

Module Handbook
of the
Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Politics, and Social Thought
at
Bard College Berlin
A Liberal Arts University

1 October 2015

Core Component

The core component (48ECTS) consists of 6 semester-long core modules over six semesters. All core modules are semester-long with a seminar format (meeting for two sessions of 90 minutes per week) and additional lecture component of up to four 90 minute sessions per semester. Each module is designated 8ECTS.

MODULE: Greek Civilization

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of major texts, currents and artifacts relevant to the civilization of Classical Greece
- Familiarity with key events and historical figures, as well as religious, intellectual and artistic movements that characterized this civilization, and its African and Near-Eastern roots
- Knowledge of the main literary genres and theoretical disciplines that originated and were systematized in this period, and of the cultural and political debates that informed them, and were in turn triggered by them
- Deep understanding of the concepts and scientific, moral and aesthetic values that constitute a key foundation for all learning since this time
- Critical reflection on the ethical and political underpinnings and the philosophical stakes in these concepts and values
- Ability to analyse primary and secondary sources, and to interpret their meaning with reference both to their immediate context and enduring significance
- Familiarity with the problem of transmission and translation of ancient objects and texts and methods adopted in the face of this challenge
- Presentation of arguments and ideas, both one's own and those of authors and fellow students, in both oral and written form

Content:

The seminar course in this module is concerned with the art, architecture, literature, and perhaps especially the philosophy of Classical Greece, in connection to its African and Near-Eastern roots. Through a close and careful engagement with works, indeed the first works in the western tradition, of literature (epic, comic, and tragic), history, and philosophy—paired with an analysis of architecture and archaeological finds housed here in Berlin—students will discover the modes of inquiry that characterized the cultural production of Ancient Greece. By cultivating students' understanding of the distant and often strange world we find in these texts and objects, this module helps students to see the ways in these modes of inquiry have influenced nearly every field of study they will encounter at Bard College Berlin, including philosophy, psychology, history, art history, aesthetics, political theory, and rhetoric.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words). |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Medieval Literatures and Cultures

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, motifs and cultural dialogues in the medieval period, across a variety of contexts
- Ability to read and understand texts from a range of genres, and to identify both their stylistic features and the yield of historical information they provide
- Awareness of the historical manifestations and stakes of cultural conflict, interaction and clash
- Familiarity with methodological approaches to literature, historiographical study and comparative religion
- Ability to present, in written and oral form, the analysis and interpretation of texts from a range of sources (literary, religious, philosophical)
- Ability to undertake the exploration of a single theme, concept or cultural concern through the study of texts, which have distinct purposes and different provenances, and to present such an analysis effectively in written and oral form

Content:

The module introduces students to the civilizations and cultures which developed after Antiquity, and to the religious traditions and frameworks through which they defined themselves. It focuses on the major civilizational entity that emerged and developed between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries, Western Christendom and Islam. It examines Christendom's conception of cultural heritage and legitimacy (its distinctive claims to the legacy of Antiquity, and its relationship to Judaism). Secondly, it considers the way in which the definition of society in religious terms shaped and influenced the discussion and treatment of issues, questions and fields of endeavor that in modernity came to be regarded as differentiated from religion (politics, art). Lastly, it looks at the claim to universal validity, which undergirded the values of these societies and civilizations, and the nature of its connection to their religious and theological ordering. The module provides historical knowledge of the medieval period in Western Christendom, an introduction to (and competence in reading) its major texts and genres, and an ability to identify, explore and analyze cultural motifs across a variety of sources. It also offers a study in the problem of culture Contact and interaction, investigating the basis of conflict and opposition, and of co-existence, tolerance and mutual influence.

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| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Renaissance Art and Thought

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of selected works of art, art theory, literature, and political thought from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, including an awareness of the historical and (in the case of artworks) physical contexts in which they were made
- Understanding the key values that shape and emerge from Renaissance artistic production, such as naturalism, realism and perspective, which inform art and literature but also political theory and natural science, alongside values like harmony, grace, and *disegno* that define the era's aesthetics
- A theoretical and practical understanding of perspective, its guiding role in the development of Renaissance art, its implications for both political theory and philosophy, and the relationships among art, mathematics and natural science it creates
- Familiarity with broader intellectual currents, such as humanism and Neoplatonism, that shape cultural production in the Renaissance and inform its self-definition
- An understanding of the conception of nature that develops in the Renaissance in the context of both art and science, including the ability to consider critically the conditions from which the modern scientific method emerges
- Ability to analyze, interpret and discuss works of visual art in both written and oral expression
- A capacity for formal analysis, for thinking through the relationship of form to meaning, and for the critical evaluation of one's own direct responses to works of art

Content:

This core module addresses the art of the Renaissance, its contemporaneous theorization (including the relevance of Renaissance art theory to other fields of endeavor), and the values and intellectual currents that shape, and are shaped by, Renaissance artistic production. This seminar course proceeds through the close reading of a small number of artworks and texts and the dialogue among them. Students have the opportunity to critically examine the principal intellectual and cultural concerns of the period in terms emerging from the specificity of individual works of art and (literary, political, or philosophical) thought. Sustained attention is given to the development of perspective and its broader implications and its metaphorization in political theory and philosophy, as a major intellectual shift in the European tradition that grows directly out of artistic practices. The changing conception of nature and the human relationship to the natural world is another focus, where students consider the close relationship between art and science in the Renaissance and the foundations for a nascent scientific method. Further, throughout the course of this module, students will learn how to engage works of visual art closely and critically, to develop the means for interpretive formal analysis, and to articulate and evaluate their own direct responses to individual artworks, considering the implications of those responses in light of the intellectual issues and values addressed in the course.

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| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
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| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Early Modern Science

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of significant discoveries in astronomy, mechanics and analytic geometry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries
- A comprehensive understanding of the philosophical issues at stake in these discoveries
- A comprehensive understanding of theories of progress in scientific knowledge
- Familiarity with interdisciplinarity as a reflection on the dialogue and the differences between methods, here those of experimental science, history, and philosophy
- Practical experience with the design and interpretation of basic physical experimentation
- A theoretical understanding of the significance of experimental results
- The ability to describe, in written and oral expression, empirical results of historical experiments with reference to their methodological significance
- The ability to describe, in written and oral expression, empirical results of historical experiments with reference to their theoretical significance

Content:

This core module is concerned with the innovations in scientific method in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period that constituted a particularly fruitful, even decisive phase in scientific exploration and discovery. The module explores the significance for philosophical analysis—and for the humanities more generally—of the testing of natural phenomena by means of rigorous, mathematically-informed method (the ‘scientific method’—known to us today simply as ‘science’). The module’s two-fold focus—philosophical and methodological—enables students not only to evaluate the scientific research of the period (as recorded in its classic texts) but to apply this learning to other processes of thought and innovation, and to the analysis of contemporary scientific experiments. The module therefore combines a historical and practical scientific education with a philosophical investigation of the procedures and consequences—as well as the cultural significance—of scientific thinking and research.

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| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Origins of Political Economy

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, concepts and debates in the intellectual history of economics and social and political theory
- Understanding of the emergence of political economy, the philosophical discourse which sought to encompass, analyse and correct the means and mechanisms by which societies and populations provide for their own maintenance, organization and development
- Knowledge of the historical trajectory followed by political economy, from its beginnings in the late seventeenth century through its connections with 'moral sense' philosophy in the eighteenth century, to the emergence of Marxism in the nineteenth, and of philosophies of money in the early twentieth
- Awareness of the links between political economy and the wider discourses of culture: the origins of the novel; the influence of economic thought on language and vocabulary
- Understanding of the linkages between the claims, preoccupations and proposals of political economy and contemporary debates concerning questions of equality, identity, legal status, and economic justice
- Ability to describe, in written and oral presentation, the central arguments and technical concepts of foundational texts in the intellectual history of economic, political and social theory
- Ability to link, in written and oral presentation, the arguments and claims of political- or social-theoretical texts with the form and subject matter of literary and other cultural documents and artefacts

Content:

The module explores the intellectual history of the contemporary disciplines of economics, political theory and sociology, by examining the origins of the discourse known as "political economy," the philosophical study of the means and processes by which societies and populations provide for their own survival and development. It offers an introduction to the reach and implications of this endeavor, its relationship to questions of law, sovereignty and political representation as well as war and the definition of human identity. In keeping with its attention to the formative history of modern categories and disciplines of knowledge, the module also addresses the way in which economic thinking influences literary texts and cultural exchange, from the shaping of novelistic plot to the connotations of everyday language. It allows students to understand, draw upon and critique the historical formulation of contemporary problems and concerns such as inequality, the sources and circulation of wealth, and the connection (and differentiation) between the economic and political spheres.

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| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Modernism

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, concepts and theories associated with “Modernism” as an aesthetic and philosophical category, and with its meanings in literature, art, architecture and media history.
- Knowledge of the historical conditions of the emergence of Modernism in different cultural contexts and the relationship between its distinctive manifestations.
- Familiarity with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century epistemologies relevant for the emergence and development of Modernism.
- Ability to engage critically with aesthetic, scientific and philosophical discourses focused on a single concept or theme, and to present such analysis in written and oral form.
- Ability to link the arguments and claims of philosophical and scientific texts to the structure, styles and content of literary and artistic material, and to present such analysis effectively in written and oral form.
- Ability to explore and offer insights about the relevance of the issues raised by the module topics for contemporary debates in aesthetics, art criticism and philosophy.

Content:

The module offers an overview and critical analysis of the emergence, historical development and meaning of the category of Modernism, a term which describes methods, projects and attempted revolutions across the arts and sciences at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the early twentieth century. Starting from the analysis of the historical, sociological and aesthetic claims made by modernist artists, writers and architects, it considers how these proposals were manifested in their works, and what the key stylistic features, ambitions and innovations of modernist art were. The module also attends to the question of cultural influence and interaction, looking at the different contexts of modernism across Europe and elsewhere, and at the diverse sources (post-colonial, historical) of inspiration for modernist works and practices. It examines the relationship between literary and aesthetic technique and experimentation in science and philosophy, or the ways in which the various branches of modernist endeavor shared an epistemology. Finally it allows students to formulate connections between the claims and achievements of the modernists and aesthetic practices today, most notably, the status of art itself, and the connection between aesthetics and other branches of knowledge.

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| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words). |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

Foundational Economics Component

The foundational Economics component (in total 40 ECTS) introduces students to the mathematical tools used in economic analysis, and to the central categories and objects of study (supply and demand, markets, firms) proper to the discipline of economics. Above all, it provides the knowledge, instruments, and familiarity with fundamental problems and questions that will allow students to advance to close analysis and interpretation of economic behavior, and of the forces and structures (global and local) that shape economic life. The foundational economics component consists of five modules taken in the first two years of the program. Each module consists of one course of 8 ECTS.

MODULE: Principles of Economics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of fundamental concepts of economic analysis
- Understanding of the economic method and its application to the explanation of human behavior
- Basic knowledge and understanding of the overall functioning of modern economies
- Ability to recognize and understand the ways in which real-world economic activity and behavior deviates from the models and patterns used in the discipline of economics
- Capacity to analyze and critique the assumptions concerning behavior that are at the basis of economic analysis

Content:

This module is an introduction to the essential ideas of economic analysis. It elaborates the basic model of consumer and firm behavior, including demand and supply, in the context of an idealized competitive market, and examines several ways in which the real world deviates from this model, including monopoly, minimum wages and other price controls, taxes, and government regulation. The assumptions concerning human behavior that underlie economics are presented and critiqued. The module is also concerned with the aggregate behavior of modern economies: growth and measurement of the economy, unemployment, interest rates, inflation, government spending and its impact, and international trade. Part of the module focuses on the government tools used to influence economic growth and individuals' behavior.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problems sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Mathematics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of basic mathematical knowledge and its application to economics
- Ability to understand and participate in debates on the uses of mathematics in economics
- Capacity to complete exercises and projects proper to mathematical analysis or its use in economics

Content:

This module focuses on the mathematical tools important for the study of economics: analytic geometry, functions of a single variable, functions of two variables, calculus, integrals and linear algebra (matrices, determinants, systems of linear equations and methods for solving them). A large part of the module will deal with optimization in one or more variables and its corresponding applications in economics (e.g. utility and profit maximization problems). The module will also be useful for any student with a general interest in mathematics, or who does not intend advanced specialization in economics, but wishes to become informed regarding the essential mathematical building blocks of economics as a discipline.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; homework assessment exercises, final examination (90 minutes)

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 20%; exercises 40%;
final examination 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Microeconomics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the units of organisation and factors that interact to produce economic exchange within a market framework (e.g., consumers, households and firms).
- Recognition of and ability to analyze the workings of alternate market structures
- Ability to analyze the costs and benefits of specific modes of economic exchange
- Capacity to formulate and carry out case studies of microeconomic functioning

Content:

Microeconomics is the study of how individual economic units (households and firms) interact to determine outcomes (allocation of goods and services) in a market setting. The module further develops principles and analytical methods introduced by the Principles of Economics course. The first part of the module deals with consumer behavior, market demand and the extent to which a consumer's decisions can be modeled as rational. The second part deals with the theory of the firm and the positive and normative characteristics of alternative market structures—perfect competition, monopolistic competition, oligopoly, pure monopoly, and, in resource markets, monopsony—are studied in depth. Finally, the efficiency of market outcomes is studied as well as situations (e.g. the presence of externalities) under which markets are not efficient. A section of the module is devoted to problem solving, in which students present solutions to specific case studies.

Prerequisites: Mathematics; Principles of Economics

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Macroeconomics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of economic activity at the macro-level of market economies
- Knowledge of the relationship between social and political institutions and the operation of economic exchange
- Critical assessment of the role of governments in stimulating economic outcomes such as growth and employment
- Ability to assess real-world economic phenomena within the framework of theories presented within the seminar

Content:

This module familiarizes students with the main models that macroeconomists use to analyze the way economies behave. The module begins by examining theories that seek to explain money and banking. We then focus our attention on investigating economic theories that explain short run business cycles, the periods of recession and boom that occur on a regular basis. An important part of the module is to investigate the role of governments in affecting the long and short-term economic prospects of their countries. We apply this theoretical knowledge to a range of current economic issues, including budget deficits and national debt, loans and private sector debt, the current account, and the role of institutions.

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| Prerequisites: | Mathematics, Principles of Economics |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Statistics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of basic concepts of probability theory and statistics
- Capacity to understand simple statistical tests and concepts of statistical inference
- Capacity to complete statistical exercises relevant to economics
- Knowledge of the basics of simple regression analysis

Content:

This module is designed to introduce the methodologies proper to the empirical social sciences. Basic concepts of statistics, probability, probability distributions, random variables, correlation, and simple regression are introduced; the techniques of statistical inference hypothesis testing are developed.

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| Prerequisites: | Mathematics |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; problem sets 40%; final examination 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

Foundational Politics Component

The Politics component (16 ECTS) introduces students both to the historical foundations of ethical and political life, and to its ancient, modern and contemporary theoretical conceptualizations. Through careful reading and interpretation of primary and secondary sources, students engage with fundamental problems in ethics and politics, and with the moral and ideological perspectives indispensable for understanding the character and nature of human societies in their universal and particular dimensions. By focusing on and exploring in depth themes, authors, and/or historical periods, the component allows students to enhance their knowledge of the essential dilemmas of ethical and political life, while engaging with the main interpretative approaches and disciplinary debates in the fields of ethics and political thought, and with the recurring historical challenges that have beset human social and political organization. The politics component aims to refine students' understanding of the conditions of modern society, and to deepen their familiarity with the main streams in which these conditions have been considered. A central aim of the component is to enable students to deepen their reflection on the theory and practice of democratic citizenship. Students take 2 modules with 8 ECTS each.

Students may choose one module from the following two:

MODULE: Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Learning Outcomes:

- Theoretical and empirical knowledge of fundamental ancient, modern and contemporary conceptions of ethics
- Familiarity with the main approaches to ethical evaluation from antiquity to our times
- Ability to analyse primary sources and interpret their meaning with reference to their historical significance
- Ability to present and critically examine, in oral and written expression, key concepts and arguments in the history of ethical thought

Content:

This module uses a historical approach to introduce pivotal debates in ethical thought. It shows how different ethical approaches grew out of discrete political formations, responding to the dilemmas characteristic of those formations. The module offers a comprehensive introduction to the main systems of ethical theory, and to the themes and problems that recur in the elaboration of ethics as a field of inquiry. It points to the ways in which philosophical deliberations about theoretical concerns can be brought to bear on real-world challenges and conflicts. Critical for this investigation of the relationship between theory and practice is reflection on one or more historical institutions or documents relevant for interdisciplinary understanding of the interplay between ethics and politics.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, Independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: History of Political Thought

Learning Outcomes:

- Theoretical and empirical knowledge of the history of social and political thought
- Open engagement with various conceptualizations and manifestations of liberal democratic citizenship
- Ability to analyse primary sources and interpret their meaning with reference to their historical significance
- Ability to present and critically examine, in oral and written expression, key concepts and arguments in the history of political thought

Content:

This module offers an overview and analysis of the main works and debates in the development of the discourses now variously known as political theory, political thought, and political philosophy. Organized around a thematic focus (such as the concepts of “freedom” or “equality”), and through consideration of theoretical texts and historical documents drawn from Ancient Greece to the present day, this module analyzes a single category or problem in political thought. Through this approach, we illuminate the conditions under which such concepts are devised and developed, and how they change over time and are manifested in contemporary form.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments, 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words). |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

Students may choose one module from the following two:

MODULE: Methods in Social Studies

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of qualitative social research methods
- Familiarity with the creation and implementation of original research design in social studies
- Ability to analyse primary sources with reference to their methodological significance
- Ability to present and critically examine, in oral and written expression, key concepts and arguments in the theorization of qualitative research methods in social studies

Content:

The module familiarizes students with the tools that allow the study of the constitution of social groups, and of the practices that shape our everyday life. Students are introduced to the framework of such study: the formulation of a research question, and to data collection strategies, research design, and the construction of cases. These categories are made meaningful through an encounter with the manner in which they arise in current research, in ethnography and discourse analysis, and through methods such as interviews. The cornerstone of this module is the “research design” assignment, where students devise a research question, and then develop an approach to offering an empirically grounded response to this question using one or more of the methods studied.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments, 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words). |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Methods in Historiography

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with central schools of historiography
- Ability to apply historical methods to interpret and evaluate different kinds of primary sources and analyze their bias
- Ability to analyze secondary sources and understand how others have interpreted the record of the past
- Ability to present and critically examine, in oral and written form, key evidence, claims and interpretations put forth by primary and secondary texts
- Acquisition of basic research skills to conduct independent research, including the effective use of libraries and databases

Content:

This seminar introduces the methods and approaches of historical investigation. Choosing a case study of historical conflict, institutional change or ideological debate, the seminar explores approaches to reading and interpreting primary sources, critiquing scholarly analysis and use of such sources, and constructing a defensible argument based on a considered assessment of source evidence and “secondary” literature. The case studies addressed are of especial relevance for students in the social sciences, pertaining to the transformations (in perception as well as in concrete conditions) affecting processes of social cooperation and exchange.

Prerequisites: none

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words)

Workload: contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation: 30%; Term assignments 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

Advanced Components

The advanced component comprises 40 ECTS. Students may choose the advanced economics component (5 modules, each of 8 ECTS), or the advanced politics component (5 modules, each of 8 ECTS). It is possible to take courses in the advanced modules of the other component as part of the elective component. A double concentration is also possible.

Advanced Economics Component

MODULE: Ethics and Economic Analysis

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the value commitments underlying economics
- Critical assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of market exchange and market economies
- Knowledge of theories pertaining to the relationship between economics and ethics
- Ability to connect ethical value judgments to economic theorizing and to critically assess the role of different value judgments in economics

Content:

This module aims at highlighting how economics and ethics intersect in various ways: Is it legitimate to dump our trash in lesser-developed countries because it is economically speaking 'efficient'? Are high salaries for managers or movie stars justified? Should a company be allowed to bribe officials in foreign countries in order to do business there? Should we encourage markets for organs or blood if they are efficiently allocating 'resources'? In this module, seminars deal with these aspects of the economy, where different value judgments may be in conflict. While it is often useful to analyze various aspects of human life in economic terms, there may be spheres where economic calculation might seriously distort our judgments of goodness and rightness and hence might be in need of correction by other forms of measurement. The module balances the positive aspects of economics (such as alleviation of poverty and development of nations) with its negative sides (such as corruption of values and neglect of fairness issues). It elaborates on the value judgments underlying economics and its often utilitarian or libertarian commitments. The module seeks to help students critically assess the potential and the pitfalls of economic reasoning and equip them with the necessary knowledge to differentiate between market logic and market ideology. Courses within the module may also deal with the more applied side of business ethics, i.e. how ethical behavior plays a role in companies and organizations, ranging from the ethical obligations of employees (e.g. whistle-blowing) to those of managers, investors or entrepreneurs.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay; final essay (total length 5000-7000 words) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation: 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Econometrics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of econometrics based on prior knowledge of probability theory and statistics
- Ability to read and understand state-of-the-art empirical research papers in economics
- Knowledge of key problems in econometric work such as separating correlation from causation, issues of data availability, sources of biased estimation etc.
- Overview of key econometric techniques used in applied economics and ability to critically assess their merits and drawbacks
- Ability to conduct a variety of econometric analyses with econometric software packages and real-world data sets

Content:

This module aims at equipping students with one of the most important methodological toolkits of economics, namely econometrics. Economics is in many ways an applied science deeply anchored in real-world phenomena that can be measured and quantified. In order to answer important quantitative questions, the economist needs to collect data and assess the empirical relationships between objects of interest. Since much economic data is observational, a main task of the econometrician is trying to find out whether events that are correlated also stand in causal relationship with each other and in what order of priority. In order to answer such questions, the economist needs the toolkit of multivariate regression analysis as well as a number of sophisticated techniques that expand on the simple linear regression model (time series and panel data models, vector-autoregressive models, non- and semiparametric econometric techniques, and various methods to assess the degree to which such models fit). Courses in this module thus expand on the basic statistics course by applying and developing core statistical notions within an economic context. They help in developing students' literacy in reading applied economics papers and assessing their claims through critique of their econometric analysis. Other courses within this module include lab sessions where students familiarize themselves with econometric software packages and learn how to conduct simple econometric analyses based on real-world data sets and the research questions such data provokes.

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| Prerequisites: | Foundational Economics Modules, esp. Statistics |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; problem sets 40%; final examination 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Global Economic Systems

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of advanced macroeconomic theories and phenomena
- Knowledge of the working of economies on the macro-level and of the interdependencies of open economies via trade and financial flows
- Ability to apply theories of trade and finance to case studies and policy debates (such as, but not limited to, the Euro crisis or the recent “financial meltdown”)
- Capacity to critically assess explanatory and predictive powers of economic models on the macro-level

Content:

This module deals with advanced topics of macroeconomics, such as trade and international aspects of economic systems. It covers real flows of goods in international trade as well as the flow of money in international finance. Main theories of trade and the rationales for it are discussed and evaluated as well as the role that money and banking play within modern economies. The module also looks at economic systems and the organization of economic life within these systems: What are the key features of capitalism or communism and how are they distinguished? How viable are these systems and what sorts of institutions do they give rise to?

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| Prerequisites: | Foundational Economics Modules, esp.: Macroeconomics |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; term assignments; mid-term examination (60 minutes); final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; short assignments 20%; mid-term examination 20%; final examination 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Behavioral Economics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the standard rational choice model of human decision-making behavior, its merits and its empirical and normative adequacy
- Critical assessment of the explanatory power of rational choice theory
- Knowledge of actual human behavior driven by heuristics, characterized by bounded rationality and subject to a variety of biases and other distortions
- Overview of and familiarity with key theories of human behavior and of developments within the field of behavioral economics (such as happiness economics, the heuristics and biases field, libertarian paternalism etc.)
- Capacity to understand how behavioral economics enriches standard economic rationality models and how behavioral economics relates to core economic models

Content:

This module of advanced microeconomics focuses on the behavioral side of economics. While much of the core of economic theory is based on the rational choice model of human activity (i.e. the human being is seen as homo economicus, a hyper-rational and solely self-interested individual), research in psychology calls for a more realistic picture of human decision-making. Behavioral economics is the subdiscipline of economics that aims at modifying the rational choice model of behavior in the direction of a more realistic model that accounts for bounded rationality, the use of heuristics, and the analysis of how human decisions are driven by emotions, and distorted by various biases. Courses in this module familiarize students with this new and fascinating approach to economics and presents them with economic models that take into account the rich psychological structure of human decision-making. Courses in this module analyze the consequences of using such a nuanced behavioral model of decision-making, of taking into account the existence of social preferences (such as other-regarding, altruistic preferences) and so forth. Courses also can deal with the implications human irrationality would have for economic policy-making as well as research into human subjective well being (“happiness”) and its economic correlates.

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| Prerequisites: | Foundational Economics Modules, esp.: Microeconomics |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes) |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term examination 30%; final examination 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Choice, Resources and Development

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with advanced fields of study within economics such as development and environmental economics
- Understanding of interdependent decision-making and its formal analysis with the toolkit of game theory
- Capacity to analyze various economic decisions characterized by strategic interdependence of actors (e.g. various dilemma situations, coordination games etc.)
- Ability to apply advanced microeconomic theories to the analysis of cases studies in different fields such as labor markets or health care provision or industrial dynamics

Content:

On what basis are decisions made, in the public or private sector, concerning the allocation of resources and the making of long-term investments? How are “public” and “private” resources distinguished and how is any combination of the resources commanded by these spheres determined? This module applies the methods of economic analysis explored in the introductory courses to the formation of policy and business strategy. Theoretical models considered may include game theory and incentive and contract theory. Cases of study may include the provision of education and health care, and the empirical examination of the role played by choice, individual agency and collective action in decision-making processes concerning the distribution and use of services provided by the state or through private entrepreneurial innovation. Other courses within the module deal with the application of knowledge gained in the foundational modules to the sphere of economic development and associated questions regarding the relationship between the economy and the environment.

Prerequisites: Foundational Economics Modules, esp. Microeconomics

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term examination 20%; problem sets 20%; final examination 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

Advanced Politics Component

MODULE: Global and Comparative Politics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the systems and modes of organization of global or regional political interaction
- Knowledge of fundamental issues and disputes dominating debates and conflicts in global or regional politics
- Ability to critically analyze the concepts that are used to grasp and explain political decision making and action at a transnational level
- Understanding of the historical development of transnational political interaction and of the specificity of its contemporary forms
- Understanding of the structural composition and status of the various modes of international intervention and conflict resolution

Content:

We constantly hear of the reality of a “globalized” world, in which nation states cannot be considered the definitive organ of political power. Transnational organizations, of greater and lesser influence and effectiveness, play a part in shaping decision-making and historical change. The functioning of markets, production, and trade, creates levels of both interdependency and exclusion that are not always transparent for individual citizens or groups (however defined) in their attempt to exercise agency in the context in which they live. At the same time, the global political landscape can be and often has been conceived as divided into distinct regional blocks, possessing their own specific legacies, traditions and lines of interaction with other regions. Courses in this module introduce the basic concepts and struggles that dominate transnational and global or comparative politics, such as the idea of the “nation state” and its meaning today; the nature of state sovereignty and the threats and challenges to which it is subject (including internal—sometimes violent—political dissent); the forms and stakes of transnational and international conflict; the internal dynamics and external influence of regional alliance and blocks; the aims and processes of legitimization involved in military campaigns and interventions, and the role of peace keeping and attempts at transnationally-orchestrated governance and justice.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Social Theory

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the structural, institutional and normative aspects of social life
- Ability to recognize and assess secondary sources and interpret their meaning in relation to primary material on social matters
- Capacity for independently asking sociological questions
- Oral and written presentation of concepts and arguments pertaining to the classics of social research

Content:

An introduction to sociological thought focusing on the study of society, culture and institutions, inequalities of class, gender, and status, and political sociology or the study of power and political life in classical sociological theory. The module begins with an examination of core sociological ideas about how societies are organized and the inherent strengths and problems within different social arrangements. We then explore these sociological principles through concrete studies of class, race, gender, religious and sexual inequality in Europe and the US, considering how meaning is assigned to social institutions and how education alters or consolidates existing social constellations and hierarchies.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, Total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Law and Society

Learning Outcomes:

- Advanced understanding of the interrelation of legal and political systems and other cultural phenomena
- Understanding of the actual functioning of historical and/or contemporary legal orders
- Ability to reflect on the challenges involved in the practice of liberal democratic citizenship
- Ability to assess secondary sources and interpret their meaning in relation to primary material and historical context
- Capacity for independent research, critical analysis, interpretation and oral and written presentation of concepts and arguments pertaining to legal and moral institutions

Content:

Law is often thought to operate independently of the influence of culture. This module investigates the ways in which legal systems develop under the sway of specific cultural values and demands, and considers the evolving interpretative engagement with legal precedent and constitutional provisions. Courses in the module address the philosophical history of the theory and functioning of law, positions developed on the basis of experience of legal practice by judges and political movements, or the environments and traditions that shape the elaboration of legal codes and frameworks.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Social Commitment and The Public Sphere

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the historical constitution and meaning of the category known as the public sphere
- Understanding of the ways in which individuals and groups take part in the sphere known as civil society
- Awareness of both theories of and practical accounts of the ways in which debates within the public sphere influence change and development
- Knowledge of distinctive modes of intervention in and transformation of the public sphere, including the role of art, cultural invention and language in the reconstitution of politics

Content:

This module examines how political groups, individuals with a political aim, or institutions acting as agents in social transformation use the spaces, media and institutions of social life to advance specific causes or alterations in the way that past or present conditions are interpreted and lived. The module considers the categories of “civil society” and “the public sphere” (how these came to be defined and how they came into being historically), as well as the ways in which their resources and frameworks have been used or reconfigured.

Prerequisites: none

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Movements and Thinkers

Learning Outcomes:

- Advanced understanding of a paradigmatic formulation in the history of philosophy, politics, and economics.
- Ability to present and critically examine, in oral and written expression, key concepts and arguments in the history of ethical and political thought
- Ability to assess secondary sources and interpret their meaning in relation to primary material and historical context
- Capacity for independent research, critical analysis, interpretation and oral and written presentation of concepts and arguments pertaining to the history of ethical and political thought

Content:

In this module we consider the forms of mutual influence between events, the popular movements that both respond to and produce them, and individual thinkers or schools of thought in the history of philosophy, politics, and economics. Particular attention will be given to the continuing impact of a specific work or body of work on contemporary debates concerning key problems in ethics, politics or the study of history and society.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

Elective Component

The elective component comprises 72 ECTS. Students choose 9 electives. Each elective consists of 1 course with 8 ECTS. The elective component can include language study from beginner to advanced level. It can also include the internship module (completion of an internship or period of practical training, accompanied by an internship course introducing the functioning of institutions and organizations). Credits for an internship in conjunction with the course can be earned to the same value as a single elective: 8 ECTS.

The elective component allows students to choose a range of further courses, either in classes in their chosen concentration field, or in the additional areas of study in the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences or the fine arts, offered by Bard College Berlin's faculty and visiting instructors. Assessment standards and expectations will be comparable in all elective courses. The Elective Component's purpose is to allow students to pose further questions relevant to their field which may be raised by other disciplines, and to enable them to develop the research skills, wide disciplinary knowledge and capacity for broad-ranging study characteristic of the BA

MODULE: Language Study

Learning Outcomes:

- Written and oral competence according to the Common European Framework for Languages level assigned to the course.

Content:

The content of the language courses varies according to the level

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| Prerequisites: | Depending on the level |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; homework; quizzes; final written exam (90 minutes). |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 62h, independent study: 178h, total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 25%; homework exercises: 25%; quizzes: 25%, final exam 25% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Depending on need |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Language class |

MODULE: Internship

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of the functioning of organisations in business, education, culture and politics
- Ability to research and analyse the funding structure of public and private organisations
- Understanding of decision-making processes within organisations and of views on best practice and optimal structuring
- Awareness of the cultural impact of organizations, institutions and businesses
- Capacity to understand and carry out the tasks demanded at traineeship level in organisational structures
- Ability to connect traineeship experience with professional development and career plans

Content:

The internship module provides academic credit to students wishing to pursue a period of practical training outside classroom hours in conjunction with a course which guides them in understanding the functioning of organizations and institutions.

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| Prerequisites: | None |
| Credit Requirements: | Internship, preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 2 term assignments, 1 final essay (total length: 4000-6000 words). |
| Workload: | Internship: 130h, seminar contact hours: 21h, independent study: 89h, Total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40% |
| Credits: | 8 credits |
| Frequency: | Each semester |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar and internship |

MODULE: Senior Core Colloquium

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with contemporary research methods and approaches in the field of the student's senior thesis
- Capacity to identify fruitful and productive research questions
- Ability to plan and organize research work
- Ability to prepare the framework of a research project
- Ability to summarize, critically analyse and draw upon contemporary scholarship in individual research work
- Capacity to present research work to an audience working in similar fields and to a general public
- Capacity to participate in an informed way in the debates and controversies relevant to a particular research field

Content:

The senior core colloquium is the capstone seminar experience of the BA within the students' chosen concentration and closely interconnected fields. The seminar meets for a total of three hours weekly in the first semester of the fourth year. It addresses key methodological approaches and questions in contemporary scholarship, centered on a core question relevant to the research work of the senior thesis.

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| Prerequisites: | Foundational Concentration Modules; Moderation |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; research project prospectus; 5-10 term exercises; presentation of research project |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 45h independent study: 195h total: 240h |
| Evaluation: | Seminar preparation and participation: 30%; prospectus: 10%; term exercises: 40%; presentation of research: 20% |
| Credits: | 8 |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 semester |
| Composition: | Seminar |

MODULE: Senior Thesis

Learning Outcomes:

- Capacity to pursue and complete independent work in the student's field of specialization
- Ability to present research work in a way that conforms to the standards and criteria of academic and scholarly requirements
- Capacity to develop and refine an argument that draws extensively on already existing scholarship while presenting a persuasive and valuable new perspective
- Ability to prepare effectively for the completion of an individual research project by following the guidance of an experienced researcher in the selection of a research question, appropriate research material, and useful methods of interpretation and analysis

Content:

The culminating or capstone element of the degree is the BA thesis project in the fourth year. All students take this module. It consists of an individual project (4 ECTS), serving as a preparation for the BA thesis and including Regular meetings with the thesis advisor, to plan and discuss research results and writing, and a final BA Thesis (12 ECTS), submitted in the second semester of the fourth year, and defended in an oral examination.

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| Prerequisites: | Successful completion of 4 core modules, 3 foundational concentration modules, and 1 advanced concentration module |
| Credit Requirements: | Preparation for and participation in weekly supervision meetings; BA Thesis of 10000-12000 words |
| Workload: | Contact hours: 15h, independent study: 465h, total: 480h |
| Evaluation: | Preparation for supervisions: 25%; thesis project: 75% |
| Credits: | 16 credits |
| Frequency: | Annual |
| Duration: | 1 year |
| Composition: | Individual project: 4 credits, BA Thesis: 12 credits |