



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



Table of Contents

Doctorate	2
Graduate School of North American Studies • Freie Universität Berlin • Berlin	2

Doctorate



Graduate School of North American Studies

Freie Universität Berlin • Berlin

Overview

Degree	Dr rer pol Economics PhD/Dr rer pol/Dr phil Political Science PhD/Dr phil Sociology PhD/Dr phil in History PhD/Dr phil in Cultural Studies PhD/Dr phil in Literary Studies
Teaching language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">English
Languages	Courses are exclusively taught in English.
Full-time / part-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">full-time
Programme duration	6 semesters
Beginning	Winter semester
Application deadline	30 November for the winter semester starting in October of the following year
Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Combined Master's degree / PhD programme	No
Joint degree / double degree programme	No

Description/content

The Graduate School is dedicated to a comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis of North American societies from the early modern era to the present. Between 2019 and 2024, the GSNAS's research focus will be on changing notions of "democracy" in North America.

The Graduate School provides closely supervised doctoral and post-doctoral education as well as excellent theoretical and methodological research training within the fields of Cultural and Literary Studies, History, Political Science, Sociology, and Economics, while at the same time promoting interdisciplinary approaches and perspectives.

The study programme has been organised into eight interdisciplinary research areas:

- American Conceptions of Democracy between Canonisation and Crisis
- Race, Gender and Class as Competing Elements of North American Ideals of Democratisation
- Multi-Polarisation of American Politics
- Aesthetics of Democracy
- Publics and Counterpublics

- Economic and Financial Crises
- Democracy and Inequality
- Globalisation, Democracy and (the End of?) American Hegemony

Course Details

Course organisation	<p>Doctoral Curriculum:</p> <p>The Graduate School aims at achieving a balance between specialisation in a field of choice and in-depth interdisciplinary training. The curriculum is designed to support these goals by combining interdisciplinary courses, team-taught by representatives of different disciplines from the social sciences and the humanities, and three courses on disciplinary research methods and one course on good scientific practice. Professional key qualifications are obtained in additional courses and workshops provided by the Dahlem Research School (DRS).</p> <p>The first three semesters of the doctoral training programme offer an intense study period in which doctoral students critically assess the fundamental theoretical and methodological tools. Moreover, students review the latest research and critical debates in their respective fields. During this period, the mandatory coursework is to be completed, and students will be expected to have refined their research design and methodological approach. Close collaboration between the student and his/her dissertation adviser will be mandatory and will thereby individualise the training programme. Beginning with the fourth semester, the primary focus will be on independent dissertation research. Besides teaching one class at undergraduate level in the fourth or fifth semester, the last year will be reserved for completion of the dissertation.</p>
A Diploma supplement will be issued	Yes
Certificates for specific modules are awarded	Yes
International elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International guest lecturers • Integrated study abroad unit(s)
Integrated study abroad unit(s)	<p>Students are encouraged and expected to pursue their dissertation project for three to six months at an American or Canadian institution. For this purpose, students can apply for travel and subsistence grants.</p> <p>The GSNAS cooperates with several major American universities and their American Studies programmes, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Studies Programme, Brown University, Providence, RI • Institute of American Studies, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH • African and African American Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA • American Studies Programme, Stanford University, Stanford, CA • American Studies Programme, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA • Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA • American Studies Programme, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC • American Studies Programme, Yale University, New Haven, CT • Karla Scherer Center for the Study of American Culture, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL • McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, McGill University, Montreal, QC
Teaching/work obligations or opportunities	<p>The curriculum of the Graduate School includes the teaching of one BA/MA class at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies.</p>

Special promotion / funding of the programme

- Other (e.g. state level)

Course-specific, integrated German language courses

No

Course-specific, integrated English language courses

Yes

Costs / Funding

Tuition fees per semester in EUR

None

Semester contribution

In total, the semester contribution amounts to 312.89 EUR. It includes a fee of 198.80 EUR for the transportation ticket contribution. This allows you to use public transportation in Berlin for free. Other costs covered by the semester contribution include a 50 EUR enrolment fee, a 54.09 EUR semester contribution to the student support service ("studierendenWERK Berlin"), and a 10 EUR contribution to the student union.

Costs of living

Compared to other European countries, the cost of living in Germany is quite reasonable. However, the cost of living has also risen somewhat in Germany in recent years. The prices for food, accommodation, clothing, cultural events, etc. are slightly above the EU average. You will need around 950 to 1,200 EUR each month to cover your living expenses. The biggest expense is monthly rent, which is between 400 and 700 EUR in Berlin.

Funding opportunities within the university

No

Requirements / Registration

Academic admission requirements

Applicants must have completed an advanced academic degree (Master's, "Magister" or equivalent) with above-average marks in one of the following disciplines or closely related academic programmes: American Cultural Studies, American Literature, History, Political Science, Sociology, Economics. For an overview of all necessary application documents, please see: https://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/en/graduateschool/application/application_procedure/index.html

Language requirements

All applicants who are neither native English speakers nor have earned a degree at a university with English as the sole language of instruction are required to submit certification of their English proficiency: minimum TOEFL scores of 600 (paper-based), 250 (computer-based) and 100 (Internet-based) or equivalent minimum CAE (A and B), CPE (A, B, C) or IELTS (7.0) scores.

Application deadline

30 November for the winter semester starting in October of the following year

Submit application to

Application platform (open from 1 October to 31 January) available at https://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/en/graduateschool/application/application_procedure/index.html

Services

Possibility of finding part-time employment

There are many ways of earning money while you study, for example as waiting staff, academic assistants, or private tutors. Knowledge of German will improve your chances of finding a part-time job, but it isn't necessarily required. However, it is important to be aware of the legal regulations.

The student support service at the university, called studierendenWERK Berlin, and the local representative of the "Bundesagentur für Arbeit" (Federal Employment Agency) can provide information about jobs for students. When searching for a job, look at online job boards, ads in local newspapers, and notice boards on campus.

Accommodation

You have the option to stay in a public/private student dormitory or in a private (shared) apartment. Student dormitories are not administrated by the university itself, so Freie Universität Berlin does not have any on-campus housing. However, it works together with "[studierendenWERK Berlin](#)" regarding student accommodation.

If you do not wish to stay in a student dormitory, you can try to find a room or an apartment on the private housing market. Many students in Berlin live in shared apartments ("WGs"). You can find these offers online (e.g. [WG-gesucht](#) or [Craigslist](#)) or on notice boards on campus.

Available rooms/apartments near the university are rare. Therefore, students mostly commute from other parts of the city. The commute via public transportation usually takes between 30 minutes and an hour, which is considered a normal travel time in Berlin due to the city's size.

Structured research and supervision

Yes

Research training / discussion

Yes

Support for international students and doctoral candidates

- Cultural and linguistic preparation

Supervisor-student ratio

1:3

Contact

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c/o John F. Kennedy Institute of North American Studies

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🌐 Course website: <https://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/graduateschool/>

📘 <https://www.facebook.com/freieuniversitaetberlin/>

🐦 https://twitter.com/fu_berlin

🌐 <https://www.linkedin.com/school/freie-universitat-berlin/>

📷 https://www.instagram.com/fu_berlin/

📺 <https://www.youtube.com/c/FreieUniversitaetBerlin>

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International Programmes in Germany - Database

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www.gate-germany.de

Disclaimer

The data used for this database was collected and analysed in good faith and with due diligence. The DAAD and the Content5 AG accept no liability for the correctness of the data contained in the "International Programmes in Germany" and "Language and Short Courses in Germany".

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