



University  
of Bremen

Fachbereich 08  
Sozialwissenschaften

Information for guest students

# Studying social sciences at the University of Bremen



## Dear international students,

The University of Bremen is a young university, founded in 1971, with currently almost 20,000 students. More than 3,000 of them are enrolled in the various undergraduate and graduate programs at the Faculty of Social Sciences, in the Departments of Geography, History, European Studies, Political Science, and Sociology. Every year more than 100 students from our faculty spend a study period abroad, and almost as many guest students come to us from all over the world. This booklet will provide an orientation about the faculty and its departments and will hopefully support your decision to choose Bremen as your place of study.

### Language requirements for guest students

To study the social sciences in Bremen you need sufficient knowledge of one of our teaching languages, German or English. To be able to follow courses you need at least a B2 level in one of these languages, even though the minimum for German knowledge is usually set at B1 level in our bilateral exchange agreements. The individual study programmes differ with regard to the number of English language courses at Bachelor's level, but altogether we offer a substantial list of courses taught in English each semester. When choosing lectures and seminars from all degree programs of our faculty plus language training, you will always be able to earn 30 Credit Points (ETCS) per semester in the courses taught in English. Participation in the courses from our International Master's programs is often limited to advanced students from the relevant study fields. Please inquire with the Erasmus coordinators of the Master's programs, if you meet the prerequisites.

### ECTS requirements

The courses in our study programmes are usually worth either three or six ECTS depending on the examination requirements at the end of the semester. Examination requirements can be assignments, written exams, essays, oral presentations, records, etc. For exchange students the number of ECTS (CP in Bremen) can sometimes be negotiated with the lecturer prior to finalizing the learning agreement depending on the workload of the assignments offered.

### International Module Social Sciences

The Faculty's International Office coordinates several teaching formats according to our internationalization strategy. Guest students who stay two semesters in Bremen, can achieve 12 credit points (CP/ECTS). The main offer in winter semester is the course "Urban History and Geography of Bremen and Northern Germany" (including field trips). This is an offer exclusively for international guest students and students will gain knowledge and competences about the basics of Germany's and Bremen's geography and history. In summer semester, the International Module normally consists of a lecture part, complemented by talks from international lecturers from our partner universities, and a seminar part, in which students present the findings from their own work (ideally incoming Erasmus students will work on Germany and Bremen students on other European regions/ countries or a joint piece of work). The final part of the module consists of an international field trip.





A few times within the academic year, we welcome international scholars or lecturers to teach a one-week intensive lecture. Students can achieve 2 CP/ECTS per course. Each course will be listed individually in the course catalogue.

### Student Committees at FB 08

Students at the University of Bremen organize Student Committees (StugA). They provide advice and information to fellow students about questions concerning the study structure or if you should have problems with a professor. Furthermore, they organize different activities, such as film screenings, an orientation week at the beginning of the semester, and parties, to which you are of course kindly invited.

#### Political Science

<https://politik.stugen.de>

#### Integrated European Studies (IES)

<https://www.uni-bremen.de/fb8/ies/stuga>  
[stug\\_ies@uni-bremen.de](mailto:stug_ies@uni-bremen.de)

#### Sociology

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#### History

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#### Geography

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### Teaching staff mobility and staff training

Most bilateral Erasmus agreements include mobility of teaching, technical and administrative staff. Each year the International Office of the Faculty of Social Sciences accommodates a growing number of visitors and enables a useful integration of the visitors into our teaching modules and research institutes. We are looking forward to your visit!



### Doctoral studies at the University of Bremen

Doctoral students have so far only seldom taken part in the Erasmus student exchange program. Nevertheless, doctoral students are welcome to come to Bremen and attend courses from our BA and MA programs besides doing their research related to the thesis (assessed by a staff member from the home university). Doctoral students who are at the same time staff members and teaching at their home institution are, of course, invited to come to Bremen as Erasmus shortterm teaching staff.

It is worth mentioning that former Erasmus students have not only the possibility to apply for a Master's program in Bremen but also for a three-year grant to work on a PhD at our Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS) (<https://www.bigsss-bremen.de>).

# Political Science

## The Institute for Political Science

The Institute for Political Science is ranked among the leading political science departments in Germany and specializes in two main areas: Theories and Institutions in International Relations (including the European Union) and the Modern Welfare State. The teaching profile of the Bachelor's and Master's programs is shaped by the two research institutions affiliated with the Institute for Political Science. These are the Institute for Intercultural and International Studies (<https://www.iniis.uni-bremen.de>) and the SOCIUM Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy (<https://www.socium.uni-bremen.de>). In light of the international and intercultural approach of political science at Bremen, Erasmus students as well students of political science from outside of Europe are especially welcome. Currently, the Institute has a total of 46 Erasmus partner universities around Europe.

## BA Political Science

In this six-semester BA program (mainly in German, partly in English), students are introduced to the key areas of political science (Germany's political system, political theory, comparative politics, international relations, and policy studies). Focal themes in the program include global governance and European integration, democracy theories, and welfare state politics. Students can specialize in one of the subdisciplines in their fourth semester. Students aiming for a teaching career can study political science as a main or subsidiary subject. The Bachelor's program is open to Erasmus students of political science and neighboring disciplines.

## MA Political Science

This four-semester Master's program is designed for students wishing to deepen their knowledge of political science. Most courses are taught in German, but there is also a growing number of English language courses. Areas of specialization include political theory, public administration, European integration, and international relations. Topics covered include state and democratic theory, democratic justice as well as public policy and administration. Erasmus students, who are at the MA level, may in general participate in seminars of this program.

## MA International Relations

During this two-year English MA program in International Relations students attend a total of twelve seminars covering fields such as theories and issues of global governance (including war and peace, international political economy, modern social theory, normative theories of the international order) as well as methods courses.

The MA Program in International Relations addresses explicitly international students. Erasmus students at the MA level are welcome to choose courses from this program.



## MA Social Policy

This four-semester study program is designed for students wishing to specialize in studies on the modern welfare state, i.e., the analysis of health care, pension, or unemployment systems. The welfare state is examined not only from a political science perspective but also from a sociological, legal, and economic perspective and the study program has a strong focus on global dynamics of the welfare state. Courses are offered in German and in English and cover subjects such as theories of the welfare state, comparative policy analysis as well as methods to study social policy. Erasmus students at the MA level are welcome to attend courses in this program.

## Master of Education (M. Ed.)

The four-semester M. Ed. program qualifies for the teaching profession at grammar schools/ secondary schools in the subject of Politics. The program

combines political science education with by the study of Didactics and Educational Science. Erasmus students at the MA level are welcome to attend courses in this program.

## Contact and information

Erasmus Coordinator for Political Science and International Relations

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Erasmus Coordinator for the MA Social Policy

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# Sociology

## The Institute of Sociology

The Institute of Sociology is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and contributes considerably to the vibrant social science research landscape at Bremen University and beyond. In teaching and research, the main focus areas are sociological theories, social science research methods, and statistics, political and comparative sociology, migration studies and integration, developmental sociology, social networks, family, life course research, as well as education, work, and social inequality. We offer training at the undergraduate and graduate level: BA Sociology and MA Sociology and Social Research. Students in the Bachelor program in Sociology are exposed to a wide array of theoretical approaches and branches of sociology. Our Master's program Sociology and Social Research offers students thorough project-based training in advanced quantitative and qualitative methods. Further, a wide array of General Studies courses is offered each term, complementing the broad range of topics and methods.

Nearly all courses offered under the two programs are open to Erasmus students. Courses in neighboring disciplines within the social sciences can also be attended. German is the language of instruction in most courses. However, each term several courses are offered in English, covering in total about 30 Credit Points. This enables guest students to also study in English. The Institute of Sociology is also closely linked to the SOCIUM – Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy (<https://www.socium.uni-bremen.de>). Whereas teaching is organized by

the Institute of Sociology, research mainly takes place within the Research Center. Most of the academic staff are members of both the Institute of Sociology and SOCIUM, enabling a close link between research and teaching. Erasmus PhD students can profit from the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS, [www.bigsss-bremen.de](http://www.bigsss-bremen.de)), where international students work on their doctoral projects. BIGSSS also accepts Visiting Scholars, offering office space and participation in the graduate school program.

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## BA Sociology

The objective of the BA program in Sociology is to equip students with a solid knowledge in basic sociological theories and methods, statistics, and social stratification analysis. In addition, students are given the opportunity to deepen their knowledge in selected research areas within sociology. Emphasis is placed on training in empirical research methods and gaining competence in selected branches of sociology. Erasmus students of Sociology and neighboring disciplines are welcome to join courses in the BA Sociology program.

## Contact and Information

Erasmus coordinators

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**Prof. Dr. Thomas Kern**

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## MA Sociology and Social Research

The Master's program in Sociology and Social Research is designed for students who seek to deepen their knowledge of sociological theories and acquire practical and methodological competencies in doing empirical social research. The course design offers project modules to ensure that students become familiar with all facets of current research. Key areas for specialization are:

- Social inequality and living arrangements
- Education, work, and the welfare state
- Urban development and migration
- Social integration and methods research
- Network research

An overarching focus is placed on life course research and longitudinal methodology; both approaches characterize the research profile of sociology at the University of Bremen. Erasmus students of Sociology at the MA level may participate in various seminars but must consult teaching staff first. They can also choose from BA courses.

# European Studies

## BA Integrated European Studies (IES)

The BA programme IES is multidisciplinary and comprises political science and cultural history, with a geographic focus on the European continent.

There are two study tracks or concentrations available: the political science track, in which students focus on European integration, European states and politics in Europe and theories and research methods that allow their systematic study; and the cultural studies track, in which topics such as cultural and social theory, cultural memory and museum studies, gender studies, and postcolonialism are taught in depth.

International students are welcome to choose from the wide range of courses offered on both study tracks of the IES curriculum, tailoring their own study programmes individually. Lectures and seminars are offered in German and English.

## Contact and information

Erasmus coordinator at the Institute of European Studies

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## MA European Studies (IES)

The political science MA program deals with Europe both with regard to the European integration process and the political system of the European Union (EU) and with regard to the politics and political of European states and their relationships and contributions to the EU and to EU integration.

In the first semester, students get introduced to political science theories and approaches in European Studies and training in qualitative and quantitative research methods. In the second semester, students attend seminars in the core modules “The European Union. Polity, Politics and Policy” and “The EU and the European States from a comparative perspective”. During the third semester students spend a semester abroad or do a research internship. The fourth semester is reserved for the writing of the master thesis.



# Geography

## The Institute of Geography

Geography deals with nature and the environment as well as the spatial organization of societies. The interdisciplinary position of this subject between the natural and social sciences makes the study of geography unique and offers a wide range of career possibilities. For further information visit our website: [www.uni-bremen.de/geographie](http://www.uni-bremen.de/geographie)

### BA/BSc Geography (in German)

The bachelor program imparts the basics of physical geography and human geography as well as geographical techniques and methods. The subject of physical geography is the influence of natural geofactors on the human habitat. Human geography analyzes human and societal activities with regard to the resulting spatial structures. The instruments that are used are, for example cartography, geographical information systems, statistics, field mapping, creating and evaluating questionnaires, and laboratory work.

The obligatory excursions increase the awareness of concrete interdependencies in the field. The first/fall semester starts with an orientation during the week before normal classes start and an introductory project module.

The basic modules introducing human and physical Geography form the foundation of knowledge needed for the next semesters. We also offer modules introducing Geographical Information Systems, cartography, statistics, and social research. During the second year, our students can choose from a range of modules discussing fields of geographic research and methodology in more detail.

Our project modules offered in the fifth semester allow students to conduct their own group research projects according to their personal interests. This prepares students to develop skills to work on their bachelor thesis during the last (sixth) semester. Students opting to become a teacher in secondary education can also choose modules in the didactics of geography.

### Master of Education (M. Ed.) (in German)

The four-semester M. Ed. program qualifies for the teaching profession at grammar schools/ secondary schools in the subject of Geography/ Earth Science. The program combines geography education with the study of Didactics and Educational Science. Erasmus students at the MA level are welcome to attend courses in this program.

### Contact and Information

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### MA Urban and Regional Development (in German)

How do the many, often unacquainted people in the urban social fabric manage to coexist? What causes the marked regional differences in residents' living conditions that are currently observed, and how does our society approach the extreme divergences among the ways in which people live? This MA (completely taught in German) focuses on these issues. It offers students the opportunity to take an in-depth look at questions concerning the social organization of space. It aims to impart interdisciplinary knowledge from the fields of geography and sociology. At its heart are the spatial differentiations and their impacts on different developments and structures that take place in our society's cities and regions. Questions concerning regionalization, suburbanization, the sustainability of regional development, as well as migration and integration, diversity in cities, and especially in urban planning, urban economies, urban infrastructure, and housing markets stand at the core of the program. Emphasis is being placed on teaching spatial information processing techniques and methodological approaches to develop spatial action plans.

In the first semester, students learn fundamental concepts in theoretical sociology as well as economic theories of regional development. In addition, in-depth coverage of advanced qualitative and quantitative research methods is provided. In the second and third semesters, students have the opportunity to acquire research skills through modules on specific urban topics such as environment, culture, migration, and urban economies. Parallel to this, students develop a study project with a focus on planning instruments and procedures.

### MSc Physical Geography: Environmental History (in English)

The current debate about the reasons and effects of climate change illustrates the need for experts who can understand and explain the complex interrelations that lead to environmental changes over time. Meeting this demand, the M. Sc. "Physical Geography: Environmental History" is a research-oriented Master's program in physical geography focusing on the understanding and reconstruction of environmental and climatic history. This program is innovative and unique in Germany due to its distinctive interdisciplinary approach including courses in physical and human geography, archaeology, geosciences, paleobiology, and environmental physics. To ensure high academic quality and practical orientation, the program draws on both, expertise within the University of Bremen as well as on partnerships with regional scientific institutions in Bremen and Lower Saxony. All classes are taught in English. You will be trained in interdisciplinary lectures, seminars, projects as well as in laboratory and field courses. Consecutive core subjects start in the winter semester and are continued in the summer semester, closely interconnected and consolidated by means of research-based and hands-on training. Furthermore, computer-based analyses and visualization techniques of spatial and temporal data and processes are conveyed. Advanced students of other subjects at the Faculty of Social Sciences can study courses in Archeology and Historical Political Ecology even without a background in natural sciences.



# History

## The History Department

The programs of the History Department at the University of Bremen are structured on its member's research interests and expertise. They cover a broad range of subject matters, such as Eastern and Western European History and Latin American History as well as German History, spanning from Ancient History to the 21st. century. The History Department has cooperation agreements and activities with research institutions and museums in and around Bremen, including the Research Centre for Eastern European Studies, the German Maritime Museum, the Focke Museum, the Archives of Bremen, the Archaeological Office of the State of Bremen, as well as with other Universities and institutions from around the world.

Our undergraduate programs include the Bachelor's degree in History, with the options of single honors in History or joint honors, as well as a Bachelor's in History with a teacher's training option (Didaktik der Geschichte). As from the winter semester 2023/2024, the current general Master's program in History is expected to give birth to two new programs: "Public History" and "Inequalities: past and present". Both in the undergraduate and postgraduate programs, modules normally consist of two courses (e.g., one lecture and one seminar or two seminars) and are completed by a final examination, usually in a form of a term paper or oral examination. The teaching language is German, although there are courses taught in English.

### BA in History

The two Bachelor's programs offer a broad historical knowledge and an introduction to the methods of historical research. In a first phase, students acquire knowledge of the major historical periods: Ancient, Classical, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary History. The second phase emphasizes thematic approaches, such as Archeology, German History, East-European History, History of Slavery, Latin American and Global History, and includes broader approaches, such as "cultures-entanglements-conflicts," "order and dissent," "interpretations and imaginations of the past," and "the multiplicities of modernity." Students who choose the teacher's training option will be offered courses in didactics of history and educational sciences.

will address the role of History in public discourse, including the perceptions of history, memory, culture, and competing interpretations of historical phenomena, as well as their public presentation in the media. Students will also acquire professional competencies such as communication skills and presentation techniques for historical content in the media and in museums/exhibitions.

### MA in History

The Master's degree provides students with advanced skills in historical research as well as with professional skills, preparing either for a range of different careers or to pursue further study at the doctoral level. From the academic year 2023/2024 onwards, the existing general M.A. in History is expected to give space for two programs: "Public History" (Geschichte in der Öffentlichkeit) and "Inequalities: past and present" (Ungleichheiten: Past and Present). The "Public History" Master's program





The Master's program "Inequalities: past and present" will focus on the study of social inequality throughout history, its perceptions, and interpretations. Students will analyze and discuss the diverse effects of inequality, their sociopolitical consequences, and historical-analytical approaches. They will also deepen the study of the developments of inequality, dealing with the historical processes of sociopolitical change in Europe and beyond, and with the historiography on this subject. So, this master's program will have an interdisciplinary approach on the subject. Beyond the historical seminars, student will also have the possibility to engage in classes from Sociology, Political Sciences and Cultural Studies. Thereby this program will build up a particularly good base for different occupational fields as well as for a future PhD thesis.

## Contact and information

Erasmus Team

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## Studying at other Faculties

While we expect that you study the majority of your courses at Faculty 8, you may find some interesting lectures and seminars at other Faculties of the University. Often students of Social and Political Science can find interesting courses at the Faculty of Law and at the Faculty of Economics while students of History and European Studies pick a few courses at the Philological and Philosophical Faculties. Geography students might be interested in courses offered at the Faculty of Physics, Natural Sciences and Geosciences.



## **General Information about Studying at Faculty 08**

### **International Office of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FB 8)**

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For general questions about your stay at the University of Bremen (application, matriculation, accommodation, language classes, etc.) please contact the International Office.

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