i>, A doua disertație, „Vină, „conștiință încărcată” și cele înrudite”</p> <p>Humiliation and cruelty</p> <p>Avishai Margalit – <i>The Decent Society</i>, partea I, „The Concept of Humiliation”, cap. 7, „The Paradox of Humiliation” și cap. 16, „Punishment”</p>		

¹ For example, organisational aspects, recommendations for students, specific aspects relating to the course/seminar, such as inviting experts in the field, etc.



Trauma and suffering

Judith Butler – *Cadre de război*

Two Perspectives on Forgiveness: Jankélévitch and Derrida

Vladimir Jankélévitch - *Iertarea*

Punishment and Revenge – Kim Ki Duk

Robert Nozick – *Philosophical Explanations*, cap. „Retributive Punishment”

What does digital surveillance mean? Discussion around a book

Shoshana Zuboff – *Era capitalismului de supraveghere (The Surveillance Capitalism)*, Publica, 2023

Digital surveillance and democracy

Kai Strittmatter – *Noua dictatură. Supravegherea digitală ca politică de stat în China*, Humanitas, 2024

Further bibliography

Etienne Balibar – *Violence et civilité*

J. Derrida – *Despre iertare*

Émile Durkheim – *De la division du travail social*

Gertrude Ezorsky (ed.) – *Philosophical Perspectives on Punishment*

Didier Fassin – *Punir, une passion contemporaine*

Didier Fassin Christopher Kutz (ed.) – *The Will to Punish*

Michel Foucault – *The Punitive Society. Lectures at the Collège de France 1972-1973*

David Garland – *Punishment and Modern Society. A Study in Social Theory*

H.L.A. Hart – *Punishment and Responsibility*

V. Jankélévitch – *Iertarea*

Georg Simmel – *Philosophie de l'argent (Philosophy of Money)*

Mark Tunick – *Punishment. Theory and Practice*

Bill Wringe – *An Expressive Theory of Punishment*

Leo Zaibert – *Rethinking Punishment*

8.2. Seminar/ laboratory	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks
Bibliography		

9. Evaluation

Type of activity	9.1 Evaluation criteria ²	9.2 Evaluation methods ³	9.3 Percentage in the final grade
9.4. Course	Elaboration of a paper that argues the connection between the theme of the	Examination and debate	100%

² The evaluation criteria must directly reflect the learning outcomes targeted at the level of the degree programme respectively at the level of the subject. More specifically, the learning outcomes set out in the expected learning outcomes are assessed.

³ Both final evaluation methods and ongoing evaluation strategies should be established.



	course and the research plan of the doctoral student		
9.5. Seminar/ laboratory			
9.6 Minimum standard for passing			
A paper of at least 2500 words, written according to the editing standards, with a bibliography appropriate to the work.			
Obtaining the minimum grade of 7/10 after taking the paper in the final exam.			

Date of entry:
 July 2025

Signature of course coordinator

Signature of seminar coordinator

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Date of approval in the department:
 July 2025

Signature of the head of department

Prof. dr. Mihaela-Cornelia Frunzã