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Universität Düsseldorf



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Courses in English at the Institute of Social Sciences

Bachelor & Master

Summer Term 2022

Summer Term 2022
Bachelor Courses

Media and Communication Studies

Public opinion and political discourse

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Media and Communication Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Unterberg, Thomas
Level	intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Wednesdays, 2.30 pm - 4 pm

With a focus on the upcoming 2018 midterm elections in the USA this course will show how political campaigns are conceptualized as competitions among political actors seeking to gain influence on the public sphere. Since in modern societies the mass media are the most important channel by which the public sphere is constituted, the competing political parties and candidates try to influence the content of the media in a way that is favorable to their communication goals. Media content can therefore be understood as the result of an interaction between political actors and the mass media.

Artificial Intelligence and Society_ Public Communication and the Common Good

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Media and Communication Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Lünich, Marco
Level	advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Thursdays, 12.30 pm - 2 pm

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) – an umbrella term for a collection of computer techniques that can recognize systematic patterns and trends from data (i.e., machine learning) and automate decision-making – has received heightened public interest. With its possible applications in society, AI is expected to transform many economic and everyday life areas. However, research on AI and its application is nothing new as its theoretical and technical development has spanned the past decades ever since the widespread adoption of computers. What explains the recent heightened interest in AI? Who and what narratives and imaginaries drive public discourse? How does the public discourse connect AI to other notions regarding the interactions of science, technology, and society? This seminar will focus on public communication concerning AI, ensuing public perceptions and attitudes, and media effects, focusing on visions of AI's impact on the Common Good. Students will learn what lies behind AI and the theoretical construct of the Common Good and what expectations and demands exist for the developers and users of AI to consider in developing and deploying AI systems. Such questions will be addressed in the reading-intensive seminar. With the successful completion of this seminar, students will be well-equipped to understand and critique theoretical and empirical social science research approaches that tackle the social ramifications of AI in society. Students will also learn to develop research questions and empirical research designs.

Political Science

Gender, War and Terrorism

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Rüter, Svenja; Dr. Zons, Gregor
Level	intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Full day meeting on May 13, 14, 20 and 21

In the studies on war and terrorism, gender is often approached as a difference between the sexes rather than a social construct signifying a relationship of power. The former approach does not tell us how gender impacts the relationships occurring in the background. In this seminar, we will use the perspective of gender as a construction to analyze power relations in war and conflict as well as inside the military and terrorist groups by unpacking its application to different social and cultural contexts and the conception of assigned gender roles.

This applies especially to conflict settings where gender is experienced differently across time, space, and cultures, depending on the discourse it operates within. Hence, experiencing gender construction differs from person to person, based on the encountered experiences, sociocultural expectations towards one's biological sex, and one's positionality towards the discourse. In this seminar, we will see that gender power relations are not only applying to men exerting power over women but also within each of the categories (women-women, men-men, women-men).

In the seminar we will discuss questions, such as: Is war inherently masculine? Can women be the perpetrators? How does military masculinity affect the understanding of citizenship? We will attempt to find answers to those and more questions by surveying existing literature and debating the current topics in the field. Students will be introduced to the feminist theories and concepts on gender, war, and terrorism and shown how to incorporate them within the field of Political Science.

The seminar is separated into three main blocks. In the first block, we will discuss the theoretical and conceptual background on gender and war. The second block is devoted to sexual violence and war crimes. The third block deals with the variety of women's roles in terrorist groups.

Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2022

The populist radical Right in Western Europe

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Ciccolini, Guiseppe; Dr. Zons Gregor
Level	intermediate bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Full day meeting on June 24, 25 and on July 1,

Populist radical right (PRR) parties need little introduction. After their emergence in the 80s, they have firmly established themselves in the Western European public sphere. They have occasionally participated in government, too. As a political phenomenon, they represent the most prominent novelty of the last decades across borders. The reasons for their success (and failure) are very much debated among the public opinion and policy-makers. This course aims at introducing students to academic knowledge on radical right populism. Scholars have gathered important evidence on this phenomenon, although blind spots are still present. The course is divided into two blocks. To begin with, students will get a comprehensive overview of the key features of the populist radical right under several aspects: its history, its ideology, its voters. Subsequently, we will clarify the position of the PRR within the European political space and how other parties have responded to its emergence. The first block ends with a discussion of the consequences of this phenomenon for Western politics. In the second block, we will turn to the causes of the emergence of the populist radical right. These will be discussed from a multidisciplinary perspective, drawing on studies from political science, sociology, economics, and – to a lesser extent – psychology and communication science.

European Environmental Policy

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Waldmann, Jörg
Level	advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 8 CP (with final exam)
Times	Di 10.30 a.m. – 12 noon

The European Union claims having some of the world's highest environmental standards greening Europe and many European policies. Environmental Policy on EU level developed incrementally throughout the last four decades and in this seminar we aim to trace back these processes. The seminar will address changing modes of environmental governance, means to integrate environmental thinking into other policies, EU's understanding of sustainability as well as EU's efforts to mitigate climate change.

Students are required to regularly attend classes, to regularly read the assigned texts for the classes, and to introduce one of the assigned readings in a group presentation.

Sociology

Microsociology of Violence

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Tranow, Ulf
Level	advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Wednesdays, 4.30 pm - 6 pm

In public discussions violence is seen as a social pathology and a serious threat to social order. Although most people would agree that violence is an anthropological constant of social life, the demand for containment of violence is a popular request and political promise. This raises the question of what the reasons for violence are and how violent behavior is triggered. Only if we understand violence properly, we can gauge its potential threat and develop effective counter-strategies. The subject of the seminar is Randall Collins' micro-sociological theory of violence, which is one of the most important and discussed theories in this field. By drawing on video recordings, ethnography, and news reports, Collins gives a comprehensive explanation of violence and its dynamics. His insights and conclusions are quite surprising from an everyday perspective as well as from the standard sociological view. First, Collins argues against a popular misconception fostered by movies, public discourse, and standard sociology that violence evolves easily under certain conditions like poverty or the dominance of hate ideologies. Collins shows that violence is always challenging and to a certain degree goes against human physiological hardwiring. Second, Collins demonstrates that violence is primarily triggered by specific situations, which is why we do not understand violence correctly if we focus on violent individual characteristics as the crucial explanatory factor for violent confrontations. </p><p>The seminar is a reading course. In each lesson, we will intensively discuss chapters of Collins' book "Violence: A Microsociological Theory" (Collins 2009).

Bachelor Courses

Summer Term 2022

Sociology of the body: social constructions of human bodies and embodiments of social structures

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Sociology, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Beckers, Tilo
Level	advanced bachelor course
ECTS	2 CP (without final exam), 6 CP (with final exam)
Times	Tuesdays, 8.30 am - 10 am

This advanced 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.

You will learn how individual bodies and the body is shaped by social expectations and symbolic exchange, how meanings are attached to bodies and different body parts, and how these interpretations in turn shape social relations, how bodies are used as capital, how inequality affects our bodies, and how our bodies and embodied experiences are constituted by complex social forces, including relationships of power that stratify society, e.g., how bodies become gendered, 'raced', classed, and sexualized in ways that create and reinforce social institutions and relations of power.

Summer Term 2022
Master Courses

Political Science

Democracy: Cross-border challenges

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Winzen, Thomas
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without final exam), 9 CP (with final exam)
Times	Thursdays 2.30 pm - 4 pm

This seminar engages with academic debates around contemporary challenges for democratic politics. Amongst others, it covers the question of whether a new “wave of autocratization” can be observed around the world. Most importantly, the seminar emphasizes discussion of the manifold challenges, opportunities, and political choices that democracy faces in the context of the (relatively) open national borders.

European integration and domestic politics

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Winzen, Thomas
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without final exam), 9 CP (with final exam)
Times	Tuesdays 2.30 pm - 4 pm

This seminar introduces academic and political debates about European integration. The focus will be on whether and how domestic politics influences the institutional development and policymaking process of the European Union. Amongst others, the seminar will examine the role of public opinion, national and European Parliament elections, and political parties.

Master Courses

Summer Term 2022

How to Deal with Populists: The Populists Challenge and Party Systems in Europe

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Poguntke, Thomas
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without final exam), 9 CP (with final exam)
Times	Thursdays 10.30 am -12 noon

The events in Thuringia, when a FDP politician was elected Prime Minister with the votes of the right-wing Populist AfD highlighted the pitfalls of dealing with Populist challenger parties. While many politicians, particularly in Germany, readily assert that there can only be one proper way of dealing with these parties, the empirical reality is, as always, a lot more complex and multifaceted.

This begins with the widespread misperception that Populism is a rather recent phenomenon. In fact, it is as old as democracy. Also, Populist parties are by no means new. One of the first successful Populist parties dates from 1973, when it came from nowhere to upset the hitherto orderly configuration of the Danish party system. Furthermore, we have seen several approaches by mainstream parties vis-à-vis Populists ranging from strict demarcation to formal coalition. Similarly, the outcome of such strategies seems quite unpredictable: It is by no means empirically certain that strict demarcation is the most promising strategies to weaken Populists; yet, the same is true for cooperation.

This seminar intends to clarify the origin(s) and the substantive meaning of Populism before it takes a closer look at the concepts of Populist and mainstream parties. It will then investigate the interaction between Populists and mainstream parties in Europe by looking at a range of individual countries and comparative studies.

The respective configurations of national party systems will be discussed with reference to the institutional conditions in individual countries including the possibilities to govern with minority cabinets and the ease to call early elections. In sum, this seminar will not only familiarize students with Populism, parties and party system change across Europe but also with the considerable variation of constitutional arrangements that set the institutional boundaries of party competition.

Master Courses

Summer Term 2022

Business and European Integration

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Hummel. Hartwig
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without final exam), 9 CP (with final exam)
Times	Tuesdays, 10.30 am -12 noon

Access to this course is limited, participation cannot be guaranteed

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. Classes will be based on assigned readings and presentations. Students starting this course, including ERASMUS students, need to have a basic knowledge of political and economic institutions and decision-making processes of the European Union and of integration theories.

The Evolution of a European Public Sphere

Term	Summer Term 2022
Department	Political Science, Institute of Social Sciences, HHU
Lecturer	Dr. Waldmann, Jörg
Level	Master course
ECTS	3 CP (without final exam), 9 CP (with final exam)
Times	Thursdays 10.30 am -12 noon

Access to this course is limited, participation cannot be guaranteed

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.).

The course is delivered through a combination of assigned readings, group research and presentations. With the help of groups, students will explore the Europeanization of the public sphere in a variety of fields.

Certificates of attendance require participation in group presentations or minor research projects. The module is assessed by oral examinations. A detailed course outline, further information and relevant literature will be provided via course website.

Master Courses

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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/>

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