



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,631: Gesellschaft/Society: How Do I Make Myself? – Being and Order

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (70%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Oral examination and technical discussions, Analog, Individual work individual grade (30%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,631,1.00 Gesellschaft/Society: How Do I Make Myself? – Being and Order](#) -- English -- [Aspers Patrik](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

None

Learning objectives

After completing the course, participants will have:

- an understanding of the structural factors that shape human behavior and experiences.
- insight into the tension between personal desires and societal structures.
- enhanced self-awareness.

Course content

This course explores the central question: *How do we create ourselves?* What tools do we have at our disposal to shape who we are and who we aspire to become? What social conditions limit our ability to freely create ourselves?

By turning the focus inward, and using theoretical literature, we examine our own potential for creative freedom, gaining insight into both the opportunities and many constraints that influence our capacity to be "creative" when we make ourselves. Through active engagement and reflection, participants will draw on their own experiences and circumstances, fostering a deeper sense of self-awareness and a direct connection to the course themes.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course will combine traditional formats, such as lectures and seminars, with more unconventional sessions designed to encourage participants to reflect on their own circumstances and social conditioning in relation to the course themes and literature.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

Course literature



Selections of these texts will be made (translations will be made available). Additional texts will be selected

- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. 1991. *The Social Construction of Reality, A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Penguin Books.
- Goffman, E. 1968. *Stigma, Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Ringwood: Penguin Books.
- Heidegger, M. 2001. *Einleitung in die Philosophie, Gesamtausgabe, II Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 27*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann.
- Menkiti, I. 1984. Person and Community in African Traditional Thought. In R. A. Wright (Ed.), *African Philosophy*,: 171-181. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Reckwitz, A. 2017. *Die Gesellschaft der Singularitäten: Zum Strukturwandel der Moderne*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
- White, H. 2008. *Identity and Control, How Social Formations Emerge*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Zahavi, D., & Zelinsky, D. 2024. Experience, Subjectivity, Selfhood: Beyond a Meadian Sociology of the Self. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 54(1): 36-51.

Additional course information

Patrik Aspers is Chair of Sociology and researches markets, theory and uncertainty. He works with empirical methods, e.g., interviews.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	70%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

Written paper

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Oral examination and technical discussions
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	30%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

Individual reflections and introduction of a text

Examination-aid rule

Open Book

Students are free to choose aids, apart from the following restrictions:

- pocket calculator models which are not part of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series, as well as any programmable electronic devices that are capable of communication such as electronic dictionaries, notebooks, tablets, smartphones, headsets, additional screens, etc. are not admissible;
- there is an option for faculty members to explicitly define exceptions under supplementary aids.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

1. Moderation (30%): You will write a reflective piece that starts from your personal experience but that it relates explicitly to the course materials. There are no specific requirements on the form of this text. Expected length is about 1200 words. You are also required to discuss a text during the course, this is not graded.
2. Individual Report (70%): You will submit a concise written report that delves deeper into a specific aspect covered in the course, engaging critically with the relevant literature. This report may departure from your own experiences, or, if you prefer, only engage with existing literature. The length of the text should be 2500 words (with the usual flexibility of +/- 15%).

Examination relevant literature

See Course Literature



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).