

Master in Life Sciences

A cooperation between
BFH, FHNW, HES-SO, ZFH

Module title	Politics and Society
Code	B4
Degree Programme	Master of Science in Life Sciences
Workload	3 ECTS (90 student working hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lessons contact (total 42 of which 28 central teaching): 32 h - Self-study: 58 h
Module Coordinator	Name: Dr Ian Jennings Phone: +49 152 5456 5915 Email: ianjennings@thebaselschool.ch Address: Brückenstr. 5, D-79541 Lörrach, Germany
Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Jennings • Guest lecturers
Entry requirements	Several pre-course readings for the B4 module in pdf form, as well as a short self-test, will be provided at the beginning of the semester.
Learning outcomes and competences	<p>After completing the module, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine critically the fundamental assumptions underlying the politics and culture of today's Western-style democracies, and, in particular • explain how these assumptions affect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the actual practices of today's Western-style democracies and - the professional practices of life scientists, • explain how global political issues affect the professional practices of life scientists, • respond in writing in a structured, critical, and ethical manner to the dilemmas and assumptions encountered in the study of local and global politics and culture and their effects on the professional practices of life scientists.
Module contents	<p>This module seeks to bring students to an understanding of the interconnected nature of professional practice as a life scientist, the local political system in which such practice functions, the global political system in which the local political system functions, and the ethical and philosophical commitments and assumptions which shape the practices of politics and business.</p> <p>In line with these objectives the module has four pillars:</p> <p>First "How Modern Western-Style Democracies Think". The issues discussed in this part of the course would include the concept of Rights, the relation between Law and Ethics, and the purpose and justification of Democratic Governance.</p> <p>Second "How Modern Western-Style Democracies Function". The issues discussed here would include Lobbies, Interest Groups, and Movements; Representation and Elections; Public Health Policy and the Bureaucracy; and Political Leadership.</p> <p>Third, "Globalised Political Issues". These issues would include Migration, Economic Globalisation, Demographic Change, and World Order and Global Governance.</p> <p>Fourth "How the Life Sciences are Affected" – an examination of the practical effects of the political context on the Life Sciences professions, in which various contemporary examples and cases will serve as material for discussion, exercises, and debates. About six cases/issues which will serve as the primary focus of the decentralised classes (two hours will be devoted to each). Examples are the research uses of the "immortal" cancerous cell line of Henrietta Lacks, political manipulation of controversies regarding the use of</p>

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	antibiotics in livestock farming, the controversy regarding the misuse and marketing of the opioid drug OxyContin, ethical and regulatory questions arising from the use of cell therapy techniques such as Kymriah, contemporary controversies in the fields of forestry and nature conservation in Switzerland, and the recent scandal involving VW's alleged testing of exhaust fumes on monkeys and humans.																																								
Teaching / learning methods	<p>This module has the following structure:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Week</th> <th><1</th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> <th>4</th> <th>5</th> <th>6</th> <th>7</th> <th>>7</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Central</td> <td></td> <td>4L</td> <td></td> <td>8L</td> <td></td> <td>8L</td> <td></td> <td>8L</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local</td> <td></td> <td>2L</td> <td>4L</td> <td></td> <td>4L</td> <td></td> <td>4L</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-study</td> <td>20h</td> <td colspan="7">18h</td> <td>20h</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* 2 hours for exam preparation (questions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures (centralised), including those of guest lecturers • Tutorial-style (decentralised) classes, which would include exercises and debates • Written essays, premised on student research <p>The 58 hours of self-study will be taken up by a combination of pre-course reading (and the viewing of video material), the readings required for the centralised and decentralised sequences, participation in teamwork projects, and the research and writing necessary for turning in the short individual essay (which will be submitted at the halfway point of the course). Close guidance will be given in all cases, and the students' progress will be monitored.</p>	Week	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	>7	Central		4L		8L		8L		8L		Local		2L	4L		4L		4L			Self-study	20h	18h							20h
Week	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	>7																																
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Local		2L	4L		4L		4L																																		
Self-study	20h	18h							20h																																
Assessment of learning outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short individual essay (maximum of 500 words; an application of the module material to contemporary issues affecting the Life Sciences professions), to be handed in during the module (40%) 2. Performance in the teamwork projects (PowerPoint slides and Handouts used in presentations in the decentralised classes) (20%) 3. Final written exam (open book) (40%) 																																								
Format	7 weeks																																								
Timing of the module	For ZHAW and FHNW: Spring semester, CW 15-21 For BFH and HES-SO: Autumn semester, CW 45-51																																								
Venue	For ZHAW and FHNW: Olten For BFH and HES-SO: Fribourg																																								
Bibliography	<p>Extracts from the following books will be used in the module:</p> <p>David Miller <i>Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction</i> Oxford UP (2003) Andrew Heywood <i>Politics</i> Palgrave MacMillan (4ed) (2013) Tim Marshall <i>Prisoners of Geography</i> (2016) Manfred Steger <i>Globalization: A Very Short Introduction</i> Oxford UP (2017) Gary Comstock (ed.) <i>Life Science Ethics</i> Springer (2ed) (2010)</p> <p>Shorter articles and extracts on various topics will also be provided.</p>																																								
Language	English																																								
Links to other modules																																									
Comments																																									
Last Update	23.02.2018																																								