

CHARTER FOR THE MAJOR IN ECONOMY & SOCIETY

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Contemporary societies question the strength of social links, political communities and common goods. Myriad factors transform our economies and societies: globalization, financial crises, chronic unemployment, climate change, inequalities, poverty, the emergence of new economic powers, geopolitical conflicts, the evolution of firms, and technological advances among others. The Economy & Society major aims to analyse these issues through the lenses of different social sciences, in particular sociology and economics which both seek to understand social processes.

This major invites students to see the economy and society just as social scientists do – as a diverse combination of individuals, groups, and institutions. Here, diverse interactions are studied using concepts and methods integral to economics and sociology, alongside other social sciences like history, law, and political science. Students of the major will be able to apply what they have learned to understand market mechanisms and social interactions as well as the social and economic implications of public policy responses to contemporary world challenges.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Economy & Society major will provide students with interpretive knowledge and skills, including:

Understanding and interpreting social & economic complexities and their policy implications

- Contemporary transformations of societies, firms and markets
- Macroeconomic issues such as growth, unemployment and fluctuations
- Monetary and fiscal policies
- Active labour market policies
- Sustainable development and environmental sustainability
- Social protection
- Identification and measurement of inequalities
- Gender norms and the role of division of labour between the sexes in economic development
- Processes of discrimination

Ease in working with data and conceptual tools to interpret socio-economics phenomena and evaluate related political topics

- Generating, collecting, managing and interpreting qualitative as well as quantitative data
- Developing reflexivity about the way data are constructed
- Completing statistical and econometric analyses
- Using socio-economic concepts and methods to analyse public policy issues

ACADEMIC FORMATS

The Economy & Society major starts in the second year, and is comprised of two types of learning formats:

- **Core courses**, designed for all students of the major, addressing fundamental areas of inquiry in the major,
- **Methodological workshops**, in small groups, aimed at advancing students' technical capacity to engage with issues relating to the major.

These courses are supplemented by seminar courses, one during the autumn semester and three during the spring semester.

Core Courses

The core courses of the Economy & Society major include:

- An **advanced economics course** (Fall Semester), 48 hours,
- An **advanced sociology course** (Fall Semester), 48 hours,
- A **multidisciplinary course** (Spring Semester), 24 hours.

Advanced economics course (24 hours of lectures + 24 hours of discussion sections – 6 ECTS credits): Institutions, Behaviours and Market Failures: Perspectives in Microeconomics

The course complements the first-year economics course with a focus on recent developments in the discipline from the fields of information economics, behavioural economics, economic dynamics, and institutional economics. It starts from simple economic problems involving multiple agents (firms, consumers, public actors) and public policy challenges. The course will analyse the basic tensions at work and derive institutions (e.g. markets, auctions, and voting) as solutions to these problems. It provides the concepts and methods to understand the basic ideas of social choice, game theory, contract theory, imperfect information economics, law of supply and demand, and mechanism design. The course will apply these ideas to shed light on practical questions in real world settings, such as: How to run elections? How are prices and welfare affected by access to personal consumer data by online sellers? How does Google make money? How to sell TV rights for soccer games? How to bid for an oil field? Can taxpayers benefit from favouritism in public procurement?

**Advanced sociology course (24 hours of lectures + 24 hours of discussion section – 6 ECTS credits):
Significant Topics in Sociology: Gender**

The course in sociology is intended to delve deeper into a single topic while mobilizing the themes covered in the first year. The course will focus gender issues. It will demonstrate different methodological and theoretical approaches applied to a given subject.

While gender strongly structures all social relations and even thought processes, French sociology took little interest in this field prior to the end of the 20th century. The aim of this seminar is to show that considering gender – or not considering it – involves whole sections of sociology, including analyses of the family, the labour market, and the functioning of the school system. Two main questions will guide course inquiry — How do we explain the positions and roles given to men and women in our society? How do we explain the historical transformation in these positions and roles? These themes will systematically integrate gender to revisit some of the major questions of sociology, and, primarily, that of the reproduction of societies through fundamental institutions, including school, family and the world of work.

Multidisciplinary course (24 hour lecture course – 3 ECTS credits)

The objective of the course is to learn how to use economics and sociology to understand complex social issues. The course will highlight similarities and differences between the methodological approaches used in economics and sociology and present important debates and controversies that characterize the way they relate in public and academic spheres. The topics that will be analysed have traditionally been studied within both disciplines, including inequality, migration, criminality and deviance, religion, discrimination, etc. For each topic, both theoretical and empirical analyses will be studied.

Methodological workshops

Workshops in the major will employ tools and comparative methods to explore epistemology in the social sciences related to contemporary society and economy. By using their previous project work, students will be encouraged to make links between these qualitative and quantitative workshops and other seminar coursework in an effort to employ methodology with applications to specific topic areas and themes.

Two different methodological approaches are explored within the major:

- Research methods workshops
- Quantitative methods workshops

Definition of different types of methodological workshops

Research methods workshops

These workshops will guide students to construct a research problem of socio-economic relevance and use qualitative methods to structure inquiry. Methods covered will support long-form academic writing and may involve field research or survey projects to learn by doing.

Workshop examples: ethnography, survey research, archival research, spatial representation in social science, cartography of controversy, press and document research & media literacy

Quantitative methods workshops

These workshops will guide students to apply statistical measurement & design to research projects with applied uses of technology. The workshops will encourage students to articulate quantitative findings effectively in academic writing.

Workshop examples: applications of R/Stata, introduction to econometrics, introduction to sociometrics, applications of Big Data