

Introduction to Sociology (K001114)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 6.0 **Study time 180 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2025-2026

| | | | |
|----------------|---------|------|------------------|
| A (semester 2) | English | Gent | lecture |
| | | | independent work |

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

| | | |
|---------------------|------|--------------------|
| Delaruelle, Katrijn | PS04 | lecturer-in-charge |
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| Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026 | crdts | offering |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences (main subject Communication Studies) | 6 | A |
| Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences (main subject Political Sciences) | 6 | A |
| Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences (main subject Sociology) | 6 | A |
| Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences (Joint Section) | 6 | A |
| Preparatory Course Master of Science in Sociology | 6 | A |

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

- Institutionalization
- Culture
- Structure
- Stratification
- Deviation
- Social change

Position of the course

Contents

The main objective of this course is to shed light on the specific nature of the sociological approach in the study of society, social groups, and interaction. We start with an introduction of the sociological approach and the main theoretical frameworks within sociology: functionalism, the conflict perspective, and the action perspectives. Thereafter, we focus on the different levels of social complexity, starting from the macro level (societies and world systems), over the meso level (groups and organizations) and arriving at the micro level (interpersonal interaction). Along the way, we discuss two specific angles from which to study social phenomena: the study of structure and the study of culture. Next, three fundamental processes supporting the construction of social reality are explained: institutionalization, socialization and stratification. In a next part of the course, the whole of these insights is applied to a number of subfields in sociology, such as the study of deviance. We end with establishing the bridge between theory and method, discussing the various sociological perspectives. We go into the question of how these different methodological and theoretical approaches complement each other within the whole of the scientific study of social reality.

Initial competences

none

Final competences

Upon completion of this course, students will have learned the following

competencies:

1. To have insight into the basic elements of sociological analysis
2. To be able to discern and understand the classical approaches to the study of social reality
3. To be able to distinguish between culture and structure
4. To be able to distinguish between micro and macro approaches to the study of social reality
5. To be able to understand and recognize middle-range theories in the fields of socialisation, social control and deviance, power and religion
6. To have insight into the stages of social change
7. To understand how different methodological and substantive sociological perspectives complete each other in the study of social reality

More specifically, the course addresses the following program objectives:

- LO1: knows and can elaborate on the most important theories, currents and concepts prevailing in the domain of the social sciences.
- LO2: knows the historical developments that have occurred in the fields of sociology, political sciences and communication sciences over time.
- LO3: knows the cross-sections, the intersections and the cross-fertilisations that exist amongst the different social sciences.
- LO5: knows and can explain the multilayered and complex character of social, political and media-related facts and phenomena.
- LO8: can interpret and analyse contemporary social phenomena and problems and can take position, relying on contemporary theories in the domain of the social sciences, in debates on them.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lectures and interactive lectures with class discussions, peer-to-peer learning;
E-learning, online exercises and mock exam.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Sociology: A global introduction

Indicative price: € 45

Optional: no

Language : English

Author : Macionis, J.J. & Plummer, K.

ISBN : 978-0-27372-791-0

Number of Pages : 1064

Oldest Usable Edition : 4th edition

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : Yes

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : regularly

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : intensive

References

Course content-related study coaching

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods**Formative assessment**

- Interactive lectures with group discussion, peer-to-peer learning, and application of theoretical subject matter to everyday examples;
- By making online exercises on the online learning platform, students can monitor their progress with the subject matter. The exercises will be accompanied by feedback. Moreover, a mock exam will appear on the online learning platform in the course of the semester, which is very similar to the real exam. As such, students get insight into the build-up of the final exam and their mastery of the subject matter.

Summative assessment

- Written Multiple Choice exam, questions similar to mock exam. Emphasis will be laid on application and insight, rather than on reproduction of the subject matter.

Calculation of the examination mark

The final grade is composed based on the following categories:

Written Exam determines 100% of the final mark.

Within the Written Exam category, the following assignments need to be completed:

Written Exam with a relative weight of 100 which comprises 100% of the final mark.