

# **Study Regulation for the Continuing Education Master's Program International Relations Online at Freie Universität Berlin**

## **Preamble**

Based on § 14, paragraph 1, number 2 of the Partial Basic Regulations (Experimental Model) of Freie Universität Berlin from October 27, 1998, the following study regulation for the Continuing Education Master's Program International Relations Online was issued on February 15, 2013 by the Joint Commission on the East European Studies and International Relations Online Master's Programs at Freie Universität Berlin:<sup>1</sup>

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## **§ 1 Area of Application**

This regulation concerns the goals, content, and structure of the Master's Program International Relations Online at Freie Universität Berlin based on the examination regulation for the Master's program from September 18, 2013.

## **§ 2 Qualification Goals**

(1) The students, guided by theory, are able to analyze and interpret topics and developments in the fields of international relations, global politics and area studies. They can reflect critically on and view from an interdisciplinary perspective the political, societal, cultural, and institutional contexts of global politics and their implications. The students know the relevant classic strands of global politics theory and have an overview of the theoretical approaches that can be called upon from related disciplines. In addition to that students display applicable knowledge of specific regions of the world and are able to analyze and interpret developments taking place in these regions from

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<sup>1</sup> This regulation has been confirmed by the Freie Universität Berlin Executive Board on August 26, 2013.

the perspective of humanities and social sciences. Furthermore the students can classify such developments within the respective political, societal, legal, historical, and cultural contexts as well as evaluate them from a transdisciplinary point of view. The students have the competence to deal with intercultural and gender-specific problems. Within the framework of scientific research design, they can empirically test and develop theoretical assumptions. To this end they draw from different empirical data and evaluate it according to the standards of scientific work. The students can draw upon practical knowledge and are able to successfully organize, carry out and evaluate projects and negotiations with international focus.

2) The students have command of the superior competencies of teamwork and moderation skills, critical thinking and conflict resolution as well as analytical and practical problem solving skills.

Within the framework of a blended learning study, the students acquire abilities and knowledge in the areas of organization and coordination and time management. They also learn to work in virtual learning environments in a structured and independent way. The students get in contact with regional and international networks and circles of experts in international relations and area studies, and participate in building such networks.

(3) Through the thematic diversity and practical orientation of the Master's Program the students gain initial relevant professional experiences in diverse areas and become qualified for higher positions in an international context. The broad interdisciplinary qualifications and practical skills and competences related to global politics and area studies that students gain in the course of the program are intended to be applied in professional fields of activity. The program provides a scientific foundation for internationally directed activities in the following areas: politics and political consulting, economics and economic consulting, law and legal consulting, culture, tourism administration, media, business administration, adult education as well as research and teaching in academic institutions. A theoretical-methodological education based on fact, especially in the fields of political and social sciences, furthermore enables students to conduct continuative scientific work and research.

### **§ 3 Content of the Study Program**

(1) The Master's Program International Relations Online is an interdisciplinary program, in which students deal with current problem situations of international relations, global politics and area studies through the application of theory and methods. The students gain expert knowledge concerning the historical development of global politics and area studies. Within Theoretical Foundations they learn the theoretical and methodological basics for the program, including classic approaches and interdisciplinary theories. Within the framework of innovative interdisciplinary theories students apply selected concepts and approaches from related study fields such as communication, neurosciences, network-analysis and political administration to current problems.

They also learn to work scientifically and methodically in the development of research designs and the application of correct forms of citation. In the section on practical application, the students learn methods of negotiating, of working on multilateral and policy-relevant problem solving and of planning, conducting as well as evaluating projects. The study profile Global Politics deals with different interdisciplinary issues of international relations and global politics. The students are able to analyze and critically assess interdependent problem areas and constellations. In the study profile Area Studies students deal with problems both general and related to specific regions. By combining perspectives stemming from different disciplines they can draw up practically oriented analyses. In all sections of the Master's program, gender-relevant and intercultural academic questions receive special consideration.

(2) Besides subject-related knowledge, students acquire key transdisciplinary qualifications. In the online and in the in-house phases of the program, the students acquire skills related to moderation, criticism as well as problem solving and transfer. The students' motivation is stimulated. They are taught an effective and efficient manner of working including optimal time management. A competent handling of the internet and, in particular, of virtual learning environments constitutes a key point of the superordinate competencies formed and trained by the study program.

#### **§ 4 Structure and Organization**

(1) Enrollment for the Master's program can be either full-time or half-time. The program is divided into the following parts:

1. Mandatory modules, comprising 36 credits
2. Study Profiles, comprising 24 to 32 credits
3. Compulsory electives, comprising 32 to 40 credits and
4. Master's thesis including defense, comprising 20 credits.

(2) In the mandatory section, comprising two topical focuses, the following modules have to be completed:

1. Topical focus Theoretical Foundations:
  - Module Initiation: Why and How Shall We Study Global Politics? (10 credits)
  - Module Explaining Global Politics: The Game of Using Theories (10 credits)
2. Topical Focus Practical Application:
  - Module The Applied Side: How to Run Projects (8 credits)
  - Module The Applied Side: How to Bargain in Global Politics (8 credits).

(3) One of the following Study Profiles has to be chosen. Within the chosen profile, three or four elective modules comprising 24 or 32 credits have to be selected and completed:

1. Study Profile Global Politics, including the following modules:
  - Module Changing Global Landscapes: Globalization Challenges (8 credits)

- Module Changing Patterns of Governance: The Evolution of the State (8 credits)
- Module Changing Patterns of Governance: The European Model (8 credits)
- Module Changing Patterns of Governance: Coping with Global Risks and Uncertainties (8 credits)

2. Study Profile Area Studies, including the following Modules:

- Module Overview: Studying Areas (8 credits)
- Module Lost in Transformation: Comparative Area Studies (8 credits)
- Module Russia: Eternal Enigmas (8 credits)
- Module Eastern Europe: A Dissolving Concept? (8 credits)

(4) In the compulsory elective section, five modules comprising a total of 40 credits have to be chosen and completed if three modules comprising a total of 24 credits are chosen and completed within the study profile selected according to paragraph 3. If four modules comprising a total of 32 credits are completed within the Study Profile selected according to paragraph 3, four modules comprising a total of 32 credits must be chosen and completed within the compulsory elective section.

The following modules are offered in the compulsory elective section:

- Module Global Flows: Capital and Finance (8 credits)
- Module Global Flows: Migration (8 credits)
- Module Global Flows: Energy (8 credits)
- Module Global Flows: ICT Powered Governance Modes (8 credits)
- Module Policy Issues: Global Cities (8 credits)
- Module Policy Issues: Conflict Management and Reconciliation (8 credits)
- Module Policy Issues: Narratives and the Cultural Factor (8 credits).

Besides the above-mentioned modules in the compulsory elective section students can also choose as compulsory elective module a module from the study profile that the student does not select.

(4) The module descriptions (Annex 1) provide information about each module concerning the content and qualification goals, learning and teaching forms, the work load, forms of active participation, the customary duration, and the frequency of offerings.

(5) The course plans (Annex 2 and 3) provide information about the exemplary course plan of the study program, full-time and half-time.

### **§ 5 Forms of Teaching and Learning**

(1) The forms of teaching and learning follow the blended learning format. The program is predominantly offered as online instruction and is supplemented by in-house classes. During the online phases, the module contents are taught through a virtual learning platform. The in-house classes take place once per semester and consist of seminars. Each module is taught both online and in an in-house session.

(2) During the online phases, the students work through the module contents predominantly independently and are accompanied and supported by instructors online and offline. The online modules provide the methodological and theoretical foundations for a particular subject. Concrete areas of application are discussed, and exemplary case studies deal with topical research questions. Each module consists of three parts, which are subdivided into several learning units. The learning units are composed of the following components: information concerning work load and educational goals, guiding questions, content area, key points, compulsory and additional literature, and tasks. Except for the compulsory reading and the tasks, all components of the learning units are available as audio versions, too. Besides the independent study of the contents, interactive forms of work such as discussions and group work are also used. Thus the online phase promotes the critical faculties and analytical skills of the students in the subject area and the transdisciplinary capacity to independently organize and structure one's work.

(3) The in-house classes supplement the online phase. Defined topics from the module are discussed and analyzed in depth. The primary forms of work are seminar talks and group work that are conducted based on teaching material and preparatory readings. Beyond that, the students give presentations and conduct simulation games on selected conflict topics. The in-house classes primarily serve for teaching and applying subject-specific knowledge and promoting moderation skills, problem-solving strategies and intercultural competence. The students network with one another, with their instructors, and with decision makers from politics and business.

#### **§ 6 Student and Studies Guidance**

(1) General Student Guidance is available from the student advisor assigned to the Master's program.

(2) Guidance on studies is available from the instructors in charge of the respective modules. They provide counseling in terms of online consultation hours, emails, telephone calls or consultation hours during the in-house classes. Furthermore, students are advised to review their individual course plan of the study program with the student advisor.

#### **§ 7 Date of Validity and Transitional Arrangements**

(1) This regulation goes into effect a day after its publication in the official journal of Freie Universität Berlin (FU-Mitteilungen).

(2) At the same time, the study regulation for the Master's program International Relations Online, issued on May 31, 2012 in FU-Mitteilungen 65/2012, p. 1144 will be no longer in force.

(3) This regulation applies to students who enroll or re-enroll in the Master's program at Freie Universität Berlin after the regulation has gone into effect. Students who enrolled in the Master's program before the effective date of the regulation continue their studies based on the regulation according to paragraph 2 if they do not request from the respective examination board to continue

their studies based on the new regulation. In case of such an application, the examination board, following the principles of maintaining confidence and equal treatment, decides on the amount of credit to be credited from the already begun or completed modules, according to the regulation in force then – and possible additional work. The transition is not reversible.

(4) The possibility of completing the study program based on the study regulation according to paragraph 2 is guaranteed, in case of full-time enrollment, until the end of the 2015 summer semester, or, in case of half-time enrollment, until the end of the 2017 summer semester.