



PhD. in Philosophy

At the Institute of Philosophy of the
Slovak Academy of Sciences, v.v.i.

Call for Applications 2026-2027

**Deadline for
Applications:
May 31, 2026**



**The Institute of Philosophy
of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, v. v. i.,**
calls for applications for PhD. studies
for the academic year 2026-2027.

**PhD. studies are offered in the programme
Systematic Philosophy** in cooperation
with Comenius University in Bratislava and
in the general programme **Philosophy** in
cooperation with the Pavol Jozef Šafárik
University in Košice.

Please address your inquiry directly to the
instructor responsible for the topic.

Contact information can be found on the list
of topics in this brochure and on the Institute's
website (see the QR code).

PhD. Study Topics 2026-2027

I. Systematic Philosophy In cooperation with Comenius University, Bratislava

Democracy Adjourned: Uncertainty as a Characteristic of Society in an Environmental Crisis

The student will elaborate a problem analysis of the concept of political democracy in the epoch of the Anthropocene with reference to the tradition of critical theory of society and the theory of post-democracy, aversive democracy, simulation democracy and other ways of addressing the problem of democracy.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Prof. PhDr. Břetislav Horyna, PhD.

e-mail: filohory@savba.sk

The Absurd in Contemporary Philosophy: Neutrality, Absence of Meaning, Hopelessness, Tragedy

In the French philosophical tradition, the theme of the absurd is still present today and has been introduced by phenomenological thinkers such as E. Levinas (the notion of *il y a*) and M. Blanchot (the notion of neutrality). More recently, this style of thought has been revived by thinkers such as A. Comte-Sponville (the notion of hopelessness), Clément Rosset (idiocy) and Marcel Conche (the tragic), among others. However, similar elements can also be traced in thinkers who do not make them the centre of their thought (despair in C. Romano). The dissertation will be an examination of conceptions of this tendency, with the intention of presenting an interpretation of the primarily negatively connoted terms that will serve as a starting point for a “positive” understanding of them (the idea of tragic wisdom in Conche is an example).

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Mgr. Róbert Karul, PhD.

e-mail: Robert.Karul@savba.sk

Moral Responsibility

Debates around Moral Responsibility belong among the most widespread and relevant in philosophy. The aim is to present novel arguments within the dichotomies in existing debates about moral responsibility and/or to present arguments for new ways of focusing on relevant problems. The use of analytic methods should lead to a model of arguments within a formal system. The special focus of the research should be at the influence of modern technologies (AI etc.).

Study form: full-time / external

Number of students: The nature of the topic allows for the acceptance of multiple applicants.

Ing. Mgr. Miloš Kosterec PhD.

e-mail: milos.kosterec@savba.sk

Transparent Logics

In the field of hyperintensional context analysis, several transparent logics have emerged. The goal is a constructive comparison of existing solutions and a systematically grounded selection of one of these systems to address relevant issues in the analysis of hyperintensional contexts.

Study form: full-time / external

Number of students: The nature of the topic allows for the acceptance of multiple applicants.

Ing. Mgr. Miloš Kosterec PhD.

e-mail: milos.kosterec@savba.sk

Semantics of Classical Logic

PhD students working in this area are expected to use classical logic as a reference standard for comparison with non-classical frameworks (e.g., multivalued logics, sub-classical logics, or supra-classical logics). Research directions include assessing the range of possible uses of classical logic in representing concepts and domains of reasoning, and obtaining new technical results on the properties of classical logic.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Matteo Pascucci, PhD.

e-mail: filomapa@savba.sk

Semantics and Proof-Theory of Non-Classical Logic

PhD students working in this area are expected to investigate the properties of modal logics and other non-classical frameworks. They may address technical problems (e.g. axiomatizations, definitions of rule-based calculi, decidability results) or applications of their favorite systems in diverse areas such as normative reasoning, epistemic reasoning, and temporal reasoning. Research directions also include the analysis of expressive limits of non-classical frameworks.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Matteo Pascucci, PhD.

e-mail: filomapa@savba.sk

The Influence of the Concept of the Anthropocene on the Philosophical Theory of Democracy

The concept of the Anthropocene points out that even political subjects are ultimately dependent on bio-geo-chemical flows of material on a planetary scale. However, pre-Anthropocene concepts of democracy do not take this fact into account and at the same time work mainly with territorially defined entities, referred to as states. However, few of the industrialized states are able to reproduce their material and political existence only from the resources available to them within the internationally recognized borders of their territory. States must therefore secure the resources for their reproduction, as well as the sinks for emissions and other waste produced by this reproduction, outside their territory. This is done mainly by power-based, i.e. undemocratic means and methods, which in fact allow highly industrialized states to live at the expense of others. The aim of the work is to identify and analyze the influence that these phenomena have on the theory of democracy.

Study form: full-time / external

Number of students: 1

Doc. Mgr. Richard Šťáhel, PhD.

e-mail: riaditel.fiu@savba.sk

Artificial Intelligence and Relationships

People are beginning to form relationships with systems of artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence now appears to be occupying roles such as that of a friend, romantic partner, coach, or therapist. This dissertation will explore ethical consequences of this phenomenon. It will also suggest strategies how to tackle the moral problems to which this phenomenon leads.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: The nature of the topic allows for the acceptance of multiple applicants.

PhDr. Daniela Vacek, PhD. (IIa)

e-mail: daniela.vacek@savba.sk

Conceptual and Methodological Challenges of Implementing AI Ethics in Practice

Contemporary approaches in AI ethics aim to guide the ethical development and deployment of intelligent technologies through various normative frameworks. However, their application in practice raises challenges that highlight conceptual ambiguities, normative gaps, and tensions between ethical ideals and real world socio-technical contexts. This dissertation examines how these challenges inform and refine normative ethical theory, clarifying the conceptual and methodological foundations of applied AI ethics.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

PhDr. Daniela Vacek, PhD. (IIa)

e-mail: daniela.vacek@savba.sk

Impossible Worlds

This PhD project investigates impossibility, specifically the relationship between the nature question — what impossibility is? — and the extent question — what impossibility there is? Impossible worlds have proven to be a useful apparatus in this regard. Following in the footsteps of their possible ancestors, impossible worlds provide a scope of applications that address the aforementioned questions. The project delves into these applications.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Mgr. Martin Vacek, PhD.

e-mail: martin.vacek@savba.sk

Worldly and Non-Worldly Hyperintensionality

Many philosophical problems are framed in terms of hyperintensional distinctions. Although these distinctions were initially introduced in a representational manner, various accounts treating hyperintensionality as a non-representational phenomenon have been developed. This PhD project builds on these accounts and will propose a novel worldly account of hyperintensionality.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Mgr. Martin Vacek, PhD.

e-mail: martin.vacek@savba.sk

Phenomenology of Despair

The topic of the thesis develops a phenomenological account of despair as a distinctive form of lived experience that reshapes the subject's relation to the future and to its possibilities. Although despair is widespread and closely related to depression, it remains poorly defined within psychiatric classification systems. The thesis is situated at the intersection of phenomenology and psychopathology and will also respond to the contemporary mental-health crisis. It will explore despair in relation to possibilities, epistemic and cognitive abilities, and embodiment and affectivity. By comparing despair with contrary and adjacent states such as hope, hopelessness, resignation, and depression, the project aims to offer a complex conceptual framework with implications for diagnosis and understanding how despair relates to depression.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Doc. Jaroslava Vydrová, PhD.

e-mail: Jaroslava.Vydrova@savba.sk

II. Philosophy

In cooperation with the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice

Kant's Treatise "On Perpetual Peace" and Contemporary Political Philosophy

The starting point of this thesis is a critical analysis of the philosophical and political context of Kant's treatise "Towards Perpetual Peace." The graduate will explain the relationship between Kant's political thought and transcendental philosophy, without the understanding of which the analysis of the concepts of Kant's political philosophy is impossible. Thus, the author will focus on some of the main problems of Kant's philosophy, which are hidden behind the terms freedom, law, the idea of law, the state, the state system, constitutionalism, liberalism, republicanism, cosmopolitanism, etc. The thesis will show how these main concepts of the philosophy of politics are formally and substantively defined by Kant himself and will compare Kant's understanding of them with their understanding in contemporary political contexts, in particular the European Union.

Study form: full-time/external

Number of students: 1

Prof. PhDr. Břetislav Horyna, PhD.

e-mail: filohory@savba.sk

Revolt, Freedom, and the Critique of Ideology in the Philosophical Thought of Marian Váross

This doctoral thesis will analyze the development of Marian Váross's philosophical thinking in the context of the critique of ideologies in totalitarian and post-totalitarian societies. The aim of the research is to expand scholarly understanding of the influence of socialist ideology on the formation of research in the humanities in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1989 through an analysis of selected aspects of Váross's philosophical work. The dissertation will examine forms of intellectual revolt and the phenomenon of so-called "forced philosophy" as a consequence of Váross's interest in the psychological and philosophical causes of

pathological phenomena in a totalitarian society. Particular attention will be paid to reflection on freedom, the idea of humanity, and creativity, which in his work constitute a point of intersection between philosophy, psychology, and art. The research conducted for this dissertation will be based on an analysis of Városov's concept of dialectical realism, which serves as a synthesizing framework for his philosophical thinking. For this reason, the project will include an examination of interdisciplinary philosophical and art-historical texts that formed part of contemporary social and philosophical and artistic debates.

Study form: external

Number of students: 1

Marcel Martinkovič, Mgr., PhD.

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The Emergence and Development of the Idea of Environmental Democracy within Political Ecology

Political ecology as a discipline focused on the research of political, economic, and social relations affecting the environment arose in the 1970s. As part of research into the state of the environment's role in determining power relations and their impact on the devastation of environmental conditions that support the existence of an organized human society, the idea of ecological, or environmental, democracy also began to take shape. Democracy as a philosophical concept thus acquired a new meaning, which, however, underwent dynamic development. The aim of the thesis is to map this development and analyze its relevance for environmental political philosophy.

Study form: full-time/external

Number of students: 1 full-time, 1 external

Doc. Mgr. Richard Šťáhel, PhD.

e-mail: riaditel.fiu@savba.sk

The Importance of Anarchism in French Philosophy

While anarchism is often dismissed as a hopelessly unrealistic approach to social-political thinking, today anarchism is undergoing a vibrant renaissance due in part to the attempts to update it through the works of the French structuralist and post-structuralist philosophies. In France of the 20th century, the anarchist tradition of Bakunin and Kropotkin was regarded as a viable political paradigm, and there were different political groupings that followed this line. Anarchism influenced some of the leading Francophone philosophers of the day, such as Alexandre Kojève, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and others. This topic invites proposals for projects aimed at exploring these connections. Why was anarchism important in France, especially from the *fin de siècle* until World War II? What significance did it have for the development of French philosophy? Are there elements of this anarchist tradition that can still be used as philosophical tools today?

Study form: full-time/external

Number of students: 1

Prof. h.c. Jon Stewart, PhD., Dr. habil. phil. et theol, Drsc.

jon.stewart@savba.sk

The Challenges of Hegel's Determinate Religion

Hegel's long section on "The Determinate Religion" from his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* has traditionally been one of the most neglected parts of his entire corpus. Here Hegel gives a detailed overview of the history of the religions of the world, ostensibly tracing

the conception of the divine in each of them. Only recently have scholars begun to examine this part of Hegel's *Lectures*, and there are many questions still to be resolved. What function does this section serve in his system? Does it make sense today to examine religions in the way Hegel does? Or is he simply the victim of the Eurocentrism, ethnocentrism, and racism of his day, which renders his analyses of the world religions meaningless? Is there really a development in the conceptions of the divine? How does Hegel's theory fit with other religions that he did not treat in his *Lectures*?

Study form: full-time/external

Number of students: 1

Prof. h.c. Jon Stewart, PhD., Dr. habil. phil. et theol, Drsc.

jon.stewart@savba.sk

Phenomenological Psychology

The dissertation will focus on the application of the phenomenological approach in psychology and psychiatry, based on the works of E. Husserl and M. Heidegger, which contributed to the re-evaluation of methodological and therapeutic procedures in the 20th century and up to the present day. The elaboration of the dissertation requires knowledge of this discourse and source texts. Independent work with a selected representative of phenomenological psychology or psychiatry, such as Erwin Straus, Kurt Goldstein, Medard Boss, or others, is expected, as well as an evaluation of the particular conception and its contribution to the further development of phenomenological psychology.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

Doc. Jaroslava Vydrová, PhD.

e-mail: Jaroslava.Vydrova@savba.sk

Phenomenological Analysis of Artwork

The dissertation will focus on the analysis of a work of art in a phenomenological approach, which includes an evaluation of the phenomenological method, an examination of the status of the work and the status of subject matter, the question of the creative process, as well as the relationship to experience, corporeality, and expressiveness. In particular, the dissertation will focus on 20th-century art, which phenomenology accompanied both at its birth and in later periods, and within that, especially visual art. The dissertation assumes knowledge of the main phenomenological works dealing with the field of the phenomenology of art.

Study form: full-time

Number of students: 1

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