

Course descriptions

B.A. Social Work

This handbook contains course descriptions of courses offered in the Bachelor of Social Work. For further details regarding ECTS and exams as well as an overview of which of these courses MAY be offered in English, please use our 'ECTS and Course Manual'.

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1st and 2nd Semester (beginners level)

Module 1: Propaedeutics, History and Theory of Social Work

Graduates have basic knowledge and an overview of history, theory and scientific propaedeutics of social work. They have in-depth knowledge of historical foundations and relevant theories of both the profession and the scientific discipline of social work, especially regarding major social movements as well as structural social conditions that have shaped and continue to shape the development of social work. They are able to analyse the scope of relevant theories of social work. Graduates develop their own point of view within the multitude of theoretical approaches in their respective historical contexts. They apply theories to current social developments as well as to concrete situations of practice. Graduates are aware of what it means to study social work as a science, develop an "ethos" of scientific and academic work that enables self-critical reflection on scientific problems, and adhere to rules of respectful discussions in seminars and "good scientific practice".

Module 2: Methods of Social Work Practice I

Graduates are familiar with different theories and methods of social work and how to evaluate them critically. They reflect on their own biographical experiences and resources in the context of professional practice, and are aware of the steps, scope and limits of methods and professional practices. Graduates recognize and engage with ethical dilemmas and problems. They grasp the biographical and life-world background as well as the self-image of social work addressees. Based on this understanding, and in dialogue with the addressees, they develop ideas for needs-based assistance and strategies for professional activity. These ideas and strategies are sensitive to the diversity of human life and take into account the political and legal framework of social work in Germany. Graduates promote participation of addressees throughout the assistance process, a collaborative development of ideas, and addressees' self-determination in making life choices. Graduates also consider digital forms of social work practice.

Module 3: Fields of Practice, Target Groups and Organizations of Social Work

Graduates hold knowledge about how fields of Social Work practice are structured in general, and in-depth knowledge about one field in particular. They can apply relevant theoretical frameworks to analyse social work practice in specific fields and with specific populations. Furthermore, with a four-week research phase and a complementary exercise, they prove to be able to critically address and reflect the practice of Social Work in the respective field.

Module 4: **Professional English**

Graduates have improved their professional and technical communication skills depending on the individual competence level B1-C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference, and have expanded their receptive and productive vocabulary from the field of social work. They can access scientific articles, are able to decipher the meaning of unfamiliar terms, follow professional discussions, lectures and media reports. Graduates know how to research, critically examine and present technical knowledge - orally and in writing. They can extract the essentials from conversations, critically dissect representations and contexts, and objectively reproduce the important content in report form. Through language, they develop awareness and sensitivity to other cultural realities and norms.

Module 5: **Legal Foundations of Social Work I**

Graduates know the fundamentals of the legal system, its structure, essential functions and the structural / social and socio-political significance of law in the context of social work. They are familiar with the logic and approaches of working with laws, which enables them to study legal texts and other legal literature independently and to use it practically to solve legal questions arising in the practice of social work: Who wants what from whom, based on what and why? They know the method of social advocacy through the use of laws, develop specific concepts and strategies and are able to apply the method of social advocacy in social work practice. Graduates have specific legal knowledge in the areas of family law as well as child and youth welfare law.

Module 6: **Society, Health and Social Work**

Graduates recognize the connections between social, (social) political and health fields and factors for social work. They can compare perspectives from sociology, political science/ social policy and social medicine/ social psychiatry and derive insights for the tasks, role, and activities of social work.'

Unit 1: **Sociological Foundations of Social Work**

Graduates have achieved a basic understanding of sociological ways of thinking and selected theoretical approaches for analysing societal structures (of power, domination and inequality), constructions of normality and social systems. They are able to identify how societal and social conditions influence social work recipients' life circumstances, their courses of action, and their understandings of self and the world. Graduates also recognize how these factors impact themselves and can problematise individualizing accounts against this background. They are encouraged to reflect upon the function and significance of social work as well as their own (future) professional practice in the societal context.

Unit 2: Political and socio-political Foundations of Social Work

Graduates understand the interrelationships of society, economy, and state in current and historical processes. They know the epochs of economic and social history, the history of social movements as well as concepts of a welfare state in international comparison. They are able to recognize and analyse political and economic conditions that determine social policy. The basic knowledge acquired enables critical self-reflection and differentiated analyses in the fields of social work. Graduates know, how social work can contribute to an improvement of the socio-political foundations.

Unit 3: Foundations of Social Medicine and Social Psychiatry for Social Work

Graduates recognize the significance of demographic and social epidemiological data and findings from the health sciences as well as from reports of health and social sectors for social work and are able to interpret them. They are familiar with selected scientific and psychosocial explanatory concepts of health and illness; on this basis, they have a social science understanding of health. They know the interrelation of social conditions (social situation, gender, migration and age) and the areas of health / illness; being ill / coping with illness; utilization of health care. Graduates are familiar with the health policy objectives of health promotion / disease prevention and introduced to the complex process of rehabilitation of chronically / mentally ill and addicted people. Graduates are familiar with different areas of work in health-related social work as well as the requirements for the role of social workers in interdisciplinary work contexts.

3rd and 4th Semester (intermediate level)

Module 7: Diversity Studies

Graduates are familiar with selected debates on class, gender, sexuality, racism, ethnicity, migration and disability and have dealt with their interactions. They hold basic knowledge about the constructed character of normalization and marginalization in its societal, cultural, social, and subjective dimensions. Social practices are understood as a site for processing experiences, negotiating meanings, and perceiving possibilities for action. Social realities are recognized in their complexity, and the dangers of simplification and any unifications of meaning are reflected upon. Irritations of one's own perception are recognized as a productive source for self-reflexive practices. Different ways of dealing with socially significant differentiations and discriminations are critically analyzed for their contribution to de-/construction.

Module 8: **Research Methods in Social Work**

Graduates are familiar with the theoretical principles of qualitative and quantitative research methods. They have basic knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods and their application in the context of empirical approaches to study-relevant topics and questions from the field of social work. They are able to collect, record, process, evaluate and present qualitative and quantitative data as well as critically assess concepts, processes and results of research projects. They know the connections between scientific criteria on the one hand and social, socio-political and ethical aspects on the other hand.

Module 9: **Psychological Foundations of Social Work**

Graduates are familiar with psychological foundations of social work and relevant references to developmental psychology, personality psychology, critical psychology, clinical psychology, social psychology and socialization, as well as their respective origins and significance for psycho-social work. This includes concepts of health, stress and coping, and the explanation of the basic psychological orientations of psychoanalytic, behaviorist, cognitive, humanistic and systemic approaches. Graduates are able to devise psychosocial diagnoses that take into account biography and social context/ social lifeworld. They know concepts of psychosocial intervention that are specific to given indications and situationally appropriate.

Module 10: **Pedagogical Foundations of Social Work**

Graduates recognize the pedagogical aspects of social work that facilitate processes of learning, education, and development in the formation of an individual and socially competent personality. They understand fundamental pedagogical issues and theoretical traditions. They are familiar with theories of upbringing, education and socialization with particular regard to the historical, social and differential theoretical backgrounds as well as their relevance for social work practice. Graduates can classify pedagogical actions and concepts accordingly and apply acquired knowledge in a reflective manner to pedagogical problems and action contexts in social work. They understand core aspects of pedagogical professionalism and recognize challenges in how to act pedagogically. They know pedagogical concepts and have options for action at their disposal, including the prevention of sexualized violence.

Module 11: **Culture-Aesthetics-Media**

Graduates have insight into cultural, media and educational research, especially socialization, reception and impact research, an overview of social cultural work as a field of activity and the use of aesthetic-media practices for social work target groups. With a focus on media education, theatre education, or music, graduates have deepened their knowledge and competencies in creative group processes, social-aesthetic and media design and a critical examination of the respective

approaches, art genres and media, artistic strategies as well as inter- and transdisciplinary positions.

Module 12: Methods of Social Work Practice II – Counselling

Graduates know theories and methods of selected counselling approaches and can respond adequately to complex situations and problem constellations frequently found in counselling settings. They know how to differentiate institutionally framed goals, settings, and contexts for counselling situations; they incorporate basic psychological and sociological theory as well as knowledge specific to social work into counselling processes. They use knowledge reflectively, can conduct initial conversations face-to-face as well as in the most common of online formats, and can justify their choice of intervention within each format. Students critically reflect their own actions and attitudes in interactions with clients.

Module 13: Legal Foundations of Social Work II

Graduates are able to develop specific legal (auxiliary) concepts/ strategies, implement these in the areas of social welfare law (livelihood and basic security law) and social administration law, and enforce them against third parties and authorities (social advocacy). They have an overview of social security benefits and social assistance, can calculate specific benefits, as well as formulate and enforce benefit rights vis à vis service providers/ authorities. They can assess the legality of administrative actions on a case-by-case basis, devise appropriate strategies, write basic legal letters, as well as understand and fill out application forms in social law.

Module 14: International Social Work, Social Economics and Social Management

Graduates understand global challenges and interdependencies and analyse them critically. They know socially transformative approaches and organizational models in their local and global contexts, and on this basis critically reflect upon the various models of social work as a profession. They have specific knowledge of the interrelationships inherent in international social work, as well as social economy and social management.

Unit 1: International Social Work

Graduates know how to analyse the global and imperial interdependencies of social worlds on the one hand and their social and political impact on concrete social life on the others hand. They differentiate the contexts of respective international socio-state constitutions and devise methodical approaches for action accordingly. They recognize the influential role of relationships between governmental actors and those in civil society. Graduates critically assess the global challenges of climate change and develop action strategies that allow them to integrate these into the professional fields of social work. They understand the importance of maintaining a research stance and attitude in light of the global complexities.

Unit 2: Foundations of Social Economics and Social Management in Social Work

Graduates have introductory knowledge about the central concepts and theories of social economics, as well as their relevance with respect to the organisations and fields of social work. They have a basic understanding of the role of the social economy in the context of the overall of economic structures and the welfare state. They are acquainted with community economic approaches that underline perspectives of empowerment and social-ecological transformation within solidarity economies.

Unit 3: Advanced Study of Social Economics and Social Management

Graduates have in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge of social economics and social management. They are able to analyse field specific problems and debates in the context of social work as a critical, socially transformative profession. They possess a profound understanding of the fundamentals of social management and are able to critically analyse processes of organisational development in social organisations.

Module 15: Project Module I

Based on the theoretical knowledge acquired during their studies, graduates are able to develop questions and ideas for innovative practice projects. They can work in groups and constructively deal with group dynamics in a concrete work context. Graduates link theory and practice experiences. They work on key questions for practice projects in a self-reflective and researching manner.

Module 16: Project Module II

Graduates know how to reflect on experiences gained in professional practice and link them to scientific findings. Graduates can locate the role of social work in terms of theories of practice and are sensitized to their own power and control functions. Graduates analyse their chosen topic in-depth and independently. They are able to implement innovative solutions for practical projects planned in project module I. They are familiar with basics of quality management and evaluation procedures.

Module 17: Internship und Supervision

The internship supplements the academic course of study with practice-oriented, theory-based, reflective and administrative tasks. Graduates had the opportunity to try out, expand and reflect on acquired skills in a selected field of social work. They recognize how a specific organisation is integrated into a field of practice, understand organisational structures in their respective practicum placement, are familiar with decision-making processes and administrative techniques such as record keeping and management, processing of applications, etc., as well as the creation and

handling of different kinds of documents such as reports, minutes, statements, notices, or formal orders. In addition to familiarizing them with the professional practice of social work, gaining experience and scientifically reflecting on professional activity, the internship aims in particular at developing a professional identity as a social worker. Through additional training supervision graduates strengthen their professional identity of thinking and acting as social workers. They know how to reflect on ethical standards, values, professional ethical principles. They identify dilemmas between these orientations and specific organizational contexts in social work practice and interdisciplinary work contexts. Graduates recognize their own strengths and weaknesses in social interactions.

6th and 7th Semester (advanced level)

Module 18: Foundations of Ethics and Social Philosophy for Social Work

By reading and discussing exemplary philosophical texts on ethics and social philosophy, graduates are familiarized with both classic and contemporary positions (e.g. virtue ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, care ethics, contractualism, poststructuralism, feminism). Through critically reflecting on the central conditions of moral argumentation, graduates discuss the most important terms and concepts of ethics and social philosophy and apply them to specific conflicts in social work (morality, ethos, good and bad, values, norms, reason, autonomy, responsibility, justice, recognition, gender, diversity, universalism, etc.). Graduates know the professional and international self-commitments of the social work profession. They are able to identify and analyse moral conflicts both in their concrete professional practice and in other aspects of everyday life. They weigh alternative options for action in a well-founded, rational manner.

Module 19: Advanced Study of Theory and Practice

Graduates have in-depth knowledge in a selected exemplary subject area, are familiar with relevant theories and relate them to fields of practice/areas of social work. They use specific theoretical and research knowledge in a transdisciplinary way in order to analyse social conditions and life situations of certain target groups, as well as the structural framework and logic of professional practice. They derive insights and options for approaching practice and for developing professional identity.

Elective 1: Social Work and "Existential Needs"

Graduates have an overview of social work in the field of "existential needs", its corresponding target groups as well as organizations and institutions active in this field of work and their cooperation partners. Graduates can locate the field of practice within theories and independently analyse it with a given focus (poverty and exclusion in the context of unemployment, or poverty and exclusion in the context of homelessness). They know specific methods and strategies in the field of practice

and reflect this knowledge through case work and during practice visits. They assume social responsibility for particularly marginalized target groups of social work and have developed an understanding of diversity with regard to the different coping strategies of those affected by existential needs.

Elective 2: Social Work and “Health”

Graduates are familiar with the social determinants of health and the connection between social and health inequality and are sensitized to the importance of social work in the health sector. They are familiar with and can apply theoretical concepts of the bio-psycho-social health process, know the conditions under which selected diseases develop and their course, and the associated fields of action of social work in the context of health promotion, health care and rehabilitation. They are familiar with respective structures and facilities as well as different settings and target groups. On the basis of this knowledge, graduates apply reflected perspectives, action strategies and competencies of social work in these mostly interprofessional fields of work. They are able to introduce a resource-oriented perspective into multi-professional work processes and develop specific case and field competencies for the health sector.

Elective 3: Social Work in “Child and Youth Welfare Services”

Graduates have in-depth knowledge of structures, target groups, services and organizational forms of child and youth welfare as well as historical and current lines of development in this area of practice. They are familiar with selected key concepts and requirements of professional practice in child and youth welfare, especially regarding structural areas of tension and contradictions existing in the field. They can analyse and reflect on the ethical implications of theory and practice. They recognize the significance of participation and involvement, diversity and digitalization of life worlds, social inequalities and disadvantages, migration experiences, structural racism, cultural and gender-specific aspects for professional practice and in the design of programming in child and youth welfare services.

Elective 4: Social Work with “Children and Youth in Open Settings as well as School Social Work”

Graduates have an overview of services, programming, target groups and organizational forms of working with children and youth in open settings and in school social work. They have sound knowledge of key concepts, attitudes, principles, and requirements of professional action in this field. They analyse the field of practice of child, youth and school social work with regard to professional logic of action, dilemmas and areas of tension. They recognize and critically reflect on resulting ethical questions and power relations. They use knowledge of theory and research for the analysis of social conditions and life worlds, problem situations and coping strategies of young people. They reflect and analyse the significance of gender and other categories of social inequality for professional practices and for the design of services in the field of child and youth work in open settings and school social work.

Elective 5: Social Work and “Age”

Graduates recognize the importance of demographic change as a social and individual challenge and understand “age” as a cross-sectional issue of social work. They grasp the significance of “age” as one of the horizontal structural categories that intersect with vertical categories of social inequality as well as one of the central social constructions by which people orient themselves in living together. They hold basic knowledge of social gerontology and can orientate themselves in the interdisciplinary field. They know socio-political and social legal frameworks that govern work with this growing and heterogeneous target group. They know typical fields of action, both in areas that are explicitly assigned as “social care for the elderly” and in areas in which older people make up a significant and/or growing proportion of the addressees, especially in the field of health and care. Graduates are familiar with concepts and methods of work with the elderly and senior citizens. They can apply paradigms, theories, and methods of social work to work with older people as well as assess and professionally address effects that age, age differences and generational belonging have on helping and counseling relationships.

Elective 6: Social Work and “Deviant Behaviours”

Graduates recognize the importance of criminology as a scientific discipline of the “theory of crime” for social work. They are familiar with empirical criminological research approaches, theories of criminology and criminalization as well as with mechanisms of social control for crime (intervention and prevention approaches). Various topics are addressed: juvenile delinquency, drug crime, sexual violence, violent crime, prostitution, trafficking in women, sex tourism, victim support and victim rights, hate crime, organized crime, psychiatry and social control, offenders and probation services, concepts of the penal system and alternatives, and new phenomena of crime.

Elective 7: Social Work and “Social Cultural and Educational Work”

Graduates have deepened and consolidated their competencies for the professional field of social cultural and media work in an exemplary thematic field (depending on the offer: social cultural work and community arts, cultural education, media education, media activism or international political cultural and educational work). They are familiar with the structures of educational, cultural and/or media policy, as well as the funding opportunities available in these areas. They relate relevant knowledge of cultural and educational theory and (power-)critical discourses to practice. They use specific theoretical and research knowledge as well as artistic methods and artistic research approaches in a transdisciplinary way to analyse social conditions and life situations of specific target groups as well as the structural frameworks of professional practice. Graduates experiment with a variety of artistic approaches, design different aesthetic-artistic strategies of acting together with addressees and reflect on their experiences as to the role of cultural social work.

Elective 8: Social Work and “Racism and Migration”

Graduates deepen their knowledge using exemplars of anti-Semitism, racism against Sinti:zze and Rom:nia, anti-Muslim, anti-black or anti-Asian racism in their historical, political, social and cultural dimensions. They understand references to and interactions with other forms of social power and inequality relationships. Graduates recognize the importance of legal, political, and social discrimination and privileges for social and cultural representations as well as for subjective options for action. Theories and concepts for addressing racism were checked as to their suitability for social work. In discussions with practice projects, theoretically gained knowledge and questions were discussed and deepened.

Elective 9: Social Work and “Gender and Queer”

Graduates are theoretically trained in critical approaches of "gender" and "queer" studies and know about the effects of heteronormativity on the lives of diverse people. They are familiar with different research and analytical perspectives that seek to grasp discrimination and marginalization in their complexity: for example, intersectionality, assemblage, but also approaches critical of racism and postcolonial approaches in gender, queer, trans and inter studies. They know how to use these approaches to establish a gender-just and heteronormativity-critical social work that does not lose sight of the heterogeneity of society.

Elective 10: Social Work and „Dis_Ability”

Graduates have deepened their knowledge in the chosen area of dis_ability. They apply relevant theoretical frameworks and research knowledge to critically analyse and reflect social work practice in the field of support and assistance for people with disabilities.

Module 20: Theories and Methods of Social Work

Graduates hold in-depth knowledge of selected theories, concepts and methods of social work and relate questions of practice to scientific questions. Focused on either general methods of practice or reconstructive methods, they locate practice methods in theory, critically assess impact and limitations of various approaches on different levels and formulate implications for the discipline and profession. They analyse and assess institutional and organisational conditions into which social work is bound and identify ethical difficulties and dilemmas. They grasp and re-construct the biographical context and life-world of addressees, and develop fitting forms of professional engagement and intervention. Graduates analyse cases, situations, problems and resources from multiple perspectives to devise professional strategies that are sensitive to human differences and diversity. They reflect on their own biographical and professional experiences and skills, identify links to social work theory, and use insights to further their understanding of professional attitudes and sense of professional identity.

Module 21: **Legal Foundations of Social Work III**

Graduates can apply the concept of social advocacy in the practice of social work (on a case-by-case basis). They devise strategies for legal support and solutions regarding social rights in different legal areas (livelihood security, health/rehabilitation, child and youth welfare, old age/ care, migration). They can use social advocacy in the following areas: crime and criminal law, intersectionality and anti-discrimination law, international and human rights, care law and self-determination rights, special life situations and social welfare law, homelessness.

Module 22: **Bachelor Thesis**

Graduates are familiar with fundamental questions concerning the writing of a longer scientific paper. They have engaged with theoretical and research methodological questions and written an exposé using scientific sources. In their Bachelor thesis, they demonstrated relevant theoretical, scientific, methodological and professional knowledge and skills which enable them to research, summarize and discuss a topical issue within a given timeframe. They described and analysed life situations of social work addressees and the larger social context. If applicable, graduates outlined plans of action that include theory-based considerations and justifications for professional actions and their consequences.

Module 23: **Elective Module**

Graduates have deepened or supplemented previously acquired skills and knowledge according to their personal course of study or professional goals. They hold knowledge of current topics or practical fields of social work, deepen their knowledge in specific methods or in other areas of knowledge relevant to social work. They take on new perspectives, link their findings with other disciplines and present insights and results.