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Heinrich Heine
Universität Düsseldorf



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Courses in English at the Institute of Social Sciences

Bachelor & Master

Summer Term 2025

Summer Term 2025
Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2025

Bachelor Courses

The overview of courses for the summer term 2025 is preliminary.
We expect more courses to be announced and/or more details to be provided.

Media and Communication Studies

Political Marketing American Style

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Media and Communication Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Unterberg
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Monday, 14:30 - 16:00

This course will show how political marketing is used in the competition among political actors seeking to gain influence on the public sphere. Increasingly, voters choose parties and candidates like consumers choose products. The competing political parties and candidates therefore try to use political marketing to influence the public and the content of the media in a way that is favorable to their communication goals. Political marketing can therefore be understood as a tool designed to influence the public about political candidates and issues.

Harmful Online Communication

Term	Summer Semester 2025
Department	Media and Communication Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Weller
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 8 CP (with final exam)
Times	Fr. 13.06. 10:30 -18:00 Fr. 14.06. 10:30 - 18:00, Fr. 04.07. 10:30 - 18:00 Fr. 05.07. 10:30 - 18:00

In case of questions about the course, please reach out to Katrin Weller (katrin.weller@gesis.org).

Platforms, Power, and Politics: An Introduction to Political Communication in the Digital Age"

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Media and Communication Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Kelm, Ole , Dr.
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 8 CP (with final exam)
Times	Wednesday, 10:30 - 14:00

"This pathbreaking text brings the field of political communication fully into the digital age. This much needed update of the field explains how hybrid media systems impact participation, politics, and power in society."

Political Science

Introduction to Comparative Welfare State Analysis: Foundations, Theories and Development

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Johanna Plenter
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Wednesday 12:30 - 14:00

Providing social security for the population against risks such as illness, unemployment and old age is one of the core tasks of the state. For this reason, social spending accounts for a large share of the budget in most developed countries. However, there are significant differences in the type and level of spending and in the content of welfare state policy in international comparison. Why have welfare states developed so differently and what are the current challenges? In recent decades, the traditional welfare state has come under increasing pressure. From a liberal (economic) perspective, it is seen as bloated, cumbersome and creating false incentives. At the same time, social inequality is increasing in most democracies, and existing systems do not have adequate answers to new social risks.

Political Economy of Peace and Conflict I - Conflict

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Neudorfer
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 8)
Times	Thursday 10:30 - 12:00

Conflict is a persistent element of human history, and its current impact is unprecedented since World War II. By 2022, 108.4 million people had been forcefully displaced—2.5 times more than a decade ago—while civilian deaths rose by 50%. Today, six out of seven people globally experience a sense of insecurity. In response, Sustainable Development Goal 16 aims to promote peaceful societies, ensure access to justice, and build effective, accountable institutions to guarantee freedom from violence and fear for all individuals.

Voting Advice Applications in a Comparative Perspective

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Marschall, Stefan Ernst , Univ.-Prof. Dr
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Monday 14:30 - 16:00

This seminar explores the rapidly growing phenomenon of Voting Advice Applications (VAAs), digital tools designed to assist voters in aligning their political preferences with candidates or parties by analyzing their responses to key policy questions during election campaigns. Over the past years, VAAs have been the subject of extensive research, as scholars seek to understand their impact on political behavior, voter decision-making, and democratic processes. In this course, we will examine the theoretical foundations of VAAs, explore variations in their design and the implications of these differences, and assess their effects on the electorate.

Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2025

International Political Economy (IPE) - Theories and Empirics

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Neudorfer
Level	IAdvanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 8)
Times	Thursday, 14:30 - 16:00

The increasingly integrated global economy challenges governments to address policy making (in various policy areas) taking both the national and global dimension into consideration. Looking at where the interface of international and domestic policy making lies, this course introduces students to IPE theories in general and the growing research body in IPE. To do so, the course combines a general textbook with published articles in high ranking journals. The first part of the course will familiarize students with IPE in general and crucial actors in studying IPE – voters, parties and government. The second part of the course will then focus on political decision making in trade and monetary policy in the international context. The third part looks at effects of globalization on e.g. child labour, foreign aid, and government spending. Particularly, in the second and third part we will also look at empirical testing of theoretical explanations.

Political Economy of the Eurozone - Blockseminar

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Aspide, Alessia, Locatelli, Camilla
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Monday 07.04. 12.30 - 14.00 Thursday 10.04. 12.30 - 18.00 Thursday 24.04. 12.30 - 18.00 Friday 25.04. 12.30 - 18.00 Wednesday 30.04. 12.30 - 18.00 Thursday 08.05. 11:00- 16.30

This course explores the evolution of the European Monetary Union (EMU), tracing its origins, crises, and transformations. It examines the ideas, interests, and institutions that shaped the EMU's creation, the structural vulnerabilities exposed by the Eurozone crisis, and the critical reforms that followed. Through a comparative lens, the course evaluates the EU's responses to the Eurozone crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting their socioeconomic consequences and implications for European integration. By addressing past and present challenges, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the EMU's architecture and the future of economic governance in Europe.

Political Science

Comparative Study of Welfare States: A Qualitative Approach

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Fernández Serrano, Daniel, Zons, Gregor , Dr.
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Friday 04.07. 10:00-18:00 Friday 11.07. 10:00-18:00 Saturday 05.07. 10:00-18:00 Saturday 12.07. 10:00-18:00

The course in comparative welfare systems helps to use qualitative research methods and at the same time to get to know the research community that researches the welfare state. For this purpose, I have decided to divide the course into two parts, one on qualitative research methods, welfare state conceptualization and theory, and the second on welfare state topics which are after "dissected" by students so they can write their own case studies in the future.

Internal and external dimensions of EU economic governance

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Cova, Joshua; Schmitz, Luuk , Dr.
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Wednesday 28.05. 12:30 - 18:00 Thursday 10.04. 12:30-14:00 Thursday 17.04. 12:30-18:00 Friday 09.05. 10:30-16:00 Friday 06.06. 10:30-16:00 Friday 13.06. 8:30-16:00

The European Union (EU) stands at a crossroads, grappling with transformative challenges that will shape its future. As highlighted in Mario Draghi's recent report on The Future of European Competitiveness, European economies face an 'existential challenge', as heightened global competition and geopolitical instability may jeopardize the preservation of a European social model.

This interactive block seminar dives into the heart of these challenges by examining internal and external dimensions of EU governance. Since the establishment of the common market, the EU has continuously reshaped member states' policies across a variety of areas. Internally, we will explore how EU governance instruments impact member states' labour markets and welfare states. Externally, we will investigate how the EU exerts influence on global trade, geo-economics, and international security, highlighting the EU's norm-setting role as a key player in shaping global governance paradigms.

Political Science

Understanding Human Mobility: A Practical Approach to Qualitative Methods

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Samson, Zuzanna
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Friday 20.06. 10:00-18:00 Friday 27.06. 10:00-18:00 Saturday 21.06. 10:00-18:00 Saturday 28.06. 10:00-18:00

How to effectively study migration and human mobility with qualitative methods? What are the challenges and opportunities that these methods bring? This course will offer students a practical take on qualitative methods of data collection, applicable in migration studies: interviews, ethnography, focus groups, visual methods, mapping, discourse analysis and process tracing. It will be useful for political science students, who already have a basic understanding of qualitative methods, and provide a guidance on how to operationalise them further. Each session of the course will delve in detail into one method and analyse how it was applied in practice by reading published academic articles. The students will learn what type of data could be obtained from each method, and what are their respective strengths and weaknesses. Through such critical reflection on qualitative methods, the students will also discuss modern socio-political issues related to human mobility to Europe and North America, such as settlement, integration, border securitisation or trauma.

Sociology

Sociology of the Body

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Beckers
Level	Intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 (with final exam 6)
Times	Tuesday, 10:30 - 12:00

This course on the "Sociology of the Body" addresses a social category which has been overlooked in many early sociological theories although bodies are everywhere in society and "serve as the substratum for social life" (E. Bernstein). Yet, multiple approaches to theorizing and researching the body have emerged in recent decades. We will read studies from scholars of the 20th century until today and examine the processes by which individual bodies are shaped by social structures, ways in which bodies are socially constructed, represented and used - and, in turn, shape social life. We will understand bodies as situated within particular social and historical contexts and address a range of contemporary issues to illustrate this perspective. The body will be addressed not as a pre-social physical objective fact, but as something interpreted through the lens of society and culture.

Antisemitism as a multi-faceted problem of contemporary societies

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Niklas Herrberg
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2SWS
Times	Tuesday, 16:30 - 18:00

Antisemitism is a widespread phenomenon across all segments of society: White supremacists declare Jews to be an existential threat to their race and chant 'Jew will not replace us!', as they did in Charlottesville in 2017. Believers in conspiracy theories likewise blame Jews for all evil in the world of politics, media and economy and constantly see the power of secret Jewish cliques behind social developments. The Covid-19 pandemic, for example, becomes a sinister 'plandemic' that is said to have been caused deliberately and with sinister intent. Islamists, in turn, see the Jews as the eternal enemies of 'true Islam' and a symbol of a liberal and decadent era of modernity. With parts of the political left, they agree in their belief on the need to fight in particular Israel and Zionism with all means necessary. The massacre in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the latest eruption of antisemitic incidents and attacks against Jews worldwide represent the horrific climax of contemporary antisemitism, which appears in various forms and brings together various different actors.

Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2025

Death, grief, and bereavement

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Teran Linarte, Josue Jonatan
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Monday 14:30 - 18:00

This course will primarily explore the development of death studies within sociology, adopting a multidisciplinary approach. We will examine death as a cultural, physical, and metaphysical phenomenon. You will gain insights into how death is culturally embedded, how different societies and cultures confront death, the medical perspectives on death, and the implications for individuals and groups. Death possesses both personal and social dimensions, which is why we will focus on grief and bereavement, seeking to understand the impact on those who remain and how culture shapes these experiences. The aim of this seminar is to provoke thoughtful consideration of a topic rarely addressed in public discourse and to explore the reasons behind this reticence.

Constructing the Migrant Self: Existential and Phenomenological Approaches to Migration Studies

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Gregory Maliukov
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Tuesday 14:30 - 16:00

In case of questions about the course, please reach out to Gregory Maliukov

Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2025

Micro-Sociology of Commitment, Solidarity, and Conflict

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Tranow, Ulf , Dr.
Level	Advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Tuesday 14:30 - 16:00

People attach themselves towards abstract social entities, such as organizations or nation states. But what they feel attached to, and the intensity of their commitment can vary greatly. Why is this? As individuals and as groups, we feel solidarity with some people and indifference or even hostility towards others. How can this selectivity be explained? People enter into conflicts and struggle over a wide range of things, such as values, ideas or material goods. Many conflicts remain harmless and fade away after a short time, while others escalate. How does this happen? A sociological understanding of commitment, solidarity and conflict is crucial for explaining how social order emerges, reproduces itself and changes. Such an understanding is provided by micro-sociological theories, which see social exchange and interaction as the basic building blocks of the social world.

Master Courses

Summer Term 2025

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Political Science

Civil Society in the European Union: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Insights

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Mucha
Level	Master course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Thursday, 12:30 - 14:00

The seminar offers an in-depth exploration of the vital role civil society plays within the EU's political and social landscape. This course bridges theoretical frameworks and real-world applications to equip participants with a comprehensive understanding of civil society's influence on European integration, policy development, and democratic legitimacy.

Democracy at Risk: Understanding Contemporary Autocratization in a Changing World

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Henri Koblischke
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without exam), 9CP (with exam)
Times	Tuesday, 10:30 - 12:00

The seminar offers a comprehensive overview of current political science research in the field of research in the field of autocratization, also known as "democratic backsliding". Topics include classifications of democracy and regimes, a discussion of the extent of current autocratization, a description of the processes of autocratization and their causes.

Personalization in Politics. Comparative Perspectives

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences,
Lecturer	HHU Prof. Dr. Poguntke
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without exam), 9CP (with exam)
Times	Thursday, 10:30 -12:00

A growing literature maintains that politics is becoming increasingly personalized. This does not only apply to the increasing power at the top, where it has been called presidentialization. It is a wider phenomenon that has affected all levels of politics, including local campaigning and the way individual politicians communicate with their voters. While the spread of social media plays an important role here, it is by no means the sole explanation. This seminar will discuss the relevant literature and focus on a selection of country case studies where the phenomenon is particularly interesting, including Germany, Italy and the UK.

Political Science

Business and European Integration

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Waldmann, Jörg , Dr.
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without exam), 9CP (with exam)
Times	Tuesday, 10:30 - 12:00

The course addresses the specific role of business benefiting from, and thus advancing, European integration. Topics include issues and actors relating to agricultural, manufacturing, and services industries and financial markets. We will discuss, among other topics, the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people; industrial policy and state subsidies; competition policy; supervision of financial markets; and corporate social responsibility.

The Evolution of a European Public Sphere

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Waldmann, Jörg , Dr.
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without exam), 9CP (with exam)
Times	Thursday, 10:30 - 12:00

There are many barriers to a real European public sphere. Should they be overcome, and if yes, how? In which sectors of society we are already living in a European public sphere? The course starts with elaborating on the theoretical implications of public spheres. Yet the main part of the seminar is devoted to case studies which touch upon very different aspects of society (culture, economy, sports, media, habits etc.).

Idea(l)s of Europe: The Historical Perspective

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Kiechle, Oliver Hermann , Dr
Level	Master course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Friday, 25.04., 23.05. 9:00-14:00, 21.06., 22.06 09:00-18:00

From Antiquity until the European Union of nowadays, Europe has always been an object of ideas and projections, even fantasies. In one part of the seminar we will discuss these different concepts of Europe in history with their respective ideas of the characteristics and borders of Europe.

In a second part we will take a closer look on structural evolutions in European history. This will cover for example economical and cultural developments, but also changes of society with their associated ideologies.

Sociology

Antisemitism as a multi-faceted Problem of Contemporary Societies

Term	Summer Term 2025
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Herrberg, Niklas
Level	Master course
ECTS	2 SWS
Times	Thursday, 16:30 - 18:00

Antisemitism is a widespread phenomenon across all segments of society: White supremacists declare Jews to be an existential threat to their race and chant 'Jew will not replace us!', as they did in Charlottesville in 2017. Believers in conspiracy theories likewise blame Jews for all evil in the world of politics, media and economy and constantly see the power of secret Jewish cliques behind social developments. The Covid-19 pandemic, for example, becomes a sinister 'plandemic' that is said to have been caused deliberately and with sinister intent. Islamists, in turn, see the Jews as the eternal enemies of 'true Islam' and a symbol of a liberal and decadent era of modernity. With parts of the political left, they agree in their belief on the need to fight in particular Israel and Zionism with all means necessary. The massacre in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the latest eruption of antisemitic incidents and attacks against Jews worldwide represent the horrific climax of contemporary antisemitism, which appears in various forms and brings together various different actors.

We are looking forward to welcoming you
at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf!

The team for internationalization, Institute of Social Sciences

All courses listed are taught in English. They are open to regular as well as to ERASMUS and other international students.

Please note: All information given is subject to change!

For additional information see:

<http://www.phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de/sozwiss/englische-version/>

<https://www.phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de/sozwiss/internationaloffice/students-from-abroad/>

International coordinator:

Dr. Guido Quetsch

+49 (0) 211 - 81 14092

quetsch@hhu.de