

Module Handbook
of the
Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Politics, and Social Thought
at
Bard College Berlin
A Liberal Arts University

April 2016

Core Component

The core component (48ECTS) consists of 6 semester-long core modules over six semesters. All core modules are semester-long with a seminar format (meeting for two sessions of 90 minutes per week) and additional lecture component of up to four 90 minute sessions per semester. Each module is designated 8ECTS.

MODULE: Greek Civilization

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of major texts, currents and artifacts relevant to the civilization of Classical Greece
- Familiarity with key events and historical figures, as well as religious, intellectual and artistic movements that characterized this civilization, and its African and Near-Eastern roots
- Knowledge of the main literary genres and theoretical disciplines that originated and were systematized in this period, and of the cultural and political debates that informed them, and were in turn triggered by them
- Deep understanding of the concepts and scientific, moral and aesthetic values that constitute a key foundation for all learning since this time
- Critical reflection on the ethical and political underpinnings and the philosophical stakes in these concepts and values
- Ability to analyze primary and secondary sources, and to interpret their meaning with reference both to their immediate context and enduring significance
- Familiarity with the problem of transmission and translation of ancient objects and texts and methods adopted in the face of this challenge
- Presentation of arguments and ideas, both one's own and those of authors and fellow students, in both oral and written form

Content:

The seminar course in this module is concerned with the art, architecture, literature, and perhaps especially the philosophy of Classical Greece, in connection to its African and Near-Eastern roots. Through a close and careful engagement with works, indeed the first works in the western tradition, of literature (epic, comic, and tragic), history, and philosophy—paired with an analysis of architecture and archaeological finds housed here in Berlin—students will discover the modes of inquiry that characterized the cultural production of Ancient Greece. By cultivating students' understanding of the distant and often strange world we find in these texts and objects, this module helps students to see the ways in these modes of inquiry have influenced nearly every field of study they will encounter at Bard College Berlin, including philosophy, psychology, history, art history, aesthetics, political theory, and rhetoric.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Medieval Literatures and Cultures

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, motifs and cultural dialogues in the medieval period, across a variety of contexts
- Ability to read and understand texts from a range of genres, and to identify both their stylistic features and the yield of historical information they provide
- Awareness of the historical manifestations and stakes of cultural conflict, interaction and clash
- Familiarity with methodological approaches to literature, historiographical study and comparative religion
- Ability to present, in written and oral form, the analysis and interpretation of texts from a range of sources (literary, religious, philosophical)
- Ability to undertake the exploration of a single theme, concept or cultural concern through the study of texts, which have distinct purposes and different provenances, and to present such an analysis effectively in written and oral form

Content:

The module introduces students to the civilizations and cultures which developed after Antiquity, and to the religious traditions and frameworks through which they defined themselves. It focuses on the major civilizational entity that emerged and developed between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries, Western Christendom and Islam. It examines Christendom's conception of cultural heritage and legitimacy (its distinctive claims to the legacy of Antiquity, and its relationship to Judaism). Secondly, it considers the way in which the definition of society in religious terms shaped and influenced the discussion and treatment of issues, questions and fields of endeavor that in modernity came to be regarded as differentiated from religion (politics, art). Lastly, it looks at the claim to universal validity, which undergirded the values of these societies and civilizations, and the nature of its connection to their religious and theological ordering. The module provides historical knowledge of the medieval period in Western Christendom, an introduction to (and competence in reading) its major texts and genres, and an ability to identify, explore and analyze cultural motifs across a variety of sources. It also offers a study in the problem of culture Contact and interaction, investigating the basis of conflict and opposition, and of co-existence, tolerance and mutual influence.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Renaissance Art and Thought

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of selected works of art, art theory, literature, and political thought from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, including an awareness of the historical and (in the case of artworks) physical contexts in which they were made
- Understanding the key values that shape and emerge from Renaissance artistic production, such as naturalism, realism and perspective, which inform art and literature but also political theory and natural science, alongside values like harmony, grace, and *disegno* that define the era's aesthetics
- A theoretical and practical understanding of perspective, its guiding role in the development of Renaissance art, its implications for both political theory and philosophy, and the relationships among art, mathematics and natural science it creates
- Familiarity with broader intellectual currents, such as humanism and Neoplatonism, that shape cultural production in the Renaissance and inform its self-definition
- An understanding of the conception of nature that develops in the Renaissance in the context of both art and science, including the ability to consider critically the conditions from which the modern scientific method emerges
- Ability to analyze, interpret and discuss works of visual art in both written and oral expression
- A capacity for formal analysis, for thinking through the relationship of form to meaning, and for the critical evaluation of one's own direct responses to works of art

Content:

This core module addresses the art of the Renaissance, its contemporaneous theorization (including the relevance of Renaissance art theory to other fields of endeavor), and the values and intellectual currents that shape, and are shaped by, Renaissance artistic production. This seminar course proceeds through the close reading of a small number of artworks and texts and the dialogue among them. Students have the opportunity to critically examine the principal intellectual and cultural concerns of the period in terms emerging from the specificity of individual works of art and (literary, political, or philosophical) thought. Sustained attention is given to the development of perspective and its broader implications and its metaphorization in political theory and philosophy, as a major intellectual shift in the European tradition that grows directly out of artistic practices. The changing conception of nature and the human relationship to the natural world is another focus, where students consider the close relationship between art and science in the Renaissance and the foundations for a nascent scientific method. Further, throughout the course of this module, students will learn how to engage works of visual art closely and critically, to develop the means for interpretive formal analysis, and to articulate and evaluate their own direct responses to individual artworks, considering the implications of those responses in light of the intellectual issues and values addressed in the course.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Early Modern Science

Learning Outcomes:

- Substantial knowledge of significant discoveries in astronomy, mechanics and analytic geometry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries
- A comprehensive understanding of the philosophical issues at stake in these discoveries
- A comprehensive understanding of theories of progress in scientific knowledge
- Familiarity with interdisciplinarity as a reflection on the dialogue and the differences between methods, here those of experimental science, history, and philosophy
- Practical experience with the design and interpretation of basic physical experimentation
- A theoretical understanding of the significance of experimental results
- The ability to describe, in written and oral expression, empirical results of historical experiments with reference to their methodological significance
- The ability to describe, in written and oral expression, empirical results of historical experiments with reference to their theoretical significance

Content:

This core module is concerned with the innovations in scientific method in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period that constituted a particularly fruitful, even decisive phase in scientific exploration and discovery. The module explores the significance for philosophical analysis—and for the humanities more generally—of the testing of natural phenomena by means of rigorous, mathematically-informed method (the ‘scientific method’—known to us today simply as ‘science’). The module’s two-fold focus—philosophical and methodological—enables students not only to evaluate the scientific research of the period (as recorded in its classic texts) but to apply this learning to other processes of thought and innovation, and to the analysis of contemporary scientific experiments. The module therefore combines a historical and practical scientific education with a philosophical investigation of the procedures and consequences—as well as the cultural significance—of scientific thinking and research.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Origins of Political Economy

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, concepts and debates in the intellectual history of economics and social and political theory
- Understanding of the emergence of political economy, the philosophical discourse which sought to encompass, analyze and correct the means and mechanisms by which societies and populations provide for their own maintenance, organization and development
- Knowledge of the historical trajectory followed by political economy, from its beginnings in the late seventeenth century through its connections with 'moral sense' philosophy in the eighteenth century, to the emergence of Marxism in the nineteenth, and of philosophies of money in the early twentieth
- Awareness of the links between political economy and the wider discourses of culture: the origins of the novel; the influence of economic thought on language and vocabulary
- Understanding of the linkages between the claims, preoccupations and proposals of political economy and contemporary debates concerning questions of equality, identity, legal status, and economic justice
- Ability to describe, in written and oral presentation, the central arguments and technical concepts of foundational texts in the intellectual history of economic, political and social theory
- Ability to link, in written and oral presentation, the arguments and claims of political- or social-theoretical texts with the form and subject matter of literary and other cultural documents and artifacts

Content:

The module explores the intellectual history of the contemporary disciplines of economics, political theory and sociology, by examining the origins of the discourse known as "political economy," the philosophical study of the means and processes by which societies and populations provide for their own survival and development. It offers an introduction to the reach and implications of this endeavor, its relationship to questions of law, sovereignty and political representation as well as war and the definition of human identity. In keeping with its attention to the formative history of modern categories and disciplines of knowledge, the module also addresses the way in which economic thinking influences literary texts and cultural exchange, from the shaping of novelistic plot to the connotations of everyday language. It allows students to understand, draw upon and critique the historical formulation of contemporary problems and concerns such as inequality, the sources and circulation of wealth, and the connection (and differentiation) between the economic and political spheres.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Modernism

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with key texts, concepts and theories associated with “Modernism” as an aesthetic and philosophical category, and with its meanings in literature, art, architecture and media history.
- Knowledge of the historical conditions of the emergence of Modernism in different cultural contexts and the relationship between its distinctive manifestations.
- Familiarity with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century epistemologies relevant for the emergence and development of Modernism.
- Ability to engage critically with aesthetic, scientific and philosophical discourses focused on a single concept or theme, and to present such analysis in written and oral form.
- Ability to link the arguments and claims of philosophical and scientific texts to the structure, styles and content of literary and artistic material, and to present such analysis effectively in written and oral form.
- Ability to explore and offer insights about the relevance of the issues raised by the module topics for contemporary debates in aesthetics, art criticism and philosophy.

Content:

The module offers an overview and critical analysis of the emergence, historical development and meaning of the category of Modernism, a term which describes methods, projects and attempted revolutions across the arts and sciences at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the early twentieth century. Starting from the analysis of the historical, sociological and aesthetic claims made by modernist artists, writers and architects, it considers how these proposals were manifested in their works, and what the key stylistic features, ambitions and innovations of modernist art were. The module also attends to the question of cultural influence and interaction, looking at the different contexts of modernism across Europe and elsewhere, and at the diverse sources (post-colonial, historical) of inspiration for modernist works and practices. It examines the relationship between literary and aesthetic technique and experimentation in science and philosophy, or the ways in which the various branches of modernist endeavor shared an epistemology. Finally it allows students to formulate connections between the claims and achievements of the modernists and aesthetic practices today, most notably, the status of art itself, and the connection between aesthetics and other branches of knowledge.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term essays; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term essays 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

Foundational Economics Component

The foundational Economics component (in total 40 ECTS) introduces students to the mathematical tools used in economic analysis, and to the central categories and objects of study (supply and demand, markets, firms) proper to the discipline of economics. Above all, it provides the knowledge, instruments, and familiarity with fundamental problems and questions that will allow students to advance to close analysis and interpretation of economic behavior, and of the forces and structures (global and local) that shape economic life. The foundational economics component consists of five modules taken in the first two years of the program. Each module consists of one course of 8 ECTS.

MODULE: Principles of Economics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of fundamental concepts of economic analysis
- Understanding of the economic method and its application to the explanation of human behavior
- Basic knowledge and understanding of the overall functioning of modern economies
- Ability to recognize and understand the ways in which real-world economic activity and behavior deviates from the models and patterns used in the discipline of economics
- Capacity to analyze and critique the assumptions concerning behavior that are at the basis of economic analysis

Content:

This module is an introduction to the essential ideas of economic analysis. It elaborates the basic model of consumer and firm behavior, including demand and supply, in the context of an idealized competitive market, and examines several ways in which the real world deviates from this model, including monopoly, minimum wages and other price controls, taxes, and government regulation. The assumptions concerning human behavior that underlie economics are presented and critiqued. The module is also concerned with the aggregate behavior of modern economies: growth and measurement of the economy, unemployment, interest rates, inflation, government spending and its impact, and international trade. Part of the module focuses on the government tools used to influence economic growth and individuals' behavior.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problems sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Mathematics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of basic mathematical knowledge and its application to economics
- Ability to understand and participate in debates on the uses of mathematics in economics
- Capacity to complete exercises and projects proper to mathematical analysis or its use in economics

Content:

This module focuses on the mathematical tools important for the study of economics: analytic geometry, functions of a single variable, functions of two variables, calculus, integrals and linear algebra (matrices, determinants, systems of linear equations and methods for solving them). A large part of the module will deal with optimization in one or more variables and its corresponding applications in economics (e.g. utility and profit maximization problems). The module will also be useful for any student with a general interest in mathematics, or who does not intend advanced specialization in economics, but wishes to become informed regarding the essential mathematical building blocks of economics as a discipline.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; homework assessment exercises, final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 20%; exercises 40%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Microeconomics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the units of organization and factors that interact to produce economic exchange within a market framework (e.g., consumers, households and firms).
- Recognition of and ability to analyze the workings of alternate market structures
- Ability to analyze the costs and benefits of specific modes of economic exchange
- Capacity to formulate and carry out case studies of microeconomic functioning

Content:

Microeconomics is the study of how individual economic units (households and firms) interact to determine outcomes (allocation of goods and services) in a market setting. The module further develops principles and analytical methods introduced by the Principles of Economics course. The first part of the module deals with consumer behavior, market demand and the extent to which a consumer's decisions can be modeled as rational. The second part deals with the theory of the firm and the positive and normative characteristics of alternative market structures—perfect competition, monopolistic competition, oligopoly, pure monopoly, and, in resource markets, monopsony—are studied in depth. Finally, the efficiency of market outcomes is studied as well as situations (e.g. the presence of externalities) under which markets are not efficient. A section of the module is devoted to problem solving, in which students present solutions to specific case studies.

Prerequisites:	Mathematics; Principles of Economics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Macroeconomics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of economic activity at the macro-level of market economies
- Knowledge of the relationship between social and political institutions and the operation of economic exchange
- Critical assessment of the role of governments in stimulating economic outcomes such as growth and employment
- Ability to assess real-world economic phenomena within the framework of theories presented within the seminar

Content:

This module familiarizes students with the main models that macroeconomists use to analyze the way economies behave. The module begins by examining theories that seek to explain money and banking. We then focus our attention on investigating economic theories that explain short run business cycles, the periods of recession and boom that occur on a regular basis. An important part of the module is to investigate the role of governments in affecting the long and short-term economic prospects of their countries. We apply this theoretical knowledge to a range of current economic issues, including budget deficits and national debt, loans and private sector debt, the current account, and the role of institutions.

Prerequisites:	Mathematics, Principles of Economics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term exam 20%; problem sets 20%; final exam 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Statistics

Learning Outcomes:

- Mastery of basic concepts of probability theory and statistics
- Capacity to understand simple statistical tests and concepts of statistical inference
- Capacity to complete statistical exercises relevant to economics
- Knowledge of the basics of simple regression analysis

Content:

This module is designed to introduce the methodologies proper to the empirical social sciences. Basic concepts of statistics, probability, probability distributions, random variables, correlation, and simple regression are introduced; the techniques of statistical inference hypothesis testing are developed.

Prerequisites:	Mathematics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; problem sets 40%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

Foundational Politics Component

The Politics component (32 ECTS) introduces students to the fundamentals of political science and of political and moral thought. The foundational module in International Studies and Globalization (8ECTS) addresses theories of globalization, the functioning of transnational institutions and the dynamics of conflict and cooperation, as well as the meaning of a “global” context in which borders can be culturally fluid, but in political terms rigidly policed. Comparative Politics (8ECTS) explores the national and regional divergences between forms of government and their development over time, providing the tools for understanding and interpreting political change. Policy Analysis (8ECTS) focuses on the measures taken in response to social problems and trends, and the ways in which these measures are formulated, implemented, and assessed. Political and Moral thought (8CTS) introduces traditions of philosophical discussion of political and ethical questions, examining the legacy of theories and claims which still influence contemporary judgments concerning political and ethical action, and which provide a resource for testing the value and legitimacy of such claims.

International Studies and Globalization

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of the institutions, organizations and agreements that structure relationships between nation states
- Understanding of and capacity to critique the concepts, frameworks and methods fundamental for the field of International Studies
- Understanding of and capacity to analyze concepts and theories of globalization
- Awareness of contemporary global and cross-border issues and of key interpretations of their causes and impact
- Ability to reflect critically on the categories and assumptions that have emerged from a putatively “global” context for political agency and individual or collective identity (e.g. the idea of “global citizenship”)

Content:

This module introduces the fundamental institutions and dynamics that structure the negotiation of relationships between nation states. It addresses changes in these relationships wrought by the phenomenon of “globalization.” Globalization refers to a worldwide interconnection forged by chains of production and consumption; to processes of redistribution in power and resources consequent upon such patterns, and to the manifestation of challenges that are by their very nature transnational or global in implication and effect: military intervention, failed states, population displacement, climate change. The global framework of the political order has consequences for the understanding of “citizenship” itself, and the module also explores the meaning and possibilities expressed by the category “global citizen.”

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, Independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

MODULE: Comparative Politics

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge and understanding of the main components of the structure of government
- Ability to compare and analyze governmental structures across national contexts
- Understanding of and ability to examine critically the categories (e.g. liberal democracy) used to describe particular structures of government or political orders
- Understanding of the factors influencing national or regional political transformation over time
- Awareness of the modes of political expression, activism and influence pursued within different kinds of constitutional order

Content:

The module introduces the frameworks shaping political life through a comparative attention to their similarities and divergences across regions and kinds of government or regime. It explains components of governmental structure (legislative, executive, judicial), and their variation according to political ideology, national historical development, and economic context. Particular attention is given to identifying the origins, patterns and influences driving political change both within national polities and across neighboring states, as well as to the tools and approaches used for comparing such transformations across cultures. Courses in the module also consider the possibilities of agency open to individuals and groups—their access to political representation and modes of intervention and activism—within distinctive constitutional arrangements.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, Independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Policy Analysis

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the institutions, forces and processes that determine the development of policy
- Ability to analyze the methods, sources and results of data concerning policy effects
- Ability to compare normative conclusions concerning the effects of policy interventions with actually existing examples of measures and programs
- Capacity to relate theoretical claims concerning political change and negotiation to the development and implementation of policy in concrete instances

Content:

The module provides an introduction to understanding the measures by which social, economic and political problems in modern democracies are identified, quantified and addressed. It examines the institutional structures and relationships determining the establishment and implementation of governmental or government-supported programs and measures, including research organizations with a political orientation, lobbying, market forces, and citizen activism. Courses in the module examine modes of gathering and interpreting data on the impact of government policies, attending to divergences between positive or actually existing measures and normative conclusions developed through the study of policy development over time. Courses apply economic theory and statistical methods to the critical assessment of policy measures, and consider political theories that provide an insight into characterizing and gauging the effects of policy approaches.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, Independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Political and Moral Thought

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of key concepts, ideas, and movements in the history of moral and political thought
- Understanding of the ways in which the moral or ethical has been juxtaposed to or integrated with concepts of the political
- Awareness of fundamental questions and problems in the history of political and moral thought
- Capacity to analyze and discuss the implications of philosophical arguments in the history of ideas
- Ability to link the deliberations of the history of thought with contemporary challenges and conflicts

Content:

This module introduces students to the history of ideas concerning politics and moral judgment, providing an overview of key thinkers, movements and concepts. The purpose of the module is to illuminate the ways in which ethical deliberation is either formed by or seeks to shape itself in isolation from or rejection of the political, and to examine the tension between moral considerations and political exigencies. Courses in the module may focus primarily on the tradition of moral philosophy or political theory, and on specific movements and periods in the history of thought. Ultimately, the module seeks to provide a foundational knowledge of the philosophical legacy that constitutes a reference point for individual and collective deliberation and action, whether in the political or social sphere or in the experience of everyday life in the contemporary world.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Requirements: Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 1-4 term assignments; 1 final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).

Workload: Contact hours: 45h, Independent study: 195h, total: 240h

Evaluation: Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%

Credits: 8 credits

Frequency: Annual

Duration: 1 semester

Composition: Seminar

Advanced Components

The advanced component comprises 40 ECTS. Students may choose the advanced economics component (5 modules, each of 8 ECTS), or the advanced politics component (5 modules, each of 8 ECTS). It is possible to take courses in the advanced modules of the other component as part of the elective component. A double concentration is also possible.

Advanced Economics Component

MODULE: Ethics and Economic Analysis

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the value commitments underlying economics
- Critical assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of market exchange and market economies
- Knowledge of theories pertaining to the relationship between economics and ethics
- Ability to connect ethical value judgments to economic theorizing and to critically assess the role of different value judgments in economics

Content:

This module aims at highlighting how economics and ethics intersect in various ways: Is it legitimate to dump our trash in lesser-developed countries because it is economically speaking 'efficient'? Are high salaries for managers or movie stars justified? Should a company be allowed to bribe officials in foreign countries in order to do business there? Should we encourage markets for organs or blood if they are efficiently allocating 'resources'? In this module, seminars deal with these aspects of the economy, where different value judgments may be in conflict. While it is often useful to analyze various aspects of human life in economic terms, there may be spheres where economic calculation might seriously distort our judgments of goodness and rightness and hence might be in need of correction by other forms of measurement. The module balances the positive aspects of economics (such as alleviation of poverty and development of nations) with its negative sides (such as corruption of values and neglect of fairness issues). It elaborates on the value judgments underlying economics and its often utilitarian or libertarian commitments. The module seeks to help students critically assess the potential and the pitfalls of economic reasoning and equip them with the necessary knowledge to differentiate between market logic and market ideology. Courses within the module may also deal with the more applied side of business ethics, i.e. how ethical behavior plays a role in companies and organizations, ranging from the ethical obligations of employees (e.g. whistle-blowing) to those of managers, investors or entrepreneurs.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay; final essay (total length 5000-7000 words)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Econometrics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of econometrics based on prior knowledge of probability theory and statistics
- Ability to read and understand state-of-the-art empirical research papers in economics
- Knowledge of key problems in econometric work such as separating correlation from causation, issues of data availability, sources of biased estimation etc.
- Overview of key econometric techniques used in applied economics and ability to critically assess their merits and drawbacks
- Ability to conduct a variety of econometric analyses with econometric software packages and real-world data sets

Content:

This module aims at equipping students with one of the most important methodological toolkits of economics, namely econometrics. Economics is in many ways an applied science deeply anchored in real-world phenomena that can be measured and quantified. In order to answer important quantitative questions, the economist needs to collect data and assess the empirical relationships between objects of interest. Since much economic data is observational, a main task of the econometrician is trying to find out whether events that are correlated also stand in causal relationship with each other and in what order of priority. In order to answer such questions, the economist needs the toolkit of multivariate regression analysis as well as a number of sophisticated techniques that expand on the simple linear regression model (time series and panel data models, vector-autoregressive models, non- and semiparametric econometric techniques, and various methods to assess the degree to which such models fit). Courses in this module thus expand on the basic statistics course by applying and developing core statistical notions within an economic context. They help in developing students' literacy in reading applied economics papers and assessing their claims through critique of their econometric analysis. Other courses within this module include lab sessions where students familiarize themselves with econometric software packages and learn how to conduct simple econometric analyses based on real-world data sets and the research questions such data provokes.

Prerequisites:	Foundational Economics Modules, esp. Statistics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; problem sets 40%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Global Economic Systems

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of advanced macroeconomic theories and phenomena
- Knowledge of the working of economies on the macro-level and of the interdependencies of open economies via trade and financial flows
- Ability to apply theories of trade and finance to case studies and policy debates (such as, but not limited to, the Euro crisis or the recent “financial meltdown”)
- Capacity to critically assess explanatory and predictive powers of economic models on the macro-level

Content:

This module deals with advanced topics of macroeconomics, such as trade and international aspects of economic systems. It covers real flows of goods in international trade as well as the flow of money in international finance. Main theories of trade and the rationales for it are discussed and evaluated as well as the role that money and banking play within modern economies. The module also looks at economic systems and the organization of economic life within these systems: What are the key features of capitalism or communism and how are they distinguished? How viable are these systems and what sorts of institutions do they give rise to?

Prerequisites:	Foundational Economics Modules, esp.: Macroeconomics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; term assignments; mid-term examination (60 minutes); final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; short assignments 20%; mid-term examination 20%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Behavioral Economics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the standard rational choice model of human decision-making behavior, its merits and its empirical and normative adequacy
- Critical assessment of the explanatory power of rational choice theory
- Knowledge of actual human behavior driven by heuristics, characterized by bounded rationality and subject to a variety of biases and other distortions
- Overview of and familiarity with key theories of human behavior and of developments within the field of behavioral economics (such as happiness economics, the heuristics and biases field, libertarian paternalism etc.)
- Capacity to understand how behavioral economics enriches standard economic rationality models and how behavioral economics relates to core economic models

Content:

This module of advanced microeconomics focuses on the behavioral side of economics. While much of the core of economic theory is based on the rational choice model of human activity (i.e. the human being is seen as homo economicus, a hyper-rational and solely self-interested individual), research in psychology calls for a more realistic picture of human decision-making. Behavioral economics is the subdiscipline of economics that aims at modifying the rational choice model of behavior in the direction of a more realistic model that accounts for bounded rationality, the use of heuristics, and the analysis of how human decisions are driven by emotions, and distorted by various biases. Courses in this module familiarize students with this new and fascinating approach to economics and presents them with economic models that take into account the rich psychological structure of human decision-making. Courses in this module analyze the consequences of using such a nuanced behavioral model of decision-making, of taking into account the existence of social preferences (such as other-regarding, altruistic preferences) and so forth. Courses also can deal with the implications human irrationality would have for economic policy-making as well as research into human subjective well being (“happiness”) and its economic correlates.

Prerequisites:	Foundational Economics Modules, esp.: Microeconomics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term examination 30%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Choice, Resources and Development

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with advanced fields of study within economics such as development and environmental economics
- Understanding of interdependent decision-making and its formal analysis with the toolkit of game theory
- Capacity to analyze various economic decisions characterized by strategic interdependence of actors (e.g. various dilemma situations, coordination games etc.)
- Ability to apply advanced microeconomic theories to the analysis of cases studies in different fields such as labor markets or health care provision or industrial dynamics

Content:

On what basis are decisions made, in the public or private sector, concerning the allocation of resources and the making of long-term investments? How are “public” and “private” resources distinguished and how is any combination of the resources commanded by these spheres determined? This module applies the methods of economic analysis explored in the introductory courses to the formation of policy and business strategy. Theoretical models considered may include game theory and incentive and contract theory. Cases of study may include the provision of education and health care, and the empirical examination of the role played by choice, individual agency and collective action in decision-making processes concerning the distribution and use of services provided by the state or through private entrepreneurial innovation. Other courses within the module deal with the application of knowledge gained in the foundational modules to the sphere of economic development and associated questions regarding the relationship between the economy and the environment.

Prerequisites:	Foundational Economics Modules, esp. Microeconomics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; mid-term examination (60 minutes), final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 20%; mid-term examination 20%; problem sets 20%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

Advanced Politics Component

MODULE: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the systems and modes of organization of global or regional political interaction
- Knowledge of the processes for resolving disputes and disagreements in global and regional political conflicts
- Awareness of the factors and interests that determine the consolidation and reconfiguration of transnational alliances and spheres of influence
- Familiarity with the cultural specificities that shape regional links and transnational political interaction
- Understanding of the effect of transnational regrouping and global crises on traditional concepts of political theory (such as the nation state and the idea of sovereignty) and understandings of transnational conflict

Content:

Going beyond the study of transnational institutions and phenomena to consider the systemic patterns and processes that facilitate a resolution of core issues in global politics, courses in this module address the dynamics of regional alliances or affiliated power blocks, and the factors that determine their consolidation or reconfiguration. They examine the strategic interests that prompt such restructuring, as well as processes of negotiation, tools for exerting pressure, and the means and approaches involved in conflict and compromise. Students should acquire both an understanding of the constantly transforming nature of power affiliations, and of their rootedness in regional legacies and historical commitments. Finally, the module attends to the effects of global and regional realignment on the traditional concepts and reference points of political theory, such as the nation state, sovereignty, and the forms of war.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Public Policy

Learning Outcomes:

- Application of knowledge of public policy analysis to a key area of social need or challenge
- Ability to understand the processes by which expert research comes to influence governmental or transnational policy in respect to a specific source of social value or pressure
- Capacity to compare and evaluate competing methods of defining and proposing policy interventions
- Capacity to provide a critical analysis of data on outcomes and predicted trends, and apply them to the devising of future policy proposals
- Ability to identify and frame an independent project in an area of public policy

Content:

This module builds on the introductory courses in policy analysis to focus on specific topics in the devising of government and transnational policy initiatives. Issues considered in the courses may include education, the environment, health, welfare, taxation and crime. Drawing on knowledge of the institutions and processes of consultation whereby expert research comes to influence government measures, this module closely examines the methodologies used by researchers to gather and analyze data concerning social trends and outcomes in a specific area of social need or pressure. It also addresses cases of divergence between public policy measures and public opinion, and the ways in which the latter has succeeded in or failed to influence the former. The module identifies alternative modes of quantifying and proposing responses to comparable social problems, and creates a framework for students themselves to devise new models of definition and solution.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Quantitative Methods in Social Science

Learning Outcomes:

- Ability to translate theoretical concepts into mathematical form and vice versa
- Ability to read and understand state-of-the-art formal and empirical research papers in social science
- Understanding of the ways in which theoretical questions can be addressed using empirical data
- Ability to conduct a variety of statistical or mathematical analyses with statistical software packages and real-world data sets
- Knowledge of key problems in applied empirical social science such as separating correlation from causation, data availability, sources of biased estimation etc.

Content:

This module encompasses courses on the various methods by which quantitative social science proceeds in theory development and data analysis. Courses may deal with formal approaches toward modeling human strategic interaction (game theory), the formal description and analysis of voting processes (e.g. the mathematics of voting and social choice) as well as the empirical measurement and quantification of political phenomena, including appropriate methods for the identification of causal relationships (statistics and econometrics). Courses focusing on empirical methods aim at applying these to relevant social phenomena: within political science, these encompass the analysis of opinion polls and voting behavior, the quantification of inequalities, lobbying or corruption as well as the relationship between such phenomena and their impact on society (e.g. on political institutions, economic growth, inequality etc.). Empirical courses can also focus on statistical software packages (such as R, Stata or SPSS) commonly used to achieve the above-mentioned analysis by political and governmental organizations.

Prerequisites:	Foundational Economics Modules, esp. Statistics, Mathematics for Economics
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; problem sets; final examination (90 minutes)
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 20%; problem sets 40%; final examination 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Social Commitment and The Public Sphere

Civic Engagement Module

Civic engagement modules in the BA degree involve a project that applies the knowledge gained in the course to a project in the public sphere.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the historical constitution and meaning of the category known as the public sphere
- Understanding of the ways in which individuals and groups take part in the sphere known as civil society
- Awareness of both theories of and practical accounts of the ways in which debates within the public sphere influence change and development
- Knowledge of distinctive modes of intervention in and transformation of the public sphere, including the role of art, cultural invention and language in the reconstitution of politics
- Awareness of tensions between civil society and the economic sphere, and of the ways in which business may play a positive role (though civic consumerism, corporate citizenship, corporate social responsibility, or social entrepreneurship).

Content:

This module examines how political groups, individuals with a political aim, or institutions acting as agents in social transformation use the spaces, media and institutions of social life or the economy to advance specific causes or alterations in the way that past or present conditions are interpreted and lived. The module considers the categories of “civil society” and “the public sphere” (how these came to be defined and how they came into being historically), as well as the ways in which their resources and frameworks have been used or reconfigured.

Prerequisites:	none
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Philosophy and Society

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the work of a specific thinker, movement or set of movements in philosophy or social theory
- Understanding of the political implications and frameworks of interpretation relevant to major works and movements in the history of philosophy and social theory
- Capacity to connect the central claims, concepts and arguments of individual works with wider movements in the history of thought
- Ability to link topics and arguments in the history of thought with contemporary debates and ideas
- Ability to present and critically examine, in presentations and essays, key concepts and arguments in the history of thought

Content:

Courses in this module pursue an intensive focus on the work of individual thinkers or one of their major texts, or a close examination of a specific movement, cluster of ideas or central argument in the history of thought. Courses may focus on figures and schools in the history of philosophy, or on theories of social practices and their transformation over time. Attention will be paid to the political implications and interpretation of philosophical systems and claims, and to the connection between a specific work or position and the wider history of thought. Discussion will also address links to contemporary debates. Special focus will be given to the capacity to present, in class discussion, a cogent and analytically well-informed account of the material read.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; mid-term essay, final essay (total length: 5000-7000 words).
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h, independent study: 195h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; mid-term essay 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

Elective Component

The elective component comprises 56 ECTS. Students choose 7 electives. Each elective consists of 1 course with 8 ECTS. The elective component can include language study from beginner to advanced level. It can also include the internship module (completion of an internship or period of practical training, accompanied by an internship course introducing the functioning of institutions and organizations). Credits for an internship in conjunction with the course can be earned to the same value as a single elective: 8 ECTS.

The elective component allows students to choose a range of further courses, either in classes in their chosen concentration field, or in the additional areas of study in the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences or the fine arts, offered by Bard College Berlin's faculty and visiting instructors. Assessment standards and expectations will be comparable in all elective courses. The Elective Component's purpose is to allow students to pose further questions relevant to their field which may be raised by other disciplines, and to enable them to develop the research skills, wide disciplinary knowledge and capacity for broad-ranging study characteristic of the BA.

MODULE: Language Study

Learning Outcomes:

- Written and oral competence according to the Common European Framework for Languages level assigned to the course.

Content:

The content of the language courses varies according to the level

Prerequisites:	Depending on the level
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; homework; quizzes; final written exam (90 minutes).
Workload:	Contact hours: 62h, independent study: 178h, total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 25%; homework exercises: 25%; quizzes: 25%, final exam 25%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Depending on need
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Language class

MODULE: Internship

Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of the functioning of organizations in business, education, culture and politics
- Ability to research and analyze the funding structure of public and private organizations
- Understanding of decision-making processes within organizations and of views on best practice and optimal structuring
- Awareness of the cultural impact of organizations, institutions and businesses
- Capacity to understand and carry out the tasks demanded at traineeship level in organizational structures
- Ability to connect traineeship experience with professional development and career plans

Content:

The internship module provides academic credit to students wishing to pursue a period of practical training outside classroom hours in conjunction with a course that guides them in understanding the functioning of organizations and institutions.

Prerequisites:	None
Credit Requirements:	Internship, preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; 2 term assignments, 1 final essay (total length: 4000-6000 words).
Workload:	Internship: 130h, seminar contact hours: 21h, independent study: 89h, Total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation 30%; term assignments 30%; final essay 40%
Credits:	8 credits
Frequency:	Each semester
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar and internship

MODULE: Senior Core Colloquium

Learning Outcomes:

- Familiarity with contemporary research methods and approaches in the field of the student's senior thesis
- Capacity to identify fruitful and productive research questions
- Ability to plan and organize research work
- Ability to prepare the framework of a research project
- Ability to summarize, critically analyze and draw upon contemporary scholarship in individual research work
- Capacity to present research work to an audience working in similar fields and to a general public
- Capacity to participate in an informed way in the debates and controversies relevant to a particular research field

Content:

The senior core colloquium is the capstone seminar experience of the BA within the students' chosen concentration and closely interconnected fields. The seminar meets for a total of three hours weekly in the first semester of the fourth year. It addresses key methodological approaches and questions in contemporary scholarship, centered on a core question relevant to the research work of the senior thesis.

Prerequisites:	Foundational Concentration Modules; Moderation
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for classes; attendance; regular, active participation; research project prospectus; 5-10 term exercises; presentation of research project
Workload:	Contact hours: 45h independent study: 195h total: 240h
Evaluation:	Seminar preparation and participation: 30%; prospectus: 10%; term exercises: 40%; presentation of research: 20%
Credits:	8
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 semester
Composition:	Seminar

MODULE: Senior Thesis

Learning Outcomes:

- Capacity to pursue and complete independent work in the student's field of specialization
- Ability to present research work in a way that conforms to the standards and criteria of academic and scholarly requirements
- Capacity to develop and refine an argument that draws extensively on already existing scholarship while presenting a persuasive and valuable new perspective
- Ability to prepare effectively for the completion of an individual research project by following the guidance of an experienced researcher in the selection of a research question, appropriate research material, and useful methods of interpretation and analysis

Content:

The culminating or capstone element of the degree is the BA thesis project in the fourth year. All students take this module. It consists of an individual project (4 ECTS), serving as a preparation for the BA thesis and including Regular meetings with the thesis advisor, to plan and discuss research results and writing, and a final BA Thesis (12 ECTS), submitted in the second semester of the fourth year, and defended in an oral examination.

Prerequisites:	Successful completion of 4 core modules, 3 foundational concentration modules, and 1 advanced concentration module
Credit Requirements:	Preparation for and participation in weekly supervision meetings; BA Thesis of 10000-12000 words
Workload:	Contact hours: 15h, independent study: 465h, total: 480h
Evaluation:	Preparation for supervisions: 25%; thesis project: 75%
Credits:	16 credits
Frequency:	Annual
Duration:	1 year
Composition:	Individual project: 4 credits, BA Thesis: 12 credits