

Note:

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Curriculum for the
Master's Programme in Political Science
at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences of the University of Innsbruck

(New-release 2024)

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§ 1 Allocation of the study programme

According to §54 para. 1 of the Universities Act of 2002, the Master's Programme in Political Science at the University of Innsbruck is grouped among the social and economic study programmes.

§ 2 Qualification profile

- (1) The Master's Programme in Political Science provides in-depth professional training in social and political science and qualification for professional activities that require the application of advanced scientific knowledge and methods. As an academic degree programme, its core consists of the specialised teaching of theories, methods and instruments of social and political sciences and, in particular, the study of political orders, institutions, actors and processes at national, regional, European and global level.
- (2) The aim of the university master's programme is to provide graduates with in-depth scientific and academically sound, theory- and method-based analysis and problem-solving skills in science and practice. Graduates have the knowledge, skills and competences to
 - work independently on scientific problems, assess scientific knowledge and apply it in new, particularly research-relevant contexts, as well as undertake further scientific doctoral or PhD studies;
 - work on relevant problems in their respective non-university professional fields in a scientifically sound and practice-orientated manner. Beyond the subject of political science, they have knowledge, skills and competences that enable them to work in various professional fields;
 - take responsibility for the professional development and management of individuals and groups;
 - use their competences for the prosperous development of society and to improve the quality of life in a community by means of political and non-political processes;
 - reflect on the ethical, social, gender and diversity-related and societal consequences and prerequisites of the use of their knowledge.
- (3) In addition to subject-specific skills, the Master's Programme in Political Science also promotes interdisciplinary social skills such as research skills, written and verbal communication skills, teamwork and social commitment in its modules. In addition, general qualifications are taught and deepened. These include:
 - the ability to present the facts arising from the sources in a critical, factual and clear manner,
 - the ability to combine analytical, critical, creative and design thinking,
 - the competence to create scripts in common computer programmes that are used in the context of social science methods (e.g. R or Python),
 - the competence to create data visualisations that communicate complex content in an appealing, understandable and correct way.
- (4) The Master's Programme in Political Science prepares students in particular
 - for work in scientific organisations and institutions and in particular for taking up a further scientific doctoral or PhD programme and/or
 - for managerial, analytical, planning, auditing and advisory work in public administration, in non-governmental and governmental organisations (such as the European Union, the United Nations, etc.), in companies or in transnational party or interest groups.

§ 3 Admission

- (1) Admission to the Master's Programme Political Science requires a completed bachelor's degree in a subject-relevant subject or completion of a comparable subject-relevant study programme at a recognized national or international postsecondary educational institution.
- (2) In any case, the Bachelor's Programme in Political Science passed at the University of Innsbruck is a subject-relevant study programme. The Rectorate decides on the relevance of another subject-relevant study programme pursuant to §64 para. 3 Universities Act.
- (3) In order to compensate for significant subject-related differences, supplementary examinations totalling a maximum of 30 ECTS-Credits may be prescribed, which must be taken by the end of the second semester of the master's programme.
- (4) The following qualitative admission requirements pursuant to §63a para. 1 Universities Act also apply: knowledge in the field of political science sub-disciplines and social science methods. In any case, this knowledge is demonstrated by positively assessed course examinations totalling 20 ECTS-Credits from the core areas of "European Union", "International Relations", "Political Theory" and "Comparative Politics" as well as 10 ECTS-Credits from the area of 'Methods of Empirical Social Research' and 'Statistics'.

§ 4 Scope and duration

The Master's Programme Political Science covers 120 ECTS-Credits; this corresponds to a duration of four semesters. One ECTS-Credit is equivalent to a workload of 25 hours.

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

- (1) Courses without continuous performance assessment:
Lectures (VO) are courses held in lecture format. They introduce the research areas, methods and schools of thought for a given subject. No maximum number of students per course.
- (2) Courses with continuous performance assessment:
 1. Seminars (SE) provide in-depth study of contents, methods and techniques of a specialist area including presentations and discussions. Maximum number of students: 30.
 2. Lecture-tutorials (VU) focus on the practical treatment of concrete scientific tasks that are discussed during the lecture parts of the course. Maximum number of students: 60

§ 6 Allocation of places in courses with a limited number of participants

In courses with a limited number of participants, the places are allocated as follows:

1. Students for whom the study duration would be extended due to the postponement are given priority.
2. If the criterion in no. 1 does not suffice, first, students, for whom this course is part of a compulsory module are to be given priority, and second, students of for whom this course is part of an elective module.
3. If the criteria in no. 1 and no. 2 do not suffice, the available places are randomly raffled.

§ 7 Structure of the study programme

Within the scope of the Master's Programme in Political Science, compulsory modules covering 30 ECTS-Credits as well as a compulsory specialisation covering 60 ECTS-Credits incl. the Master's Thesis (CM 3 with 2.5 ECTS-Credits, CM 4 with 2.5 ECTS-Credits and 25 ECTS-Credits Master's Thesis) are to be passed. The following Specialisations are offered:

- European Integration Policy: elective modules 1 to 3
- International Relations: elective modules 4 to 6
- Comparative Political Science: elective modules 7 to 9

In addition, further elective modules covering 30 ECTS-Credits are to be passed.

§ 8 Compulsory and elective modules

(1) The following compulsory modules covering altogether 30 ECTS-Credits are to be passed:

1.	Compulsory Module: Political Science in the 21 st Century	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Trends and Challenges in Political Science in the 21 st Century	2	5
b.	VU Programming, Visualising and Communicating Research Results in Political Science	2	5
	Total	4	10
Learning Outcomes: Students have a sound overview of theoretical and analytical concepts, empirical findings and methodological challenges of analysing political governance and political system comparisons in national, international and supranational contexts as well as party and election research. They are able to analyse and evaluate specific characteristics and functions of political systems and their inherent dynamics on the basis of theory. In addition, students have basic knowledge of programming and visualisation. They are able to graphically visualise data relevant to political science with the help of programming languages such as R or Python. They can structure research results and scientific working methods in a clear, coherent and comprehensible manner and communicate this knowledge both orally and in writing in a way that is appropriate to the situation, function, domain and target group.			
Prerequisites: none			

2.	Compulsory module: Political Science Research Methods	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VU Qualitative Methods in Empirical Political Science	2	5
b.	VU Quantitative Methods in Empirical Political Science	2	5
	Total	4	10
Learning Outcomes: Students master the application of common quantitative and qualitative methods of political science and related disciplines in answering their research questions as well as important research questions of the discipline. They understand the background of these methods in philosophy of science, logic or statistics and their implications for data collection, data management and data analysis. They understand how to select quantitative and qualitative methods that are appropriate to answer their research questions or significant research questions in the discipline. They know how to collect appropriate data to apply these methods and can describe the advantages and disadvantages of the methods used, evaluate them empirically and present their research findings in the context of these advantages and disadvantages. Finally, students understand how to document the methods used in such a way that their work is transparent and can be replicated.			
Prerequisites: none			

3.	Compulsory Module: Preparation of the Master's Thesis	h	ECTS-Credits
	Agreement on the topic, the scope and the form of the Master's Thesis on the basis of a brief summary of the contents (synopsis) as well as agreement on the work processes and the study progress. Planning of an appropriate time frame for the completion of the Master's Thesis.	-	2.5
	Total	-	2.5
	Learning Outcomes: Students can present and critically scrutinise their planned research project in the light of the requirements for Master's Theses. They are able to write a research design, outline a timeline and apply the principles of good scientific practice.		
	Prerequisites: none		

4.	Compulsory Module: Master's Thesis Defence	h	ECTS-Credits
	Final oral defence of the Master's Thesis before an examination senate	-	2.5
	Total	-	2.5
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to present the theoretical and methodological positions and results of the Master's Thesis orally in the overall context of the master's programme, reflect on them and defend them in a discussion. They are able to summarise the results of the Master's Thesis convincingly in a presentation, present the resulting increase in knowledge for the discipline and communicate their specialist knowledge as well as their evaluation and methodological skills to the experts in a comprehensible manner.		
	Prerequisites: positive evaluation of all other compulsory and elective modules as well of the Master's Thesis		

(2) One specialisation is to be passed.

A. European Integration Policy

1.	Elective Module: EU Theories	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Theoretical Approaches and EU Politics in Integration in a Global Context	2	5
b.	SE Theoretical Approaches and EU Politics in Integration in a Global Context	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to reconstruct, analyse and evaluate theoretical models and conceptual designs for the investigation of systemic, policy field-specific and process-relevant aspects of EU integration. They will be able to define the characteristics of the EU's political system, including the inter-institutional negotiation and decision-making processes, the functional differentiation of the EU's system of action, the embedding of the EU system in international contexts of action such as the WTO or the UN and the cooperation between the EU and third countries and international organisations, and validate these on the basis of theory-based questions.		
	Prerequisites: none		

2.	Elective Module: EU Government System	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Inter- and Intra-Institutional Decision-Making Processes of European Integration	2	5
b.	SE Institutions, Procedures and Positioning of Political Governance in the EU Multi-Level System	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students have theoretical and empirical knowledge of analysing European governance against the background of growing demands for democratic, efficient and transparent decision-making processes. Students are able to reconstruct the embedding of EU institutions, member state actors and non-governmental organisations in the EU's multi-level system. They are able to describe and explain complex interaction processes of interdependence and the interaction of institutions and procedures.		
	Prerequisites: none		

3.	Elective Module: Areas of Policy in the EU	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Policy Field Analyses in the Area of European Integration Research	2	5
b.	SE Case Studies on the EU Policy Cycle	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students have in-depth knowledge of the functional scope, depth of competences and procedural development dynamics of relevant EU policy fields. They are able to critically scrutinise corresponding decision-making patterns of the European policy cycle in the multi-level system between member states, intergovernmental and supranational actors. They are able to conceptually reconstruct and empirically validate policy-specific problems and their solutions in the context of EU integration.		
	Prerequisites: none		

B. International Relations

4.	Elective Module: Theoretical Foundations and Trends in International Relations	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	VO Current Topics in International Relations	2	5
b.	VO International Political Theory	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are familiar with the theoretical schools of thought and debates in the field of international political theory. They are able to apply these schools of thought in analysing and evaluating phenomena in international relations. Students are familiar with the development of current topics and problem areas in international relations (e.g. great power relations, arms control, environmental and climate policy, human rights policy) and are able to analyse relevant structures, actors and processes in these fields and identify interactions between different topics and problem areas.		
	Prerequisites: none		

5.	Elective Module: Foreign and Security Policy	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE Foreign Policy	2	5
b.	SE Security Policy	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students know the theoretical and methodological tools of foreign policy research and are able to use these tools to (comparatively) analyse the processes and content of state foreign and security policy. Students will have in-depth knowledge of the actions of major powers, middle powers and small states in various areas of foreign and security policy. In addition to the comparative analysis of processes and contents of foreign and security policy, students are able to critically reflect on the foreign and security policy actions of states (e.g. with regard to their effectiveness or moral content) and to make recommendations for action on the basis of this critical analysis.		
	Prerequisites: none		

6.	Elective Module: Transnational International Relations	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE International and Transnational Politics	2	5
b.	SE Gender and Identities	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students have in-depth knowledge of the diversity of non-state actors in global politics. They are able to distinguish between different types of non-state actors (such as multinational companies, non-governmental organisations or transgovernmental organisations/networks) and analyse their actions and influence in global politics. Students are able to recognise hierarchies in world politics and their central characteristics, or characteristics of exclusion and marginalisation, such as gender, identity, ethnicity or class, and to analyse their effects.		
	Prerequisites: none		

C. Comparative Political Science

7.	Elective Module: Elections and Political Communication	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE Electoral Analysis	2	5
b.	SE Political Communication	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are familiar with central theories and models for explaining the behaviour of political elites and the electorate and a broad range of methods in election and media research. They are able to recognise and evaluate structures, processes and trends in the development of public opinion, the media and media systems and differences in national communication cultures.		
	Prerequisites: none		

8.	Elective Module: Governance, Parliamentarism and Political Elites	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE Governance and Political Elites	2	5
b.	SE Parliamentarism	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students have knowledge of theoretical and empirical research on the central structures, processes and actors in the parliamentary and executive arena. They are familiar with important questions, challenges and findings of parliamentarism, executive and political science research on elites and are able to work on topics in this field largely independently in a theory-led manner and using suitable methods.		
	Prerequisites: none		

9.	Elective Module: Political Economy and Representation	h	ECTS-Credits
a.	SE Political Economy	2	5
b.	SE Gender, Inequality and Representation	2	5
	Total	4	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to analyse and apply theory and empiricism in the cross-sectional subjects of political economy and empirical gender studies as well as in the fields of inequality and representation. Students are familiar with the most important subjects, concepts, theories and methods of political economy and the basic functional mechanisms of economic systems (especially the market economy), have basic knowledge of the possibilities and limits of political control of different types of economic systems, their political prerequisites and social consequences, as well as the theories and methods of the new political economy (e.g. game theory). Students are able to apply the central concepts and topics of empirical gender studies in political science. They have a multidimensional understanding of the relationship between gender and politics and the importance of gender for analysing political processes. They are thus able to conduct empirical analyses of political processes and policy fields from a gender perspective. They are familiar with the latest research on political, economic and social inequality and representation.		
	Prerequisites: none		

- (3) Courses amounting to 10 ECTS-Credits must be selected from the non-selected specializations.

(4) Further elective modules covering 30 ECTS-Credits are to be passed.

1.	Elective Module: Interdisciplinary Skills	h	ECTS-Credits
	Provided that places are available, courses covering 10 ECTS-Credits may be freely selected from other master's programmes offered at the University of Innsbruck. Not yet passed courses from the non-selected specialisations of this curriculum may also be completed. It is compulsory to pick one course from field of Gender Studies, Women's and Gender Studies.	-	10
	Total	-	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to understand the theories, methods and perspectives of other subjects/studies. Against the background of their own discipline, they are able to identify challenges at the interfaces between disciplines and formulate interdisciplinary questions.		
	Prerequisites: The prerequisites specified in the respective curricula are to be met.		

2.	Elective Module: Individual Choice of Specialisation	h	ECTS-Credits
	For individual specialisation, modules from the curricula of the master's programmes established at the University of Innsbruck in accordance with §54 para. 1 Universities Act covering a maximum of 20 ECTS-Credits can be freely selected. The prerequisites specified in the respective curricula are to be met.	-	20
	Total	-	20
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to understand the theories, methods and perspectives of other subjects/studies. Against the background of their own discipline, they are able to identify challenges at the interfaces between disciplines and formulate interdisciplinary questions.		
	Prerequisites: The prerequisites specified in the respective curricula are to be met.		
3.	Elective Module: Political Science in Practice I	h	ECTS-Credits
	In order to evaluate and apply their knowledge and skills and to gain professional experience, students may complete an internship of 225 hours. Approval from the Director of Studies is required before beginning the internship. A certificate from the institution must be submitted stating the duration, scope and content of the work performed and the student's commitment, and a report must also be prepared in written form or in the form of a ten-minute video clip which, in addition to objectives and activities, also includes documentation of learning experiences. (25 working hours will be allocated for the report).	-	10
	Total	-	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their training in a professional environment. They are familiar with the conditions of professional practice and can establish connections between theoretical knowledge and practical action and reflect critically on them.		
	Prerequisites: study achievements covering 30 ECTS-Credits		
4.	Elective Module: Political Science in Practice II	h	ECTS-Credits

	In order to evaluate and apply their knowledge and skills and to gain professional experience, students may complete a practical internship of 225 hours. Approval from the Director of Studies is required before beginning the internship. A certificate from the institution must be submitted stating the duration, scope and content of the work performed and the student's commitment, and a report must also be prepared in written form or in the form of a ten-minute video clip which, in addition to objectives and activities, also includes documentation of learning experiences. (25 working hours will be allocated for the report).	-	10
	Total	-	10
	Learning Outcomes: Students are able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their training in a professional environment. They are familiar with the conditions of professional practice and can establish connections between theoretical knowledge and practical action and reflect critically on them.		
	Prerequisites: study achievements covering 30 ECTS-Credits		

Instead of the elective modules pursuant to §8 para. 3 a Minor for master's programmes may be passed, provided that places are available. Minors are fixed modules from other disciplines covering 30 ECTS-Credits. They have been announced in the University of Innsbruck Bulletin.

§ 9 Master's Thesis

- (1) In the Master's Programme in Political Science, a Master's Thesis covering 25 ECTS-Credits must be written in the area of the chosen specialisation. The Master's Thesis is a piece of academic work that serves to demonstrate the student's ability to work independently on an academic topic in a substantively and methodologically sound manner.
- (2) The Master's Thesis must be submitted in electronic form or in the form specified by the Director of Studies.
- (3) If the supervisor agrees to it, the Master's Thesis may be written in a foreign language.

§ 10 Examination regulations

- (1) A module, with the exception of the modules "Preparation of the Master's Thesis" and "Master's Thesis Defence" as well as modules "Political Science in Practice I" and "Political Science in Practice II" is completed by positive evaluation of its courses.
The performance in courses of the modules is assessed by course examinations. Course examinations serve to proof the knowledge and skills imparted by a single course whereby
 1. in the case of courses without continuous performance evaluation, the evaluation is based on a single exam at the end of the course.
 2. in the case of courses with continuous performance evaluation the evaluation is based on at least two written, oral and/or practical contributions of the participants.
- (2) The course instructor has to define and announce the examination method (written and/or oral, exam paper) and the evaluation criteria before the start of the semester.
- (3) The performance in the modules "Political Science in Practice I" and "Political Science in Practice II" is evaluated by the Director of Studies. Positive evaluation reads "participated with success", negative evaluation "participated without success".
- (4) The performance evaluation of the Compulsory Module "Preparation of the Master's Thesis" is carried out by the supervisor on the basis of the research design. Positive evaluation reads "participated with success", negative evaluation "participated without success".

- (5) The evaluation of the final module of the study programme “Master’s Thesis Defence”, which also completes the study programme, is based on an oral exam before an examination board consisting of three persons.
- (6) Modules and courses taken from other study programmes are subject to the examination regulations of the curriculum they have been taken from. Extra-curricular Minors are subject to the examination regulations of this curriculum.

§ 11 Academic Degree

Graduates of the Master’s Programme Political Science are awarded the academic degree “Master of Arts”, abbreviated “MA”.

§ 12 Coming into force

This curriculum is effective as of 1 October 2024.

§ 13 Transitional provisions

- (1) This curriculum applies to all students who start the study programme from the 2024/25 winter semester onwards.
- (2) Regular students who have started the Master’s Programme in Political Science: European and International Politics, published in the University of Innsbruck Bulletin of 19 February 2008, Issue 20, No. 187 at the University of Innsbruck before 1 October 2024, are entitled to finish this study programme within a maximum of six semesters from this point in time.
- (3) If the Master’s Programme in Political Science: European and International Politics is not finished in time pursuant to para. 2, the students are subject to the curriculum for the Master’s Programme in Political Science (New-release 2024).
- (4) The students of the Master’s Programme in Political Science: European and International Politics are entitled to subject to the curriculum for the Master’s Programme in Political Science on a voluntary basis any time.