

Degree Program and Examination Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.A. Sociology – European Societies within the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin

Disclaimer: Please note that only the German version of this document is legally binding. This translation is intended for the convenience of the non-German-reading public and is for informational purposes only.

Preamble

On the basis of Section 14.1.1.2 of Freie Universität Berlin's supplemental rules and regulations [*Teilgrundordnung (Erprobungsmodell)*] from October 27, 1998, published in *FU-Mitteilungen* 24/1998 (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin), the Department Council (*Fachbereichsrat*) of the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following degree program and examination regulations for the master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Studies within the Department of Political and Social Sciences on May 15, 2024: ¹

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Section 1 Scope

These regulations define the objectives, content, and structure of the master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies within the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin. These regulations apply in conjunction with Freie Universität Berlin's framework regulations for degree programs and examinations (*Rahmenstudien- und -prüfungsordnung der Freien Universität Berlin*, RSPO) as they outline the requirements and processes necessary to complete coursework and assessments in a master's degree program.

Section 2 Learning Objectives

(1) Graduates of the M.A. Sociology – European Studies degree program possess in-depth knowledge and skills concerning the socio-structural and cultural similarities and differences between European

¹ The Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin approved these regulations on July 8, 2024.

societies and their conflicts. They are able to describe these phenomena in a comparative perspective and explain them using approaches from social theory and action theory. They are able to situate and analyze the processes of change within nation-state societies induced by the political and economic integration process. They are able to classify and analyze European societies in the context of globalization processes and in contrast to other world regions, and to identify structural and cultural similarities and differences. Graduates are aware of the quality standards of sociological research and the foundations and basic general principles of academic work and good research practice. They are able to apply this knowledge to their academic work from the start. Graduates possess extensive theoretical, methodological, and analytical skills, enabling them to conduct independent social science research and teaching and to critically evaluate and apply existing research and its findings. They are able to justify their professional opinions and research results using informed arguments and can present their findings appropriately.

(2) By engaging with research on the socio-structural and cultural features of different European societies, graduates have an awareness of the role of gender and diversity in contemporary societies. They also possess intercultural skills that enable them to analyze and understand sociological issues on the basis of evidence and from a comparative perspective that takes multiple countries into consideration. Graduates have excellent teamwork skills, including the ability to lead a team and resolve conflicts. They are able to facilitate academic discussions in a competent manner and present results convincingly. They are also skilled in organizing and leading research projects.

(3) The M.A. Sociology – European Studies degree program qualifies graduates for professional work and activities in the following areas: Research and teaching in social science institutions within or outside of higher education; knowledge transfer as well as social and political representation of interests in international (especially European) organizations, national, and international associations and non-governmental organizations; consulting work in government institutions or in political parties.

Section 3

Curriculum Contents

(1) The master's degree program provides students with knowledge of the following areas of sociology as they relate to European integration and the comparison of European societies: sociological theory, the methodology of comparative social research, social structure analysis, cultural sociology, and the sociology of global and regional development. Knowledge in these areas is expanded upon through historical, economic, and political science-based research on Europe, as well as an understanding of the research data infrastructure necessary for comparative, empirical research. Aspects of gender and diversity are addressed in all of these areas. Students also gain knowledge of the quality standards of sociological research and experience with the basic tenets of academic and scientific work, as well as good research practice. During their studies, they are introduced to academic and scientific work.

(2) All modules in the master's degree program take a fundamentally comparative perspective and provide students with a deeper understanding of the comparative study of societies, in particular with regard to contemporary European societies, through the discussion of theoretical approaches and empirical studies. In addition, the opportunity to participate in supervised student research projects during the degree program allows students to hone their ability to carry out empirical sociological research and present research results.

Section 4

General Academic Advising and Departmental Advising

(1) The Center for Academic Advising and Psychological Counseling at Freie Universität Berlin provides general academic advising for students.

(2) Instructors who teach courses offered in the master's degree program provide departmental advising during their office hours. A student aid is also available to offer additional advising support. Furthermore, students are encouraged to discuss the suitability of their individual curriculum plan with their program coordinator.

(3) It is highly recommended that students who have yet to complete at least one third of the required credit points upon reaching the mid-way point of the standard study period for this degree program

arrange an appointment for departmental advising to ensure that they are adequately supported in successfully continuing their studies.

Section 5 Examination Board

The examination board is appointed by the Department Council of the Department of Political and Social Sciences, Freie Universität Berlin. The board is responsible for organizing examinations and the other tasks stipulated by the framework regulations for degree programs and examinations (RSPO).

Section 6 Standard Time to Degree

The standard time to degree is four semesters.

Section 7 Structure and Components; Distribution of Credit Points

(1) In order to complete the master's degree program, students must earn a total of 120 credit points through the successful completion of coursework and assessments in the areas listed below, whereby 25 credit points are awarded for the master's thesis:

1. Introductory modules totaling 30 credit points,
2. Advanced modules totaling 30 credit points, and
3. Specialization modules totaling 35 credit points.

(2) The following required modules are to be completed from among the introductory modules:

- Module: The Political Unification Process in Europe and the Development of European Societies since 1945 (10 credit points),
- Module: Sociological Theories of Societal Changes and Societal Integration (10 credit points), and
- Module: Methods of Comparative Social Research (10 credit points).

(3) The following required modules are to be completed from among the advanced modules:

- Module: Social Structure and Inequalities in European Societies (10 credit points),
- Module: Values and Culture from a European Comparative Perspective (10 credit points), and
- Module: Globalization and Regional Development (10 credit points).

All of these modules provide students with the opportunity to select projects that align with their own interests. A total of one oral examination and two term papers must be completed across the three advanced modules. Both types of assessments are offered for each advanced module.

(4) The following required modules are to be completed from among the specialization modules:

- Module: Research Internship (15 credit points) and
- Module: Sociological Research (5 credit points).

In addition, one of the two following required elective modules must be chosen and completed:

- Module: Specialization – Advanced Methods of Empirical Social Research (15 credit points), or
- Module: Specialization – Special Fields of Sociological Research (15 credit points).

All of these modules provide students with the opportunity to select projects that align with their own interests.

(5) The module descriptions in Appendix 1 provide information on the prerequisites, the contents and learning objectives, the modes of instruction, the workload, the different types of active participation, the various assessments that students must take during the program, information on participation requirements in the different modes of instruction, the standard duration, and how often courses are offered.

(6) Appendix 2 is a standard curriculum plan for completing the master's degree program.

Section 8

Modes of Instruction

(1) The courses offered through the program include the following modes of instruction:

1. Basic courses (GK) provide students with an introduction to key topic areas within the field of the sociology of European societies. The main mode of instruction is an in-person presentation prepared by the respective instructor, followed by talks and discussions on the fundamental topics, problems, or questions as informed by preparatory reading.
2. Advanced lecture courses (VV) impart in-depth knowledge about a specific area of study within the field of the sociology of European societies and related research questions. The main mode of instruction is a presentation prepared by the instructor. The participants may interact with the instructor and engage in joint discussions at the end of individual sections.
3. Advanced seminars (HS) provide students with a chance to engage intensively with the specific topics and research questions regarding the sociology of European societies. Students practice carrying out independent academic work by working on issues from the field of sociology. This is done primarily with a research focus and on the basis of relevant specialist literature. The main modes of instruction and learning are presentations and seminar discussions conducted on the basis of preparatory reading of specialist literature.
4. Seminars (S) convey knowledge on a clearly defined subject area and teach students the skills of independently researching a topic, presenting the results, and discussing the subject using critical thinking. The main modes of instruction and learning are seminar discussions conducted with the aid of learning materials, specialist literature and sources, and group work.
5. Specialization seminars (VS) provide students with a chance to engage intensively with a defined area of study and to gain practice in carrying out independent academic work. The main modes of instruction and learning are seminar discussions conducted with the aid of learning materials, preparatory reading of specialist literature and sources, written and oral assignments, and group work.
6. A teaching research project (LFP) is designed for students to integrate their theoretical knowledge and methodological expertise so that they can gain experience in independent research. Students develop and strengthen their ability to independently carry out comparative empirical investigations on sociological questions related to European societies. The main mode of instruction is intensive collaboration between instructors and small study groups.
7. Colloquia (Ko) allow students to exchange ideas in a flexible format. They also provide students with the opportunity to present their own, current research results in the context of their master's thesis.

(2) The modes of instruction as outlined in Section 8.1 can be implemented through blended learning formats. Blended learning combines on-site education with digital, internet-based media (e-learning). In this context, certain educational activities can be offered through Freie Universität Berlin's central e-learning applications. Students can work on these activities individually or in groups. They can complete them on their own or with the guidance of an instructor. Blended learning can be used both as part of the active learning phase (discussing educational materials, sharing solutions to assignments, vigorous communication between instructors and students) and for follow-up activities (evaluating students' progress, applying and transferring knowledge).

Section 9

Master's Thesis

(1) The master's thesis should show that students are able to develop a sociological research question, to investigate it independently using scientific and academic methods, and to present their findings in writing.

(2) Students will be admitted to work on a master's thesis by submitting a request, provided that

1. they were most recently enrolled in a master's degree program at Freie Universität Berlin, and
2. they have successfully completed modules totaling at least 60 credit points in the master's degree program.

(3) The admission request for the master's thesis must be accompanied by proper documentation of the prerequisites listed above under Section 9.2, as well as confirmation from an instructor who is authorized to administer exams that they are willing and able to act as supervisor for the master's thesis. The function of supervision is to guide students toward an understanding of and compliance with the rules of good research practice in the context of the specific requirements of the given field or subject area. The relevant examination board is responsible for approving requests. If the request does not include confirmation from a supervisor as described above, the examination board will appoint the student a supervisor.

(4) The examination board assigns the topic of the master's thesis in coordination with the thesis supervisor. The outcome of this decision shall be kept on record. The topic and assignment must be designed in such a way as to ensure the work can be completed by the deadline. Whether the students adhered to this deadline shall be kept on record. Students have the opportunity to propose topics for their thesis; however, there is no guarantee that their proposed topics will be approved.

(5) Students have 22 weeks to complete and submit the master's thesis. The master's thesis should be at least 15,000 words in length. A two-page abstract (approx. 500 words) should be included at the beginning of the thesis. The master's thesis is to be written in English; students wishing to write their master's thesis in German or another language must first seek approval from the examination board.

(6) The work period for the master's thesis begins with the date that the topic is assigned by the examination board. The topic can be declined once within two weeks of being assigned, in which case it will be deemed not issued.

(7) Students must submit their master's thesis to the examinations office as an electronic copy in Portable Document Format (PDF) by the stipulated submission deadline. When the student submits their master's thesis, they must include a written statement confirming that they alone are responsible for the content of the thesis and that they only used the sources or references listed in the thesis.

(8) The master's thesis is to be assessed by two authorized examiners appointed by the examination board, one of whom must be the supervisor of the thesis. Examiners have eight weeks' time to submit their written evaluations.

(9) The master's thesis is considered passed if the overall grade awarded is "sufficient" (4.0) or higher.

(10) A student's work on a master's thesis elsewhere can be recognized/transferred to Freie Universität Berlin. The recognition request should be submitted to the examination board. In order for the master's thesis to be recognized, the examination conditions and the assignment of the submitted work must not differ substantially in terms of quality, level, learning outcomes, scope, and profile when compared to the examination conditions and the assignment of a master's thesis completed in this master's program, which characterize the type of professional qualification this master's degree program in particular provides.

Section 10

Retaking Exams and Assessments

(1) If a student does not pass their master's thesis, they can attempt the assessment a second time. For all other exams and assessments in the program, they can retake them three times.

(2) Exams and assessments that receive a grade of "sufficient" (4.0) or better cannot be retaken.

Section 11

Study Abroad

(1) It is recommended that students of the master's degree program complete a period of study abroad. While studying abroad, students should complete coursework that is transferable to the modules that they would otherwise be working on if they were at Freie Universität Berlin.

(2) Before starting a study abroad program, a learning agreement must be drawn up between the student, the head of the examination board, and the responsible point of contact at the host university. The agreement covers the length of the study abroad period, the courses of study to be completed while studying abroad, which must equate to the courses of the degree program in terms of credit points, and

the credit points allocated to the completed courses of study. Coursework completed in accordance with this agreement will be recognized.

(3) The third semester in the program lends itself well to study abroad, and students are encouraged to study abroad then.

Section 12

Degree Completion

(1) In order to graduate, students must complete the coursework and assessments outlined in Sections 7 and 9.

(2) A student is not eligible for graduation if they have definitively failed some coursework or assessment or are involved in a pending examination procedure at another university in the same course of study or in a module that is identical or comparable to one of the modules to be completed in the master's degree program here and that will be taken into account when determining their overall grade.

(3) The application request for the award of a degree must be accompanied by documentation showing the student has completed the requirements mentioned in Section 12.1 as well as a guarantee that the applicant is not subject to any of the eligibility restrictions mentioned in Section 12.2. The relevant examination board is responsible for approving the application.

(4) Upon successful completion of the assessment, the student will receive a Master of Arts (M.A.) university degree. Students receive a certificate of academic record and degree certificate (Appendices 3 and 4), in addition to a diploma supplement (English and German versions). A degree certificate supplement with details of the individual modules and their components (transcript) is also prepared. Additional English versions of the academic record and degree certificate may be issued upon request.

Section 13

Entry into Force and Interim Regulations

(1) These regulations enter into force on the day following their publication in *FU-Mitteilungen* (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin) and apply from the 2025/2026 winter semester onward.

(2) The degree program regulations for the master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies from July 3, 2013 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 43/2013, p. 1371), and the examination regulations for the master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies from July 3, 2013 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 43/2013, p. 1384), therefore lapse when the new regulations come into force.

(3) These regulations apply to students who are enrolled in this master's degree program at Freie Universität Berlin after its entry into force. Students who were enrolled in the master's degree program at Freie Universität Berlin before this regulation's entry into force shall study and complete courses of study on the basis of the degree program regulations and the examination regulations pursuant to Section 13.2, provided that they do not submit a request to the examination board to continue their degree program and complete courses of study pursuant to the new regulations outlined here. Should this request be granted, the examination board shall decide on the extent to which modules that the student has already begun or completed at the point in time at which the request was submitted shall be recognized and to what extent they can be accredited under the requirements of the currently valid regulations, whereby the requirements of the right to confidentiality and equal treatment shall be taken into account. The decision concerning the student's entitlement to continue their degree program pursuant to the currently valid regulations will apply from the beginning of the teaching period of the following semester onward. It is not possible to revise this decision.

(4) Students are entitled to complete their degree on the basis of the degree program and examination regulations pursuant to Section 13.2 up until the end of the 2028 summer semester.

Appendix 1: Module Descriptions

Explanatory notes:

These module descriptions address the following aspects for each module in the master's degree program, unless otherwise noted that another set of regulations applies:

- The name of the module
- The person responsible for the module (module coordinator)
- The prerequisites needed in order to take a particular module
- The module's content and learning objectives
- Modes of instruction used in the module
- The amount of work required by students to successfully complete a module
- Types of active participation
- Types of assessments/examinations
- Whether or not regular attendance is required
- Credits awarded for the module
- Standard duration of the module
- Frequency
- Applicability

The information provided on student workload takes the following factors into account:

- Active participation during class sessions
- Time needed to complete small assignments during class sessions
- Time needed for students' preparations before class and follow-up work
- Work on study units in online learning sections
- Preparation time required specifically for assessments/examinations
- The time needed for the assessment/examination itself

The amount of time indicated for independent study (including preparing for class, follow-up work, preparing for an exam) are only approximations meant to help students organize their time when planning their workload for modules. The information on the workload corresponds to the number of credit points assigned to the respective module, which serves as a unit of measurement for the amount of work required to successfully complete the module. One credit point equals 30 hours.

If regular attendance is required for the specific type of instruction, then regular attendance, along with active participation in the instruction and successful completion of assessments, is necessary in order to receive credit points for the specific module. Regular attendance means that a student has attended at least 85% of the instruction in the module. If regular attendance is not required in a module, students are still strongly encouraged to attend classes regularly. Instructors teaching courses in which regular attendance is merely encouraged cannot decide that attendance should be required. For modules that include alternative forms of active participation, the type of participation, which must correspond to the workload allotted for active participation in the respective semester, must be determined by the instructor in charge of the course during the first class period at the latest.

To complete each module, the student must complete the module assessment for that module if the module has one. In order to complete a graded module, only one assessment (module assessment) must be completed. The module assessment is based on the module's learning objectives and serves as a way to test whether the objectives have been achieved. The scope of the assessment covers the components necessary to this end. For modules that include alternative assessment forms, the type of assessment for the respective semester must be determined by the responsible instructor before the first day of class.

Where specified, active and regular participation in the instruction and successful completion of assessments are necessary in order to receive credit points for the specific module. If a module does not involve a module assessment, then active and regular participation in the instruction is necessary in order to receive credit points for the specific module.

Introductory Modules

Module: The Political Unification Process in Europe and the Development of European Societies since 1945				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/ Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: The students understand the main features of the social history of European societies' development after 1945 and the development of the European Union's political institutional order and can classify these against the background of relevant theories. They can compile and present central theses on the topics covered and lead discussions about them.				
The students develop basic teamwork skills in order to communicate effectively in group work and jointly analyze complex socio-historical developments. In addition, they develop skills to present central theses and lead discussions, which promote their rhetorical skills and their critical engagement with academic content.				
Content: Through lectures and discussions of the relevant specialist literature, the module gives an introduction to the political and social history of the European Union's development; the political system of the EU; the structure of the European multi-level system and how it functions in selected political fields (economic and monetary union, foreign and security policy, environmental and consumer protection, citizenship, equal opportunity policy) and current issues of European integration (constitutionalisation, expansion, identity). Core controversies in the discipline itself and in public discourse are studied, guiding students towards independent, research-oriented work and to conscious reflection on the public relevance of the topics covered.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Basic course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media, passing a test	Class attendance (basic course)	30
Seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments, term papers, or essays	Preparation, before and after (basic course)	60
			Class attendance (seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (seminar)	90
			Exam preparation and exam	90
Module assessment		Written examination (90 minutes) This module assessment is graded on a pass/fail basis.		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Basic course: attendance recommended; Seminar: attendance required		
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Module: Sociological Theories of Societal Changes and Societal Integration				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				

Learning objectives: Students who have completed the module are able to recapitulate and critically discuss theories of meso-sociology and macrosociology focusing on the analysis of national and global society. They are capable of analytical abstraction and have mastered the theoretical methodology for the comparative study of societies and cultures. Students deepen their teamwork skills by actively participating in critical discussions about theories and concepts and presenting their arguments convincingly. In addition, they develop analytical abstraction skills in order to recapitulate complex sociological theories and place them in a comparative cultural context.				
Content: The module covers classical and modern sociological theories of the analysis and comparison of European societies, including comparison with non-European societies; theories of integration and social change (modernisation, rationalisation, differentiation, inclusion, emergence of values); theories relating to meso-processes (creation of elites, social movements, development of social networks) and meso-structures (institutions, organisations, interest groups). These theories are discussed in greater depth in relation to lectures and thorough reading of primary and secondary literature; their applicability to current topics of European research is examined.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Basic course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media, passing a test	Class attendance (basic course)	30
			Preparation, before and after (basic course)	60
Seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments	Class attendance (seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (seminar)	90
			Exam preparation and exam	90
Module assessment		Term paper (approx. 5,000 words)		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Basic course: attendance recommended; Seminar: attendance required		
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Module: Methods of Comparative Social Research				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: Students have deepened their knowledge of comparative empirical methods of social analysis. They are familiar with the basic processes of data collection and analysis used in comparative research and are aware of relevant controversies within the discipline about appropriate methods of comparative social analysis. They can estimate the advantages and challenges of a range of methods and discuss and classify empirical studies accordingly. They are capable of developing comparative research designs and carrying out small-scale empirical studies both independently and in a team. Students acquire advanced teamwork skills to successfully develop comparative research designs. They develop the ability to critically evaluate research methods, which enables them to make informed decisions when collecting and analyzing data.				
Content: Methods of comparative social research have some special features in comparison to nation state analysis. These are illustrated using a range of research designs, quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis (e.g. aggregate data analysis, interviews, secondary analysis and content analysis). The students' knowledge of the special features of comparative methods is deepened through discussing examples of comparative analyses in the literature or in relation to the students' own small-scale comparative analyses.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Basic course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media	Class attendance (basic course)	30
			Preparation, before and after (basic course)	60
Seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments, term papers, or essays	Class attendance (seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (seminar)	90
			Exam preparation and exam	90
Module assessment		Written examination (90 minutes)		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Basic course: attendance recommended; Seminar: attendance required		
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Advanced Modules¹

Module: Social Structure and Inequalities in European Societies				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: Students are familiar with the basic concepts of comparative European social structure analysis and can apply them in practice. They can describe the main differences between European societies and between European and non- European societies and analyse the factors behind their development. Finally, they have deepened their knowledge about the changes in the social structure of European societies through the European integration process. They are skilled in chairing discussions and presenting findings on the topics covered to a specialist audience. They are also particularly aware of gender-specific issues.				
Content: The module gives students an introduction to fundamental theories and concepts of social structure analysis and Europe's special position in global comparison; it covers the welfare state regime and a European social model and compares European societies in selected aspects (e.g. participation in education and educational opportunities, migration and integration processes, population/family, gender, economic and employment structure, material standard of living, political participation and communication structures). Comparative empirical studies on individual topics are discussed, giving an insight into the current state of research in comparative social structure analysis and the applicability of a range of empirical procedures. In addition, knowledge of existing national, European and international research data infrastructures and skills in analyzing different types of research data are taught. Students further develop their intercultural skills in order to analyze and understand social differences and inequalities between European and non-European societies in a sensitive manner. They further develop their ability to moderate discussions competently and present findings convincingly.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Advanced lecture course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media, passing a test	Class attendance (advanced lecture course)	30
Advanced seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments	Preparation, before and after (advanced lecture course)	60
			Class attendance (advanced seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (advanced seminar)	90
			Exam preparation and exam	90
Module assessment		Term paper (approx. 5,000 words) or oral examination (approx. 25 minutes)		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Advanced lecture course: attendance recommended; Advanced seminar: attendance required		
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every summer semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

¹ In accordance with Section 7.3, a total of one oral examination and two term papers must be completed across the three modules in this area.

Module: Values and Culture from a European Comparative Perspective			
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology			
Module coordinator: Module instructors			
Prerequisites: None			
Learning objectives: Students can describe and apply a range of theoretical concepts of culture. They can differentiate between European countries in terms of different value dimensions; they can identify the effects of the framework of social conditions on cultural differences in European and non-European societies. They can independently analyse the impact of the European unification process on the development of a common European culture, as well as preparing and appropriately presenting the findings of this analysis. Students deepen their intercultural competence in order to sensitively analyze and understand the cultural diversity of European and non-European societies. Analyzing the effects of social conditions on cultural differences promotes their problem-solving skills and enables them to develop innovative approaches to promote equality and social cohesion.			
Content: The module focuses on theoretical concepts of culture (macro- and micro-sociological cultural theories); it compares European cultures (e.g. religious orientation, political values, economic cultures, family cultures, remembrance cultures, values relating to equality and gender relations) and concepts for explaining the development of values, changing values and the relationship between culture and social structure. Related theories (e.g. on culture, changing values) are discussed in relation to more detailed reading and current empirical cultural comparison studies in relation to selected topics among those mentioned are analysed.			
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)
Advanced lecture course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media, taking part in group work, completing assignments, passing a test	Class attendance (advanced lecture course) Preparation, before and after (advanced lecture course) 30
Advanced seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments	Class attendance (advanced seminar) Preparation, before and after (advanced seminar) Exam preparation and exam 60 30 90 90
Module assessment		Term paper (approx. 5,000 words) or oral examination (approx. 25 minutes)	
Language		English	
Regular attendance required		Advanced lecture course: attendance recommended; Advanced seminar: attendance required	
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points
Duration		One semester	
Frequency		Every summer semester	
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies	

Module: Globalization and Regional Development				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: The students have deepened their knowledge of globalisation and regional development (in particular of the societies in Western and Eastern Europe, North and South America) and the theories relating to the topic. They can analyse the regional and local adaptation to global trends, and describe and explain any differences and common features. They can chair discussions competently and present findings on the topics covered to a specialist audience. Students expand their communicative skills in order to confidently moderate discussions on complex global trends and regional adaptation processes and to convey them in an understandable way. The ability to describe and explain possible differences and commonalities in global contexts strengthens their intercultural competence and enables them to analyze and understand the diversity of global societies sensitively.				
Content: The module gives a more detailed introduction to historical parameters and theoretical approaches to globalisation, current global trends and the development of European and non-European societies in the global context and compares different regions. The development of (West) European societies is examined and analysed in comparison with that of other regions, in particular in Eastern Europe, North and Latin America. Globalisation and regionalisation processes in different parts of the world are discussed in more depth in relation to current specialist literature.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Advanced lecture course	2	Reviewing the lecture, participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, using interactive learning media, passing a test	Class attendance (advanced lecture course)	30
			Preparation, before and after (advanced lecture course)	60
Advanced seminar	2	Participating in discussions based on preparatory reading, creating excerpts and position papers, presenting and leading discussions, using interactive learning media, participating in group work, completing assignments	Class attendance (advanced seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (advanced seminar)	90
			Exam preparation and exam	90
Module assessment		Term paper (approx. 5,000 words) or oral examination (approx. 25 minutes)		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Advanced lecture course: attendance recommended; Advanced seminar: attendance required		
Total workload		300 hours	10 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every summer semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Specialization Modules

Module: Research Internship
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology
Module coordinator: Module instructors
Prerequisites: None
Learning objectives: The students are able to independently develop a theory-based research issue in a central field of comparative European social research, to carry it out empirically and to present and critically evaluate the findings of their research appropriately. In the context of the research internship, students hone their skills in the organization and management of research projects. They gain experience in working with colleagues and in resolving conflicts within the research team. These practical skills strengthen their team leadership and conflict resolution skills while developing their scientific integrity by critically evaluating and appropriately presenting research results.
Content: As part of the Research Internship, students carry out a theory-based empirical study in the fields of social structure and social inequality, values and culture in a comparative European perspective or globalization and regional development. This may also involve the replication of previously published research. Based on the state of research, hypotheses are generated from theoretical questions, a research plan is drawn up, suitable research data is selected or collected, processed, documented and analyzed. The results are presented and discussed in the research internship and a written paper is prepared.

Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Teaching research project	4	Participating in academic discussions; writing research prospectuses and research plans; independently selecting (and collecting) secondary data; preparing, evaluating, and documenting data; creating excerpts and literature reports; presenting results; using interactive learning media (e-learning); taking part in dialogic models of learning	Class attendance (teaching research project) Preparation, before and after (teaching research project) Exam preparation and exam	60 240 150
Module assessment		Written presentation and evaluation of the research placement (approx. 7,000 words)		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Yes		
Total workload		450 hours	15 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Module: Specialization – Advanced Methods of Empirical Social Research
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology
Module coordinator: Module instructors
Prerequisites: None
Learning objectives: Students are able to assess advanced methods of empirical social research used in current research with regard to their suitability for specific research topics and their concrete application and to interpret their results. Furthermore, they are able to apply corresponding methodological procedures themselves to answer questions of European comparative social research and to present and evaluate the resulting research findings. Students deepen their methodological skills in empirical social research and expand their understanding of advanced research methods. By applying these methods to specific research topics and critically evaluating their results, they acquire a high level of methodological competence. In addition, they develop their skills in the presentation and interpretation of research results, further strengthening their communication skills.
Content: By reading and discussing current specialist literature (especially comparative empirical studies and literature on research methods in empirical social research), the advanced seminars impart knowledge of current research methods that are applied in the following areas: (1.) Social structure and social inequality of European societies in comparison, (2.) Values and culture in a comparative European perspective, (3.) Globalization and regional development. Practical exercises on the application of research methods are carried out and methodological reports are produced.

Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Specialization seminar	2	Participating in academic discussions; creating reviews, literature reports, and position papers; presenting and leading discussions; using interactive learning media (e-learning); participating in group work; completing assignments, term papers, or essays	Class attendance (specialization seminar)	30
Specialization seminar	2		Preparation, before and after (specialization seminar)	120
			Class attendance (specialization seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (specialization seminar)	120
			Exam preparation and exam	150
Module assessment		Presentation and related written assignment (approx. 3,000 words); this module assessment is graded on a pass/fail basis.		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Yes		
Total workload		450 hours	15 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Module: Specialization – Special Fields of Sociological Research				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/Sociology				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: Students will be able to analyze and discuss the current state of research in central areas of European comparative social research. They are able to present and evaluate different, partly contradictory research results in a comparative manner, identify related research desiderata and develop strategies to close them. As part of this module, students deepen their skills in the critical analysis and discussion of research results in specific areas of sociology. Through the ability to present contradictory results in a comparative way and to identify research needs, they strengthen their scientific judgment and their ability to address complex research questions in European comparative social research and to develop innovative solution strategies.				
Content: By reading and discussing current specialist literature (especially comparative empirical studies), the in-depth seminars impart knowledge about current theoretical and empirical research results in the fields of social structure and social inequality in European societies, values and culture in a comparative European perspective as well as globalization and regional development. Among other things, research reports are compiled, empirical exercises are carried out and forecasts are made on the development of research fields.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Specialization seminar	2	Participating in academic discussions; creating reviews, literature reports, and position papers; presenting and leading discussions; using interactive learning media (e-learning); participating in group work; completing assignments, term papers, or essays	Class attendance (specialization seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (specialization seminar)	120
Specialization seminar	2		Class attendance (specialization seminar)	30
			Preparation, before and after (specialization seminar)	120
			Exam preparation and exam	150
Module assessment		Presentation and related written assignment (approx. 3,000 words); this module assessment is graded on a pass/fail basis.		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Yes		
Total workload		450 hours	15 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every winter semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Module: Sociological Research				
University/department/teaching unit: Freie Universität Berlin/Department of Political and Social Sciences/ Political Science				
Module coordinator: Module instructors				
Prerequisites: None				
Learning objectives: Students are able to plan, carry out and present their work in a comprehensible manner. They are enabled to justify basic scientific theoretical positions, the research question, the research design, the selection of methods and, if necessary, the specific empirical work (data collection and analysis) and their evaluation in scientific discussions and reflect on them taking into account current research approaches. They can convincingly present the added value of their theoretical and methodological approach by contrasting it with other approaches appropriate to the subject matter and explaining its advantages in relation to their own research question.				
Content: The latest research approaches, innovative methods and new types of research data in the field of sociological research are presented, discussed and applied to the students' own work projects. The presentation of one's own work is taught as well as its theoretical and methodological position within sociology. The aim is to convey the reflection and plausibility of the research design, the approach and the research results in scientific discourse.				
Modes of instruction	Contact hours (hours per week during the semester)	Types of active participation	Workload (in hours)	
Colloquium	2	Reading, presenting original research work, presenting original contributions to discussions, creating a research prospectus	Class attendance (colloquium) Preparation, before and after (colloquium)	30 120
Module assessment		None		
Language		English		
Regular attendance required		Yes		
Total workload		150 hours	5 credit points	
Duration		One semester		
Frequency		Every summer semester		
Applicability		Master's degree program M.A. Sociology – European Societies		

Appendix 2: Standard Curriculum Plan for the Master's Degree Program M.A. Sociology – European
Societies
Option 1

Semester	Modules		
1 (30 credit points)	The Political Unification Process in Europe and the Development of European Societies since 1945 (10 credit points)	Sociological Theories of Societal Changes and Societal Integration (10 credit points)	Methods of Comparative Social Research (10 credit points)
2 (30 credit points)	Social Structure and Inequalities in European Societies (10 credit points)	Values and Culture from a European Comparative Perspective (10 credit points)	Globalization and Regional Development (10 credit points)
3 (30 credit points)	Research Internship (15 credit points)		Specialization – Advanced Methods of Empirical Social Research (15 credit points)
4 (30 credit points)	Sociological Research (5 credit points)	Master's thesis (25 credit points)	

Option 2

Semester	Modules		
1 (30 credit points)	The Political Unification Process in Europe and the Development of European Societies since 1945 (10 credit points)	Sociological Theories of Societal Changes and Societal Integration (10 credit points)	Methods of Comparative Social Research (10 credit points)
2 (30 credit points)	Social Structure and Inequalities in European Societies (10 credit points)	Values and Culture from a European Comparative Perspective (10 credit points)	Globalization and Regional Development (10 credit points)
3 (30 credit points)	Research Internship (15 credit points)		Specialization – Special Fields of Sociological Research (15 credit points)
4 (30 credit points)	Sociological Research (5 credit points)	Master's thesis (25 credit points)	

Appendix 3: Certificate of Academic Record (template)



Freie Universität Berlin
Department of Political and Social Sciences Certificate of Academic Record

[First name/Last name]

born on [Month DD, YYYY], in [City of Birth, Country],

has successfully completed the master's degree program in

Sociology – European Societies

in accordance with the Examination Regulations of May 15, 2024, published in *FU-Mitteilungen* [XX]/[Year] with the final grade

[Grade as number and text]

and has earned the required amount of 120 credit points. The grade was calculated based on the following:

Area(s) of study	Credit points	Grade
Introductory modules	30 (20)	
Advanced modules	30 (30)	
Specialization modules	35 (15)	
Master's thesis	25 (25)	

The topic of the master's thesis was: [XX]

Berlin, [Day/Month/Year]

(Seal)

Dean

Chair of the Examination Board

Grading scale: 1.0 – 1.5 very good; 1.6 – 2.5 good; 2.6 – 3.5 satisfactory; 3.6 – 4.0 sufficient; 4.1 – 5.0 insufficient / fail

Non-graded achievements: BE Bestanden = PASS; NB Nicht bestanden = FAIL.

Credit points correspond to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Some coursework is ungraded; the amount of credit points in parentheses denotes those credit points that have been graded and have an effect on the cumulative grade.

Appendix 4: Degree Certificate (template)



Freie Universität Berlin
Department of Political and Social Sciences

D e g r e e C e r t i f i c a t e

[First name/Last name]

born on [Month DD, YYYY], in [City of Birth, Country],

has successfully completed the master's degree program in

Sociology – European Societies.

In accordance with the Examination Regulations of May 15, 2024, published in *FU-Mitteilungen*
[XX]/Year],

the Degree of

Master of Arts (M.A.)

is hereby awarded.

Berlin, [Day/Month/Year]

(Seal)

Dean

Chair of the Examination Board