

The University of Freiburg  
Department of Sociology

## Degree Outline

### Degree Program **Bachelors of Arts (B.A.)**

### Major **Sociology**

Version: 11.12.2006

**Overview:**

Bachelor of Arts examination regulations of the University of Freiburg for the faculties of philology, philosophy, and economics and behavioral studies dated 29.09.2005 based on the degree specifications from ..... and the latest version of the general regulations.

## **1. Preliminary remarks**

The six semester B.A. degree is subdivided into a major, minor and work related skills ("BOK"). It encompasses teaching and study units, a cumulative credit point system and a progress evaluation.

Generally, the B.A. degree begins only in the winter semester.

A sociology major can be combined with any of the minors listed in the B.A. degree examination regulations with the exception of a minor in sociology.

## **2. Focuses and goals of the major in sociology degree**

The B.A. degree in sociology consists of a series of study units organized around methods, theories, and problems and phenomena. As part of the B.A. degree, both quantitative and qualitative empirical social research methods are taught. Theories are representations of complex circumstances (states of being). During the B.A. degree, emphasis is placed on the interdependence of systematic and historical aspects (theories and narrative) throughout the course of social theory development and their interrelation to social philosophy, political philosophy, as well as culture theory. Problems and phenomena are topic related sections taken from actual reports. The central focuses of sociology are social differentiation, social activity and responses, social structure within society, and systems and norms dealing with family, economics, law, politics and culture, as well as their historical developments and their significance and representation in modern society. The detailed selection of focuses from the field of sociology is determined on a current basis and is evaluated every five years.

Currently, the major focuses of the B.A. degree in Freiburg are processes of globalization, the sociology of modernization in the workplace, knowledge and gender relations, as well as the sociology of societal organization in relation to social safety, anthropological uncertainty and cultural advancement.

The course of studies takes part in the development of norms for the study of sociology as outlined by the German Sociological Society (Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie).

Academic schooling in sociology is institutionalized evenly as a learning process designed to strengthen and ingrain specific personal characteristics such as courage, provide a service to ones intellect, increase awareness and skepticism of intellectual fallacy (self deception), establish tolerance of actual living circumstances, and provide a balance between enthusiasm, reactions to conflict, solidarity and humility.

## **3. Admittance requirements**

Admittance to the major in sociology degree program is determined through a selection process. The selection process is outlined in the selection process regulations.

## **4. Degree requirements**

120 ECTS credits are required to receive a major in sociology.

## **5. Format of the degree program**

The major in sociology degree comprises of study units. A study unit is a teaching/learning unit based on a specific topic or theme. Study units can be optional or compulsory. Section 5.2 provides a detailed list of the required study units for a major in sociology.

## 5.1 Accumulation of ECTS credits

The ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) is an indication of a student's workload as determined by the participation in seminars and lectures, examinations or any other academic work. In general, 1 ECTS credit represents a 25 hour workload based on a student's workload capacity of 1,500 hours per academic year. The ECTS is designed to provide transparency and clarity with regard to the structure of a degree and to provide assistance with the time management of study units. It provides a system to accumulate credits from the first semester and acts as an ongoing record of student progress.

To receive a B.A. degree, students are required to accumulate a total of 180 ECTS credits.

- 120 ECTS credits towards the major
- 30 to 40 ECTS credits towards a minor (see minor requirements)
- 20 to 30 ECTS credits towards work related skills (depending on the number of credits towards the minor).

## 5.2 Study units

A major of sociology consists of the following study units (L = lecture; T = tutorial; S = seminar; C = compulsory; O = optional)

### Fundamentals of sociology I (18 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Introduction to sociology	L, T	C	10
Introduction to empirical research methods	L,T	C	8

### Fundamentals of sociology II (6 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Conflict studies	S	C	6

### Modernization and theories of globalization (20 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Individuals, work and knowledge in processes of modernization	L, T	C	10
European social structure and globalization	L, T	C	10

To register for these courses, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

### Research methods for sociologists I (16 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Methodology and statistics for social scientist I	L, T	C	8
Methodology and statistics for social scientist II	L, T	C	8

To register for these courses, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

Furthermore, only students who have successfully completed methodology and statistics for social scientist I can register for methodology and statistics for social scientist II

### Research methods for sociologists II (16 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Empirical research project I	S	C	8

Empirical research project II	S	C	8
-------------------------------	---	---	---

To register for these courses, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

Furthermore, only students who have successfully completed empirical research project I can register for empirical research project II

### **Sociological theories (6 ECTS credits)**

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>C/O</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
Empirical research project I	S	C	6

To register for this course, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

### **Practical experience and interdisciplinary aspects of sociology**

Students have a choice between sociological career oriented seminars and seminars on the interdisciplinary aspects of sociology, or they can work on a study project.

### **Sociological career choices (8 ECTS credits)**

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>C/O</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
Practical work experience and work counseling (see description)	S	C	8

To register for this course, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

A further requirement of the sociological career choices module is the mandatory participation in seminars on interdisciplinary aspect of sociology.

#### Practical work experience and work counseling seminar

Participation in the practical work experience seminar involves a total of six weeks of work experience at a private or public institute or office providing sociology related work. To receive recognition for the work performed, students must provide an attest from their employer that they were actively involved in the office work. Students must also submit a written report about this work experience.

### **Interdisciplinary aspects of sociology (12 ECTS credits)**

Participation in seminars on interdisciplinary aspects of sociology with a total of 12 ECTS credits is required.

To register for this course, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

The module interdisciplinary aspects of sociology is a mandatory element of the practical work experience module.

### **Study project (20 ECTS credits)**

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>C/O</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
Study project (see description)		C	20

To register for this course, the successful completion of the lecture introduction to sociology is required.

#### Study project

Under the guidance of a supervisor, students are required to develop, plan, carry out and evaluate an independent study project (ex. an empirical study, presentation, consulting project, project for a company working in the field of sociology and work in an archive).

Accredited recognition of the study project requires the approval of the proposal from a supervisor in the field of study and the submission of a written academic project report.

### Advanced studies in selected study areas

Students can choose between one of the following advanced studies modules:

- advanced studies in (general) sociology
- advanced studies in empirical research

### Advanced studies in (general) sociology (8 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Advanced studies in (general) sociology	S	C	8

To register for this course, the successful completion of the modules introduction to sociology, fundamentals of sociology I, fundamentals of sociology II, modernization and theories of globalization, research methods for sociologists I, and research methods for sociologists II is required.

### Advanced studies in empirical research (8 ECTS credits)

Courses	Type	C/O	ECTS
Advanced studies in empirical research	S	O	8
Participation in a research project		O	8

One of the two optional courses must be completed.

To register for this course, the successful completion of the modules introduction to sociology, fundamentals of sociology I, fundamentals of sociology II, modernization and theories of globalization, research methods for sociologists I, and research methods for sociologists II is required.

## 5.3 Academic work and progress evaluations and examinations

The above mentioned ECTS credits for individual seminars and activities are accredited upon the successful completion of all required course examinations and evaluations.

The departmental examination specifications and requirements for a B.A. degree (see specifications) outline which study modules, evaluations and examination are required to receive the degree. To receive the above mentioned ECTS credits, students may be required to participate in a series of evaluations, examinations or other academic work.

Students should note the registration requirements and conditions for the participation in some courses, evaluations and examinations. These prerequisites are outlined in the examination regulations.

## 5.4 Courses and the terms of accreditation of ECTS credits

Each module consists of multiple courses. The following are the different types of courses: lecture, tutorial, seminar, advanced seminar, practical units, internship and colloquium.

### Fundamentals of sociology I

The **introduction to sociology** course consists of a lecture (2 HPW (hours per week)), a tutorial (2 HPW) and one additional session.

In the first part of the course, basic sociological definitions (social differentiation, action, system/structure and norms) are taught and discussed using readers. In the second part of the course, the terms money, power, sympathy and truth are presented. In the third part, the history, the elements and nature of sociology, as well as the practical fields of sociology are

presented. ECTS credits will be awarded based on written works and/or participation in the classroom discussions, as well as through a written examination.

As part of the *introduction to sociology*, students will receive counseling sessions with supervisors and training in the use of primary resources, references and literature. They will also learn how to prepare academic and sociological texts.

In addition to the course content, the *introduction to sociology* course gives students the opportunity to confirm their interest in the chosen field of studies and tests their capability and readiness to fulfill the requirements of a degree in sociology in a timely manner. The successful completion of this module is a prerequisite for the participation in additional learning modules in the area of sociology.

The ***introduction to empirical research methods*** course consists of a lecture (2 HPW) and a tutorial (2HPW).

During the lecture, basic elements of scientific research and scientific theory will be presented: an overview of various strategies and approaches (methods) in the social sciences (experiments/fieldwork, samples, panel (cohort) and cross-sectional studies, qualitative and quantitative research, and surveying methods such as observation, questionnaires, data analysis and the analysis of cultural artifacts). In the tutorial, classical texts on social research will be presented and discussed.

ECTS credits will be awarded upon the successful completion of an oral examination.

## **Fundamentals of sociology II**

The goal of the **conflict studies** (theory course) seminar is to introduce the analysis and interpretation of social situation, social interaction, social milieus, social organization and social institutions as they relate to conflict theory. Students are taught to examine a research area using secondary literature and to review issues of conflict, tension and conflict resolution using various points of view.

ECTS credits will be awarded based on written and/or oral evaluations, as well as through a written examination.

## **Modernization and theories of globalization**

The ***individuals, work and knowledge in processes of modernization*** course consists of a lecture (2 HPW), a tutorial (2 HPW) and one additional session.

The lecture should enable students to analyze phenomena with regard to modernization as presented in various social theories and to contribute to and comment on ongoing discussions. The first part of the lecture focuses on the overarching perspectives of social behavior and systems theory, thus allowing for a better understanding of the factors and mechanisms of modernization processes (social differentiation, individualism, rationalism, hybridization, integration, aspects of gender) to be introduced in the second part of the class. Using examples, the use of factors and mechanisms in empirical analyses should become clear.

ECTS credits will be awarded based on written and/or oral evaluations, which can include a group work, as well as through a written examination.

The ***European social structure and globalization*** course consists of a lecture (2 HPW), a tutorial (2 HPW) and one additional session.

In this course, classical sociological analysis of structure is linked to the introduction of the basic framework of the globalization discourse. Using four structural axes of social development – economy and money, state and power, culture and secularization, society and individualism –, the interdependencies and interaction of developing occidental society and globalization will be presented. Using four case studies, presented in the lecture and the tutorial, the encounters between various social and cultural traditions, the origins of

modernity and the reach of global institutions will be examined. These case studies range from the long year European critical discourse on the topic of religious headwear to the evaluation of programs established by international organizations. In addition to the lectures, elements of the course include intensive discussions amongst groups of students and with the course supervisor, as well as additional assignments in the tutorial.

ECTS credits will be awarded upon the successful completion of written assignments and a written examination.

### **Research methods for sociologists I**

During both lectures *methodology and statistics for social scientist I and II* (2 HPW each), their accompanying tutorials (2 HPW each) and additional sessions, basic statistical and analytical methods in the social sciences will be introduced.

The main focus of the course *methodology and statistics for social scientist I* is descriptive statistics: ways to describe and present trends and common occurrences using tables, charts, graphs, as well as single variable, dual variable and multivariable indices.

During the tutorial, the lecture material will be supplemented and expanded upon using practical exercises and through an introduction to the use of computer resources such as data analysis programs (ex. SPSS). The preparation of tables, charts and graphs using these programs will also be introduced.

The course *methodology and statistics for social scientist II* focuses primarily on statistical induction. In this course, the idea of extrapolation will be discussed; this involves an introduction to the terms probability and probability theory, and the statistical models and practices of extrapolating from a sample to a population, as well as ways of testing hypotheses (significance tests). The tutorial supplements the lecture and expands upon it using practical exercises.

ECTS credits for the courses *methodology and statistics for social scientist I and II* will be awarded upon the successful completion of written assignments and a written examination.

### **Research methods for sociologists II**

The *empirical research projects I and II* (qualitative and quantitative) extend over a year. It provides students the opportunity to participate in and work on research projects independently or with others in the early stages of the degree. Participants should become familiar with developing and carrying out a research proposal, from the setup to data collection and analysis, within a predetermined time limit. Under the supervision of the course instructor, participants work out the elements of the research, from the underlining research problem to the conceptualization and organization of the empirical work, down to the production of a report paper that is ready for publishing.

Within the scope of the course, individual work, tasks divided within the workgroups and the complete work process are seen as necessary components of research work as a whole.

The complete work process is to be taken seriously and to be performed responsibly.

Participants can choose between research projects focusing on qualitative or quantitative research methods. After receiving a project overview and reviewing research methods that may be applicable to the project, the project plan should be prepared, a research problem based on the relevant research methods and hypotheses should be established, the necessary personnel and financial resources should be secured, and the research project should be carried out. The first part of the research project is completed with the empirical survey and the establishment of an individual workload. In the second part, the data collected is analyzed and evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively. Where necessary, methodological and technical skills (software for data entry, data analysis, transcribing and presentations) will be learned and practiced. The second part of the research project is completed with an evaluation based on standard contextual and formal research conventions.

The *empirical research projects I and II* are very time intensive. In addition to the individual project workload, the accompanying courses for each semester require 4 HWP and 2 HWP

respectively. Data collection can also extend into the semester break between the two semesters.

ECTS credits for the courses *empirical research projects I and II* will be awarded based on oral and written works, as well as through a written examination in the course *empirical research project II*.

### **Sociological theories**

The goal of the **sociological theories** seminar is for students to strongly familiarize themselves with theoretical sociology and sociological theories. This can be achieved using classical sociological texts or those of modern authors, as long as these texts play an important role in general sociology. Key sociological terms such as division of labor, power, society, gender and social interaction are focused upon. The course also lets students get acquainted with sociological schools of thought and concepts such as social phenomenology, critical theory, systems theory and social structuralism.

ECTS credits for the course *sociological theories* will be awarded based on oral and written examination.

### **Sociological career choices**

In the past few years, a successful start to a career is becoming more and more dependent upon the number of internships that an applicant has taken. Employers place a higher value upon actual work experience than upon academic skills and knowledge. For this reason, a practical work experience of no less than two months is mandatory. It is up to the students to find an internship. This ensures that the students manage to find their way in the working environment independently. The department provides assistance through information and records of previous internships and through job counseling.

There is a wide range of career options in the field of sociology. This course does not focus on one specific area or work. The accompanying class work serves the purpose of preparing the students for their work experience and gives them a chance to reflect upon their experience once the work is finished. Topics for the class work include: career choices for sociologists, strategies for applying to internships, presenting internship reports, presentations while on the job.

ECTS credits for the practical work experience will be awarded based on a certificate of completion of the internship and on a written report on the practical work.

### **Interdisciplinary aspects of sociology**

As part of the module interdisciplinary aspects of sociology, students are expected to complete 12 ECTS credits of classes (generally lectures) focused on interdisciplinary aspects of sociology in the faculty of philosophy.

### **Study project**

Students are expected to independently develop, plan, carry out and evaluate a study project (ex. an empirical study, presentation, consulting project, project for a company working in the field of sociology and work in an archive).

Accredited recognition of the study project requires the approval of the proposal from a supervisor in the field of study and the submission of a written academic project report.

### **Advanced studies in general sociology**

The **advanced studies in general sociology** course continues the contents and issues introduced in the sociological theories module. The main focuses of the course are fundamental sociological problems (individual behavior – social behavior in systems theory and figurational (process) sociology; action vs. communication; cultural theories from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century). Moreover, links between general sociology and modern sociological analysis as pertaining to actual areas of research are discussed. Students are expected to manage a large work load as well as to be able to work independently with advanced theoretical literature.



ECTS credits for this course will be awarded based on oral and written works, as well as through a oral examination.

### **Advanced studies in empirical research**

In the course advanced studies in empirical research, students get to know multivariable data analysis and are given the chance to use it. Students are introduced to the general elements that form the basis of almost every process and model (the typical linear model) and presented methods for special cases – varying focus areas are presented on a rotating basis: regression analysis, log-linear modeling, factor analysis, cluster analysis, correlation analysis. In the advanced empirical research seminar, students are given the chance to apply specific qualitative research methods (ex. interviews, group discussions) at every stage from conceptual design, to the data collection and evaluation.

ECTS credits for this course will be awarded based on oral and written works, as well as through an oral examination.

Instead of doing advanced studies in empirical research, students have the option of participating in an ongoing research project. In this case, students must provide proof that they have actively participated in a research project for at least two semesters.

To receive credit, students must prepare a research report that outlines the research problems and methods and that also adequately presents the (at least in part) the research results and their sociological significance. This research report must be prepared in such a manner as to allow for its publication.

## **5.5 Progress evaluations and examinations and the B.A. thesis**

The **B.A. examination regulations** stipulate that the testing for a B.A. major consists of progress evaluations, exams and a thesis; there is no final oral or written examination on the contents of the degree.

The separate examination grades for the major will be determined in the following way:

-grade of the progress evaluations and exams: multiplied by four

-grade of the B.A. thesis: multiplied by one.

The final grade for the B.A. degree will be calculated by multiplying the total grade in the major subject area by four and multiplying the total grade in the minor subject area by one.

### **Progress evaluations and examinations**

All of the progress evaluations and exams form a cumulative grade for the major subject area. In other words, the individual grades form a part of the final grade for the major. A more detailed description of the final grade calculation (value of the individual grades) can be found in the B.A. examination regulations.

Furthermore, the B.A. examination regulations specify which of these examinations and which additional work is required for the preliminary examination and the intermediate examination. If the deadlines for the preliminary and intermediate examinations outlined in the examination regulations are not met, a continuation of the studies is not possible.

### **B.A. Thesis**

The B.A. thesis is worth 10 ECTS credits and must be completed in a period of two months. Further information can be found in the B.A. examination regulations.

## **6. Course outline**

The course outline suggests which courses should be taken in each of the six semesters of the B.A. degree program. To optimize studies, deviation from the course outline – within the specifications of the B.A. examination regulations and dependent on the courses being offered – is partially allowed, but it is not recommended. Before a student deviates from the

course outline, they should definitely discuss this option with the department and faculty administration.

Semester	Course	ECTS	HPW
1	Introduction to sociology	10	4
	Introduction to empirical research methods	8	4
	Conflict studies (theory course)	6	2
Total		24	10
2	Individuals, work and knowledge in processes of modernization	10	4
	Methodology and statistics for social scientist I	8	4
	Empirical research project I	8	2
Total		26	10
3	European social structure and globalization	10	4
	Methodology and statistics for social scientist II	8	4
	Empirical research project II	8	2
Total		26	10

**(1 a) If choosing the module “sociological career choices” in conjunction with the module “interdisciplinary aspects of sociology” Option I**

Semester	Course	ECTS	HPW
4	Practical work and work counseling	8	
	Course from the interdisciplinary aspects of sociology module	6	2
	Course from the interdisciplinary aspects of sociology module	6	2
Total		20	4
5	Sociological theories	6	2
Total		6	2
6	Advanced studies in general sociology <b>or</b> Advanced studies in empirical research optionally Participation in a research project (possibly starting in the 5 <sup>th</sup> semester)	8	2
	B.A. thesis	10	
	Total		18

**(1 b) If choosing the module “sociological career choices” in conjunction with the module “interdisciplinary aspects of sociology” Option II**

4	Sociological theories	6	2
Total		6	2

5	Practical work experience and work counseling	8	
	Course from the interdisciplinary aspects of sociology module	6	2
	Course from the interdisciplinary aspects of sociology module	6	2
Total		20	4

6	Advanced studies in general sociology <b>or</b> Advanced studies in empirical research optionally	8	2
	Participation in a research project (possibly starting in the 5 <sup>th</sup> semester)		
	B.A. thesis	10	
Total		18	2

## (2) If choosing the module “study project”

Total

Semester	Course	ECTS	HPW
4	Sociological theories	6	2
	or Study project	or 20	or 0
Total		6-20	0-2

5	Sociological theories	6	2
	or Study project	or 20	or 20
Total		6-20	0-2

6	Advanced studies in general sociology <b>or</b> Advanced studies in empirical research optionally	8	2
	Participation in a research project (possibly starting in the 5 <sup>th</sup> semester)		
	B.A. thesis	10	
Total		18	2

In general, courses will be offered according to the listed hours per week (HPW), however, deviations from this workload are possible. Regardless of the workload, the listed ECTS credits remain the same.

## 7. Receiving the B.A. degree

The B.A. examination is completed when all of the required examinations and student work in the major and minor fields of studies and in area of “career skills” are successfully completed, and, as a result, the required 180 ECTS credits have been obtained. Based on the successful completion of the B.A. evaluation, the degree “Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)” is awarded to the student.

## 8. Perspectives upon completion of the degree

The goal of the degree course is to provide students with an academic foundation in sociology that on the one hand meets the prerequisites for a range of M.A. degrees in the areas of sociology, social sciences and cultural studies, and on the other hand opens career options that require fundamental knowledge in the field of sociology.

The job market's demand for knowledge and skills, as taught in the field of sociology, originates from the unpredictable forces guiding this market. Academic is based on the idea that the introduction to and application of knowledge gives people the skills, in a knowledge and technology intensive society, to come to terms with the demands of a rapidly changing job market and allows graduates to actively take advantage of changing and newly developing career paths. This is brought about by work practices when new knowledge or knowledge that has been callously left behind finds new outlets in social life.

The B.A. degree with a major in sociology prepares students for a wide range of career options. A fundamental education in sociological theory ensures that students are not trapped in a small field of studies and provides a high degree of insight into various aspects of life. Empirical research skills are valuable tools in various branches of work such as economics (human resources, corporate organization, marketing), politics (political advisor, administration, welfare) and culture (media, culture management).

Upon the successful completion of the B.A. degree and as long as the admittance requirements (for example having above average grades, the required knowledge in the respected field, the required language skills and appropriate work experience) are met, students have to option of doing a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree.