

Note:

The following curriculum is a consolidated version. It is legally non-binding and for informational purposes only.

The legally binding versions are found in the University of Innsbruck Bulletins (in German).

Principal version published in the University of Innsbruck Bulletin of 19 February 2008, Issue 21, No 188

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Complete version from 1 October 2014

Curriculum for the

Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory

at the School of Political Science and Sociology of the University of Innsbruck

§ 1 Qualification Profile and Study Objectives

- (1) The Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory belongs to the group of programmes in social sciences.
- (2) Social scientific theory for the purpose of elaborating theoretic-conceptual requirements for research is – next to methodology and material expertise – as such one of the three pillars of the social sciences. The quality of applied and practical- empirical research critically depends on the theoretical ground work. The Master's programme conveys knowledge of foundational paradigms and corresponding discourses in social sciences as well as the relevance of theoretical decisions for practice and empiricism of the social realm.
- (3) The Master's programme fosters in all modules – beyond subject-specific competencies – soft skills such as communicative abilities, particularly presentation techniques in terms of knowledge acquired in the Master's programme, team work competencies, consolidated rhetorical and written expression, enhanced independent performance and the ability to critical reflection and tolerance towards other positions.
- (4) In the design of the teachings of all modules close attention is paid to the use of the newest media for deepened and flexible knowledge transfer.
- (5) The study objective consists in the enhanced theory competency as basis for social scientific knowledge. Graduates are qualified to independently work on scientific problems, to evaluate scientific knowledge and to apply it in new contexts particularly relevant for research and to creatively refine it.
- (6) The Master's programme prepares for
 - occupations in academic institutions and particularly for a continuing doctorate and/or
 - executive, planning, analytical or consulting occupations in public administrations, the private sector as well as transnational governmental and non- governmental organisations;
 - professional occupations in the broad field of social research and social counselling.

- (7) The educational objective of the Master's programme includes gender competence. Therefore, the current state of gender research is the subject of a special course and is, additionally, integrated in all modules as a cross subject topic.

§ 2 Admission

- (1) Admission to the Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory requires one of the following:
 - a degree of a Bachelor's programme in a related field;
 - a degree of a Bachelor's programme in a related field obtained from a university of applied sciences;
 - an equivalent degree obtained from an accredited postsecondary institution in Austria or abroad.
- (2) A Bachelor's degree in Political Science or a Bachelor's degree in Sociology obtained from the University of Innsbruck is considered a degree in a related field at any rate.

§ 3 Scope and Duration of Studies

The Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory comprises 120 ECTS-Credits, which is equivalent to the duration of studies of four semesters. One ECTS-Credit is equivalent to a workload of 25 hours.

§ 4 Types of courses and maximum number of students per course

- (1) Courses without continuous assessment:

Lectures (VO) are courses held in lecture format. They introduce the research areas, methods and schools of thought for a given subject. Maximum number of participants: 200
- (2) Courses with continuous assessment:

Seminars (SE) provide in-depth treatment of scientific topics through students' presentations and discussion thereof. Maximum number of participants: 30.

§ 5 Procedure for the allotment of places in courses with a limited number of participants

Places in courses with a limited number of participants are allocated as follows:

1. Students enrolled in the Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory potentially facing a prolongation of their duration of study due to postponement are given preference in registration.
2. Students enrolled in the Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory are given preference in registration over students of other programmes.

§ 6 Compulsory and elective modules

(1) The following compulsory modules with a total of 25 ECTS-Credits are to be taken:

1.	Compulsory Module: Philosophy of Science and Methodology of Social Sciences	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Philosophy of Science and Methodology of Social Sciences The lecture presents meta-theoretical and methodological positions which determine the various paradigms in the social sciences, e.g. logical positivism, the approach of Thomas Kuhn, Critical Rationalism and semantic views of scientific theories in modern philosophy of science. Furthermore the discourses on scientific understanding and explaining will be discussed, as well as problems of axiological neutrality, social laws, causality and progress in the social sciences.	2	5
b.	SE Philosophy of Science and Methodology of Social Sciences In the seminar, students independently work on texts of the philosophy and methodology of the social sciences in an exemplary fashion.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students are able to characterize and critically evaluate meta-theoretical questions and positions of social science theories as well as fundamental issues of economic development.		
	Prerequisites: none		

2.	Compulsory Module: Theory-Based Empirical Social and Policy Analysis	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE Theory-Based Quantitative Empirical Social and Policy Analysis This seminar deals with the inter-linkage of theoretical positions and empirical research questions; theoretical positions and their resulting consequences for quantitative empirical research are discussed.	2	5
b.	SE Theory-Based Qualitative Empirical Social and Policy Analysis This seminar deals with the inter-linkage of theoretical positions and empirical research questions; theoretical positions and their resulting consequences for qualitative empirical research are discussed.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students are able to apply theoretical models within specific empirical research projects.		
	Prerequisites: none		

3.	Compulsory Module: Master's Thesis Colloquium	h	ECTS-Credits
	SE Master's Thesis Colloquium The course offers a forum to assist current master's theses. The current state of the work is presented as an overview and partial aspects are elaborated in-depth.	2	2.5
	Total	2	2.5
	Objective: The students are able to elaborate and present partial aspects of their master's thesis.		
	Prerequisites: none		

4.	Compulsory Module: Master's Thesis Defense	h	ECTS-Credits
	Oral defense of the master's thesis		2.5
	Total		2.5
	Objective: Presentation, reflection on, and analysis of master's thesis results in the overall context of the master's programme; the focus is on demonstrating evaluation and method competences, as well as on presenting the results.		
	Prerequisites: successful completion of all other modules and of the Master thesis		

(2) Elective modules with a total of 70 ECTS-Credits are to be taken:

1.	Elective Module: History of Social and Political Thought	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO History of Social and Political Thought The lecture gives an overview of social and political ideas from the beginning of the history of thought to classical sociological theories of the 19th century. In this context, its meaning for the current discussion in social sciences is referred	2	5
b.	SE History of Social and Political Thought Students individually elaborate exemplary important works from the history of social and political thought.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students are able to describe the history of social and political thought in its importance for contemporary social science.		
	Prerequisites: none		

2.	Elective Module: Classical Sociological Theory	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Classical Sociological Theory The lecture gives an overview of the paradigms developed in the foundation phase of sociology, in particular the works of Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel. Moreover, also lesser-known sociology approaches in their environment as well as the immediate prehistory of the development of sociology (e.g. Comte, Marx) are treated.	2	5
b.	SE Classical Sociological Theory In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of classical sociology theory.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students know how to characterize and critically reflect the paradigms of classical sociology and apply them to issues of contemporary sociology.		
	Prerequisites: none		

3.	Elective Module: Contemporary Sociological Theory	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Contemporary Sociological Theory The course introduces students to the research workshop of contemporary sociological theory. Perspectives of contemporary important sociological theories are elaborated. The lecture gives an overview of the most important contemporary sociological theories and central concepts of post-classical theory discourse, such as micro and macro approaches, action and structure, critical theory and system theory which are important in Germany, and neofunctionalism as well as historical world system theory, theoretical implications of gender research as well as postmodern and postcolonial sociological approaches.	2	5
b.	SE Contemporary Sociological Theory The course deals with exemplary works of contemporary sociological theories.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students are able to characterize and critically reflect the postclassical theoretical landscape in its development, strategies and differences.		
	Prerequisites: none		

4.	Elective Module: Systemic Social Theories	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Systemic Social Theories The lecture provides an overview of systemic and holistic concepts of social phenomena as represented by the works of Talcott Parsons and Niklas Luhmann. Additionally, the course deals with systems theoretical oeuvres of Gregory Bateson and new developments as the post-Luhmann school and neofunctionalism.	2	5
b.	SE Systemic Social Theories In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of systemic social theories.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students know how to describe systemic approaches and to evaluate their scientific and practical potential. They are able to critically reflect and apply systemic social theories.		
	Prerequisites: none		

5.	Elective Module: Theories of the State, Democracy and Power	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Theories of the State, Democracy and Power The lecture gives an overview of the historical development and current theories of state, democracy and power. In this context, the fundamentals of normative political thought and contemporary issues of political philosophy are treated.	2	5
b.	SE Theories of the State, Democracy and Power In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of theories of the state, democracy and power.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students know how to differentiate and critically reflect and evaluate the most important theories of the state, democracy and power. They are able to work on exemplary texts in the field of theories of the state, democracy and power independently and theory-driven.		
	Prerequisites: none		

6.	Elective Module: Theories of Action	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Theories of Action The course deals with sociological theories which form the abilities to act of social subjects as their primary starting point for the analysis of social action, institutional forms and social structures. In this context, it can be distinguished between comprehension-oriented (interpretative, e.g. symbolic interactionism) and explanation-oriented (nomological, e.g. rational choice theories) approaches. In view of classical and contemporary theories, issues of the relationship of action and structure, individual action creativity and communicative, socio-structural and cultural contexts of sense and action are discussed.	2	5

b.	SE Theories of Action In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of theories of action.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students have knowledge in comprehension-oriented (interpretative) and explanation-oriented (nomological) sociological action theories. They are able to describe and analyse the relationship between action and structure, individual action creativity and action contexts.		
	Prerequisites: none		

7.	Elective Module: Culture and Society	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Cultural Theory: Culture and Society The lecture will offer an overview of the diversity of the concepts of culture, that are central to the social sciences, and the consequences of related theoretical choices for understanding the social.	2	5
b.	SE Cultural Theory: Culture and Society In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of culture and society.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students have knowledge in different cultural sociological concepts of modelling the relation between culture and society. They are able to recognize and describe the explanatory power of appropriate concepts for analysing cultural and social processes.		
	Prerequisites: none		

8.	Elective Module: Gender Theories	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Theories of Gender Relations The lecture provides a survey of gender theories, the continuities and turns within feminist theories as well of the transcultural gender studies. The connection between feminist theory and social movements are analysed and the relevance of trans- and interdisciplinarity is clarified.	2	5
b.	SE Gender Relations In the seminar, students independently work on exemplary texts in the field of gender theories which they assess in terms of their contribution to contemporary social-theoretical discourse and the comprehension of contemporary society.	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Objective: Students have knowledge in historicity and cultural variability of gender relations and the category „gender“ as well as their ethical relevance. They know the history of feminist movement and are able to critically reflect current results of human and cultural science gender research and normative requirements to gender.		
	Prerequisites: none		

9. Modules from the curricula of the Master's Programme at the University of Innsbruck with a total of 10 ECTS-Credits can be selected freely in order to focus the choice of specialization.

10.	Elective Module: Professionals Practical Training	h	ECTS-Credits
	Instead of the elective module according to No 9, a professional practical training with a total of 250 hours can be completed in order to get insights into an area of practice in a national or international organisation with sociologically relevant fields of activity or research projects. A written report is to be written; this equals 10 ECTS-Credits. The training can only be taken after successful completion of the second semester at the earliest. The Director of Studies has to give permission before starting the professional practical training.	-	10
	Total	-	10
	Objective: This module serves to broaden the scope of studies and to test and apply practice-oriented qualifications acquired in the study programme.		
	Prerequisites: none		

§ 7 Master's Thesis

- (1) Students of the Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory are required to write a master thesis. The master thesis is a scientific piece of work providing proof of the ability to work on a scientific subject in an independent and substantial way, as well as methodologically acceptable manner.
- (2) The topic of the master thesis is based on a compulsory module according to § 6 section 1 No 1 to 8.
- (3) Students are entitled to propose the topic of their master thesis or to choose from a number of proposed topics.
- (4) The master thesis comprises an amount of work equivalent to 25 ECTS-Credits.

§ 8 Examination Rules

- (1) Performance review of a module is effected through the assessment in the courses comprised in the module (course examinations) with the exception of the module Master's Thesis Defence and of the Professional Practical Training.
- (2) For courses immanently relevant for examinations, the method of examination (written/oral examination(s)) is determined and announced by course instructors prior to the beginning of the course.
- (3) The method of examination (written or oral) for lectures is determined and announced by course instructors prior to the beginning of the course.
- (4) The performance evaluation of the module Professional Practical Training takes place through "successful participation" or "unsuccessful participation" by the Director of Studies.
- (5) The performance evaluation of the final module "Master's Thesis Defence" pursuant to § 6 section 1 No 4 takes place in the frame of an oral exam before an examination senate, which is comprised of three persons including the supervisor for the master thesis.

§ 9 Academic Degree

Graduates of the Master's Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory are awarded the degree "Master of Arts", in short "MA".

§ 10 Coming into force

- (1) This curriculum comes into force on 1 October 2008.
- (2) The modification of the curriculum published in the University of Innsbruck Bulletin of 27 June 2014, Issue 36, No 541 comes into force on 1 October 2014 and applies to all students.

Equivalence list – Master’s Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory

- (1) Positively assessed exams, taken as part of the Master’s Programme Sociology: Social and Political Theory at the University of Innsbruck (curriculum published in the version of the University of Innsbruck Bulletin from 19 February 2008, Issue 21, No 188) will be recognised as equal towards the exams of the curriculum published in the version of the University of Innsbruck Bulletin from 27 June 2014, Issue 36, No 541 as follows:

Curriculum published in the version of the University of Innsbruck Bulletin from 19 February 2008, Issue 21, No 188		Curriculum published in the version of the University of Innsbruck Bulletin from 27 June 2014, Issue 36, No 541	
§6(1) a.	VO History of Social and Political Thought (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)1.a.	VO History of Social and Political Thought (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) b.	SE History of Social and Political Thought (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)1.b.	SE History of Social and Political Thought (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 2a.	VO Classical Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)2a.	VO Classical Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 2b.	SE Classical Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)2b.	SE Classical Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 4a.	VO Contemporary Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)3a.	VO Contemporary Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 4b.	SE Contemporary Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)3b.	SE Contemporary Sociological Theory (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 5a.	VO Systemic Social Theories (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)4a.	VO Systemic Social Theories (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 5b.	SE Systemic Social Theories (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)4b.	SE Systemic Social Theories (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 6a.	VO Theories of the State, Democracy and Power (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)5a.	VO Theories of the State, Democracy and Power (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1)6b	SE Theories of the State, Democracy and Power (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)5b.	SE Theories of the State, Democracy and Power (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1) 7a	VO Theories of Action (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)6a	VO Theories of Action (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(1)7b	SE Theories of Action (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)6b	SE Theories of Action (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(2)1a	VO Theories of Socio-Cultural Evolution (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)9	Individual Focus Module (5 ECTS-Credits)
§6(2)1b	SE Theories of Socio-Cultural Evolution (2 h/5 ECTS-Credits)	§6(2)9	Individual Focus Module (5 ECTS-Credits)
Already successfully completed elective modules remain valid			

- (2) Individual cases, where this regulation does not apply, will be decided in order that no disadvantage shall arise for the student due to the modification.