COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics and integrity in research in communication sciences and political sciences

Academic year 2025-2026

1. Programme-related data

1.1. Higher Education Institution	Babeș-Bolyai University
1.2. Faculty	Faculty of Political, Administrative, and Communication Sciences
1.3. Doctoral Shool	Doctoral school of Communication, PR and Advertising
1.4. Field of study	Communication Sciences
1.5. Level of study	Doctorate

2. Course-related data

2.1. Course title	Ethics and integrity in research in communication sciences and political sciences		Course code	**SCDCRPP4**
2.2. Course coordinator	Prof. Dr., Dr. Habil Sandu Frunză			
2.3. Seminar coordinator	Prof. Dr., Dr. Habil Sandu Frunză			
2.4. Year of study	I	2.5. Semester	I	2.6. Type of assessment	Exam
2.7. Course status	Compulsory	2.8. Course type		Core 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	42	of which: 3.5. course	28	3.6. seminar/ laboratory	14
Time allocation for individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)					**hours**
Learning from textbooks, course materials, bibliography, and notes (IS)					14
Additional research in the library, on subject-specific electronic platforms, and on-site					12
Preparing seminars/ laboratories/ projects, assignments, reports, portfolios, and essays					14
Tutoring (professional guidance)					2
Examinations					2
Other activities					
3.7. Total hours of individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)				**44**	
3.8. Total hours per semester				**42**	
3.9. Number of credits				**9**	

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1. curriculum-related	Not applicable	
4.2 skills-related	Not applicable	

5. Specific conditions (where applicable)

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

6. Subject-specific learning outcomes

Knowledge
1. Knowledge of the concepts and tools of scientific research ethics
2. Copyright Legislation
3. Legislation and Regulations on Scientific Research
4. Institutional and personal practices and policies on writing, communicating and publishing research data
Skills
1. Identifying practices on integrity and exercising them
2. The ability to design and conduct research that respects ethical norms, participant rights, and the social impact of science
Responsibility and autonomy
1. Active and responsible participation in the research and science communication market
2. Will know the strategies and practices on scientific research
3. Will know the legislation that describes the protection of the rights of original authors on their work and how others can use it.
4. Will know and assume the set of rules that regulate CDI activity.

7. Contents

7.1. Course	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks[1]
Ethics and integrity. Principles and practices of integrity in personal life, in professional life and in the development of organizations. The problem of personal integrity in research and publishing practices.	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Ethical communication and professionalism of the researcher; Ethical principles of research in socio-human disciplines; Good conduct in the research activity	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Research ethics – normative and institutional framework: European Chart of Researchers (2005); Law 206/2004 with subsequent amendments; Code of ethics and professional deontology of the research and development staff; UBB Code of Ethics; National Council of Ethics; Ethics committees	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	

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

Research in communication sciences and political sciences from the perspective of research ethics on human subjects; Ethical challenges before the beginning of research; Ethical challenges during the conduct of research; Ethical monitoring of the study; Ethical challenges after the completion of the research	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Ethical requirements regarding the drafting of biannual papers, projects, research reports, conferences and scientific articles	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
The problem of plagiarism; Features of plagiarism and its implications; Multiple publication; Intellectual property and copyright	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Ethical aspects regarding the communication of research data and the publication of articles and scientific	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Ethical challenges of using Artificial Intelligence in research, writing and communication of research results	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	
Case studies: violations of ethics in research	Lecture, text analyses based on photo/video materials, discussions, debates	

Arranz, David, Louise M. Ferguson, Kari Frisch, Stefan Genderjahn, Kerstin Lochte, Michael Schmuker, Sonja K. Schworm, and Tanja Willem, eds. *Research Ethics in the Age of AI: Embracing Openness as a Path Forward*. Berlin: Helmholtz Open Science Office and Helmholtz Information & Data Science Academy (HIDA), 2025.

Beauchamp, Tom L., and James F. Childress. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Bednarek-Gilland, Antje. *Researching Values with Qualitative Methods: Empathy, Moral Boundaries and the Politics of Research*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2015.

Carta Europeană a Cercetătorului. 2005. http://usm.md/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/CartaCercetatoruluiCodul-de-Conduita.pdf.

Coeckelbergh, Mark. *AI Ethics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020.

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). *Publication Integrity and Ethics: 2025 Framework*. London: COPE, 2025.

D'Oro, Giuseppina, and Søren Overgaard, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Philosophical Methodology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

European Commission. *Ethics in Social Science and Humanities*. Brussels: Publications Office of the European Union, 2021.

Frunză, Ana, and Antonio Sandu. "Formalization of Informed Consent: From Ethical to Administrative Use." *Postmodern Openings* 8, no. 3 (2017): 69–95.

Frunză, Mihaela. *Tematizări în eticile aplicate: Perspective feministe*. Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2009.

Gunkel, David J. *Handbook on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2024.

Ibitoye, Ayodeji Olusegun, Makuochi Samuel Nkwo, and Rita Orji. "Rethinking Responsible AI from Ethical Pillars to Sociotechnical Practice." *AI and Ethics* 5 (2025): 6207–6223. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-025-00809-2.

Iphofen, Ron, ed. *Handbook of Research Ethics and Scientific Integrity*. Cham: Springer, 2022.

Islam, M. Rezaul. "Ethics in Social Science Research: Challenges and Future Directions." In *Ethics in Social Science Research*, edited by Otto F. von Feigenblatt and M. Rezaul Islam. Singapore: Springer, 2024. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-9881-0_19.

Israel, Mark. *Research Ethics and Integrity for Social Scientists: Beyond Regulatory Compliance*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE, 2024.

Ivanov, Stanislav. "Responsible Use of AI in Social Science Research." *The Service Industries Journal*, July 22, 2025. https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2025.2537115.

Jeon, June, Lanu Kim, and Jaehyuk Park. "The Ethics of Generative AI in Social Science Research: A Qualitative Approach for Institutionally Grounded AI Research Ethics." *Technology in Society* 81 (2025): 102836.

Jobin, Anna, Marcello Ienca, and Effy Vayena. "The Global Landscape of AI Ethics Guidelines Revisited." *Nature Machine Intelligence* 5, no. 2 (2023): 113–121.

Kemp, Peter, and Jacob Dahl Rendtorff. "The Barcelona Declaration: Towards an Integrated Approach to Basic Ethical Principles." *Synthesis Philosophica* 46, no. 2 (2008): 239–251.

Lipovetsky, Gilles. *Amurgul datoriei: Etica nedureroasă a noilor timpuri democratice*. București: Babel, 1996.

Llerena-Izquierdo, Joe, and Raquel Ayala-Carabajo. "Ethics of the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academia and Research: The Most Relevant Approaches, Challenges and Topics." *Informatics* 12, no. 4 (2025): 111. https://doi.org/10.3390/informatics12040111.

Loue, Sana. *Textbook of Research Ethics: Theory and Practice*. New York: Kluwer, 2002.

Maarek, Philippe J., and Gadi Wolfsfeld, eds. *Political Communication in a New Era: A Cross-National Perspective*. London: Routledge, 2003.

OECD. *Framework for the Classification of AI Systems and Ethical Implications for Research*. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2023.

Oliver, Paul. *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2010.

Rawnsley, Gary D. *Political Communication and Democracy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Runcan, Remus, Vasile Hațegan, Ovidiu Toderici, Gabriel Croitoru, Mihaela Gavrilă-Ardelean, Lavinia Denisia Cuc, Dana Rad, Alina Costin, and Tiberiu Dughi. "Ethical AI in Social Sciences Research: Are We Gatekeepers or Revolutionaries?" *Societies* 15, no. 3 (2025): 62. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc15030062.

Sandu, Antonio. *Etică și deontologie profesională*. Iași: Lumen, 2012.

Șercan, Emilia. *Fabrica de doctorate sau Cum se surpă fundamentele unei nații*. București: Humanitas, 2017.

Sikes, Pat, Jon Nixon, and Wilfred Carr, eds. *The Moral Foundations of Educational Research: Knowledge, Inquiry, and Values*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003.

Singer, Peter, ed. *Tratat de etică*. Iași: Polirom, 2006.

Smith Iltis, Ana. *Research Ethics*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Sutherland-Smith, Wendy. *Plagiarism, the Internet and the Student: Improving Academic Integrity*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

"The Nuremberg Code." https://history.nih.gov/research/downloads/nuremberg.pdf.

UNESCO. *Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research*. Paris: UNESCO, 2023.

Vasconcelos, Sonia. "Research Integrity and Human Agency in Scientific Research." *SciELO Perspectives*, 2025.

Wiles, Rose. *What Are Qualitative Research Ethics?* London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

7.2. Seminar/ laboratory	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks
During the seminar classes, the topics addressed in the course are developed.	Text analyses/ photo-video materials, discussions, debates	
Bibliography: The bibliography is the same as the course one.		

8. Evaluation

Type of activity	8.1 Evaluation criteria[2]	8.2 Evaluation methods[3]	8.3 Percentage in the final grade
8.4. Course	-compliance with the principles and rules imposed by the ethics of research; - analytical and synthesis capacity; - the ability to operate correctly and appropriately with the concepts and methodology of the research specific to the field; - assuming the exigencies of interdisciplinary scientific research; adequate use of bibliographic sources; - compliance with ethical rules regarding the various phases of research, including in terms of capitalizing on the results obtained	The PhD students will elaborate a 10-page text (Times New Roman 12 to 1.5 lines) in which they will analyse the ethical challenges brought by the topic they are researching during the doctoral study program. The angle from which they draft this text must be one that comes from the topic of their doctoral thesis and highlights the exigencies, procedures and ethical dimension of the topic addressed.	90%

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[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.

	the gained knowledge; - the ability to understand the relevant concepts and theories in the field; - the way in which the specific terminology is used, - the manner of applying theoretical knowledge in concrete situations; - the way of argumentation	Active participation within the seminar activities	10%
8.5. Seminar/ laboratory			
8.6 Minimum standard for passing			
At the end of the semester, the PhD students must prove that they have acquired the basic knowledge taught and that they are able to apply in concrete situations the knowledge and skills acquired.			

9. SDG labels (Sustainable Development Goals)[4]

		Sustainable Development Generic Label
	○	

1 FĂRĂ SĂRĂCIE	2 FOAMETE „ZERO"	3 SĂNĂTATE ȘI BUNĂSTARE	4 EDUCAȚIE DE CALITATE	5 EGALITATE DE GEN	6 APĂ CURATĂ ȘI SANITAȚIE	7 ENERGIE CURATĂ ȘI LA PREȚURI ACCESIBILE	8 MUNCĂ DECENTĂ ȘI CREȘTERE ECONOMICĂ	9 INDUSTRIE, INOVAȚIE ȘI INFRASTRUCTURĂ
○	○	○	○ X	○	○	○	○	○
10 INEGALITĂȚI REDUSE	11 ORAȘE ȘI COMUNITĂȚI DURABILE	12 CONSUM ȘI PRODUCȚIE RESPONSABILE	13 ACȚIUNE CLIMATICĂ	14 VIAȚA ACVATICĂ	15 VIAȚA TERESTRĂ	16 PACE, JUSTIȚIE ȘI INSTITUȚII EFICIENTE	17 PARTENERIATE PENTRU REALIZAREA OBIECTIVELOR	No label applies
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Date of entry:
September 2025

Signature of course coordinator

Prof. dr. Frunză Sandu

Signature of seminar coordinator

Prof. dr. Frunză Sandu

Date of approval in the department:
September 2025

Signature of the head of department

Prof. univ. dr. Delia-Cristina Bălaş

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[4] Select a single label which, according to the *Implementation of SDG labels in the academic process*, best matches the subject. If the subject addresses sustainable development in a generic manner (i.e. by presenting/introducing the general framework of sustainable development, etc.), then the Sustainable Development generic label may be applied. If none of the labels describe the subject, select the last option: *"No label applies."*