

# Sociology of Inequality

# MA

**Module guide**

As of: July 2021

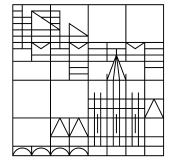
**Contact person:**

Andreas Romer

Department of History, Sociology, Sport Science and Empirical Educational Research

Email: [studienberatung.sociologie@uni-konstanz.de](mailto:studienberatung.sociologie@uni-konstanz.de)

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## Qualification goals

### **Sociology of Inequality**

#### ***Subject-specific qualification goals***

Participants in the programme will acquire fundamental skills in analysing social inequality in human societies. They will be able to complete empirically sound descriptions of social structures and gain a deeper theoretical understanding of the emergence and impact of social inequality. The focus of the study programme is on acquiring comprehensive methodological knowledge and implementing it in corresponding research-related practice. The main qualification goal is the ability to independently apply knowledge to empirical issues in inequality research. Participants will be specifically prepared for academic discussions by engaging in scientific colloquia. They also have the opportunity to collaborate on current research projects.

#### ***Transferable qualification goals***

Students will gain an understanding of social inequality, its causes and effects in a global context and develop an eye for the political and institutional dimensions of social inequality; they will be trained in empirical scientific methods so they can analyze complex social science contexts and explain them in an understandable way. Furthermore, students will develop a reflexive way of assessing situations that allows them to place scientific findings in the respective socio-political context.

## Description of the modules

### Module 1: Social Inequality

**MA Sociology of Inequality, parts 2+3 also for MA Sociology, MA Anthropology and Sociology**

<b>Credits</b>	15
<b>Duration</b>	one semester
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	around 20%
<b>Calculation of the module grade</b>	The module grade is calculated from the grades for the partial module exams weighted by their corresponding ECTS credits.
<b>Module parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduction/ Lecture series</li> <li>– Inequality: Groups and Domains (Migration)</li> <li>– Inequality: Groups and Domains (Gender)</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification goals</b>	Students get to know central concepts and important empirical findings of inequality research as well as theoretical approaches to explain them. A focus lies on research on inequality by gender and migration background.

#### **Module part 1      *Introduction / Lecture series***

<b>Course contents</b>	The course covers basic theoretical approaches and questions of social inequality. What are the mechanisms that drive social inequality? And what are the consequences of inequality – both on the collective and the individual level? Is inequality on the rise? If so, why? What role does education play in social mobility? The reading list comprises classical theory, for example from Karl Marx and Max Weber, and current scholars such as Claudia Goldin, Thomas Piketty and Raj Chetty.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Lecture / 2
<b>Workload</b>	90 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 60 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	3
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Coursework
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

#### **Module part 2      *Inequality: Groups and Domains (Migration)***

\*SWS = weekly teaching hours

<b>Course contents</b>	This class examines the consequences of international migration flows on ethnic inequality in industrial democracies with an emphasis on Europe. One of the key questions is to which extent these inequalities reflect migrant selectivity on the one hand and conditions in the receiving countries on the other hand. In Germany and other European immigration countries, inflows have long been shaped by comparatively low skilled individuals and a devaluation of existing skills upon arrival. Through transmission of e.g. low levels of human capital within families, these processes shape ethnic inequality even in later generations. The recent debate about structural racism emphasizes that this is only one part of the story. With immigrant societies coming of age, the focus on the initial causes of inequality becomes too narrow and the role of reception contexts in explaining inequality more pressing. The question of how the claims of structural and institutional racism and disadvantage can be integrated in empirical-analytical research on discrimination and exclusion will receive special attention in this class.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

### Module part 3      **Inequality: Groups and Domains (Gender)**

<b>Course contents</b>	The seminar provides an overview on current research about gender inequalities in education, the labour market, and in relation to unpaid activities, such as housework, childcare and care for frail relatives. This also includes comparisons between the situation in different countries and the role that institutional (welfare state) regulations play in gender inequality.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester

<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/required elective</b>	Compulsory course

## **Module 2: Current Research**

### **MA Sociology of Inequality**

<b>Credits</b>	6
<b>Duration</b>	two semesters
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	no
<b>Calculation of the module grade</b>	ungraded
<b>Module parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Colloquium 1</li> <li>– Colloquium 2</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification goals</b>	This lecture series with external speakers from other national and international universities provides an insight into current research activities in the sociology of inequality. It gives students the opportunity to participate in scientific debates by contributing to the discussion of the research papers.

### **Module part 1      Colloquium 1**

<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Colloquium / 2
<b>Workload</b>	90 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 60 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	3
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Coursework
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/required elective</b>	Compulsory course

### **Module part 2      Colloquium 2**

<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Colloquium / 2
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\*SWS = weekly teaching hours

<b>Workload</b>	90 hours (ca. 45 hours in-person courses, ca. 45 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	3
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Coursework
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	2
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

## **Module 3: Global and Political Inequality**

### **MA Sociology of Inequality**

<b>Credits</b>	12
<b>Duration</b>	one semester
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	around 16%
<b>Calculation of the module grade</b>	The module grade is calculated from the grades for the partial module exams weighted by their corresponding ECTS credits.
<b>Module parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Global/ Political Inequality</li> <li>– Current Debates</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification goals</b>	Students gain knowledge about political inequalities across time and in different contexts, they understand the scope and consequences of global inequality.

### **Module part 1      Global/ Political Inequality**

<b>Course contents</b>	In this course, we will discuss and examine two highly relevant topics in current sociological research on inequality: the historical development and contemporary shape of group-based inequalities regarding political rights and privileges on the one hand and of global inequalities on the other hand. Political inequalities are the subject of various forms of contention and mobilization that have substantially changed and augmented the agenda of political systems throughout the world, for instance in the case of the LGBTQ movement. Global inequalities more broadly conceived have, however, often been neglected by sociological inequality research whose framework of analysis lies on educational, wealth and income inequality within the nation state or between OECD countries. In this course, we go beyond such limitations to engage with the increasing interest in global inequalities and how they affect non-OECD countries in particular. Courses in this module will either focus on political or global inequalities or discuss perspectives at the intersection of both topics.
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<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	2
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

## Module part 2      **Current Debates**

<b>Course contents</b>	In this class, we will read and discuss books and articles that feature prominently in inequality research. These may touch upon aspects and dimensions of inequality that have recently become more important, for example: inequality between generations or inequality in exposure to environmental risks. Alternatively, we may take a closer look at studies that focus on topics that have been in the academic debate for quite a while but have become the focus of innovative and influential new research, such as the studies by Piketty or Wilkinson and Pickett. Studying these readings more closely often offers students an excellent opportunity to learn how to critically evaluate research, for example by discussing the clarity of the research question, the methodological rigor of the empirical analyses and the soundness the conclusions drawn.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	2
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

\*SWS = weekly teaching hours

## **Module 4: Advanced Methods**

### **MA Sociology of Inequality, MA Sociology**

<b>Credits</b>	18
<b>Duration</b>	two semesters
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	around 22%
<b>Calculation of the module grade</b>	The module grade is calculated from the grades for the partial module exams weighted by their corresponding ECTS credits..
<b>Module parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measurement of Inequality</li> <li>– Regression Analysis</li> <li>– Advanced Methods</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification goals</b>	Students gain deep knowledge of measuring inequality and advanced statistical methods.

### **Module part 1 Measurement of Inequality**

<b>Course contents</b>	Inequality refers to distributions of "goods" and "bads" in a social system. The course introduces basic concepts of characterizing distributions regarding their "unequal" shape. Depending on the type of resources (e.g. income, education) and the categories which are under focus (e.g. class, gender), researchers use different indicators (indices) to describe the degree of inequality. After reflecting on the theoretical foundations of different measures, students practice calculating the measurement of inequality with rich data sets.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

### **Module part 2 Regression Analysis**

<b>Course contents</b>	The course introduces the linear regression model and non-linear regression models for categorical dependent variables using data visualizations, and applied examples from a range of social science literatures. Topics will include the
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	development of the regression model, parameter estimation (least squares and maximum likelihood estimation), hypothesis testing, interpretation of estimates, model fit, non-linear and interaction terms, model predictions, model diagnostic (multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, measurement error, specification error), and the practical implications of violating regression assumptions in a range of typical applications.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	1
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

### Module part 3      **Advanced Methods**

<b>Course contents</b>	The course builds on the Regression Analysis course by providing a more in-depth introduction to a particular method. For example: Categorical Data Analysis, Multilevel and Panel Data Analysis, Missing Data, Log-Linear Models, Causal Models, Structural Equation Modeling, Survival Analysis. The advanced methods course complements the project seminar, that is, it will introduce a method that students can directly apply in the project seminar.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Seminar / 2
<b>Workload</b>	180 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 150 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	6
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	Regression Analysis
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	2
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

\*SWS = weekly teaching hours

## **Module 5: Project Seminar**

### **MA Sociology of Inequality**

<b>Credits</b>	9
<b>Duration</b>	one semester
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	around 12%
<b>Qualification goals</b>	At the University of Konstanz, members of the Cluster of Excellence “The Politics of Inequality” as well as additional researchers in the social sciences are permanently involved in many research projects. The project seminar offers the opportunity to be part of an empirical project – covering distinct aspects in research process: design development, data collection, data analyses, data visualization. Topics of the project seminar correspond to the current real world research of the instructors.

<b>Course contents</b>	Inequality research project
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Project seminar / 4
<b>Workload</b>	270 hours (ca. 60 hours in-person courses, ca. 210 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	9
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Performance assessment
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	2
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course

**Module 6: Practice Module****MA Sociology of Inequality**

<b>Credits</b>	30
<b>Duration</b>	one semester
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	ungraded / does not count towards overall grade
<b>Qualification goals</b>	Students apply their knowledge of content and methods acquired so far in specific projects in a national or international scientific or other institution, thus increasing their skills relevant for the labour market.
<b>Course contents</b>	Professional or research work in an area of inequality
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Internship
<b>Workload</b>	6 months full-time internship
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	German
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	3
<b>Compulsory/required elective</b>	Compulsory course

\*SWS = weekly teaching hours

## **Module 7: Conclusion Module**

### **MA Sociology of Inequality**

<b>Credits</b>	30
<b>Duration</b>	one semester
<b>Module counts towards the overall grade</b>	30%
<b>Module parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Master Forum</li> <li>– Master Thesis</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification goals</b>	Documentation of independent scientific work

### **Module part 1      Master Forum**

<b>Course contents</b>	The aim of the course is to accompany the development of the master's project. Depending on how far along they are in their project, participants will present their research question, research design, and intermediate results. The other participants will peer-review these presentations. There is also the possibility of including sessions on topics like theory, literature research, writing, data preparation and analysis, depending on the needs of the participants.
<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Colloquium / 2
<b>Workload</b>	90 hours (ca. 30 hours in-person courses, ca. 60 hours self-study)
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	3
<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Coursework
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	4
<b>Compulsory/required elective</b>	Compulsory course

### **Module part 2      Master's thesis**

<b>Teaching format/SWS*</b>	Self-study
<b>Workload</b>	Ca. 810 hours of self-study
<b>Credits for this unit</b>	27

<b>Coursework / performance assessment</b>	Master's thesis
<b>Requirements</b>	none
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Semester</b>	Winter semester and summer semester
<b>Recommended semester</b>	4
<b>Compulsory/ required elective</b>	Compulsory course