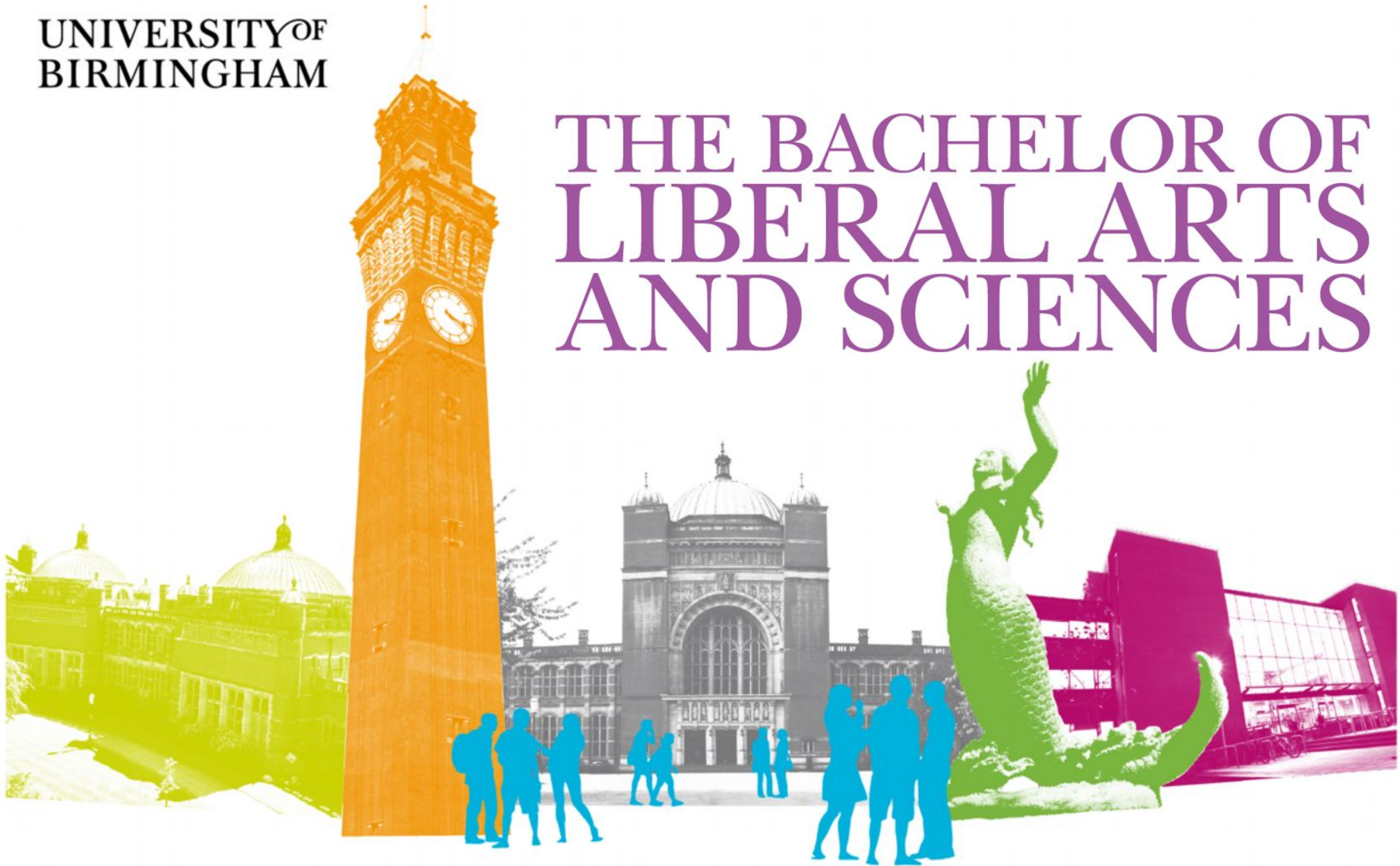


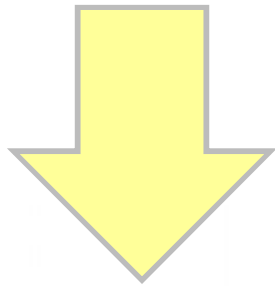
UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# THE BACHELOR OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

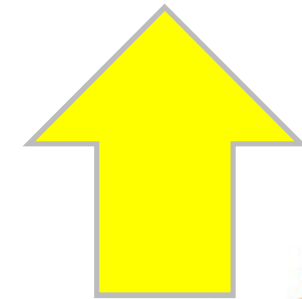


**Professor Cillian Ryan**  
**Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences**

# Characteristics of a UK Undergraduate Degree



- Subject Knowledge
- Employability & Skills
- Character Development



## Characteristics of a Liberal Arts & Sciences Degree

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# What are liberal arts and sciences?

- ❑ A general education providing a broad grounding in diverse disciplines, spanning both arts and sciences
- ❑ Usually with a “major” in an academic discipline during the latter part of the degree
- ❑ Focus on gaining academic, communications, and intellectual skills rather than exclusively specialist knowledge

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# Why study liberal arts and sciences?

- ❑ Breadth of education appropriate for a world where most graduates do jobs unrelated to their degree course and change careers several times
- ❑ Skills gained are those employers most seek: written and oral communications, intellectual ability and agility, ability to learn about wide range of topics, teamwork, adaptability

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# Why liberal arts and sciences at Birmingham?

- ❑ One of the largest leading research Universities in the UK. We are uniquely placed to provide top-ranked students with a fascinating array of options.
- ❑ 45 possible majors
- ❑ a research submission to 49 panels of assessment in the 2008 RAE
- ❑ 230 specialist departments and research centres

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# International Precedents & Developments

- ❑ US– Ivy league, Lib Arts Colleges and State Universities
- ❑ Melbourne Model
- ❑ Singapore/Yale
- ❑ Hong Kong Breadth Curriculum
- ❑ Dutch Colleges (Amsterdam, Utrecht, Maastricht etc)
- ❑ Vesalius College/Vrije Universitat Brussels
- ❑ Honours programmes US & Aus

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# Key elements

- ❑ 4 year degree
- ❑ With Year Abroad (elite scholarship exchanges)
- ❑ & Internship
- ❑ Bespoke degree
- ❑ Graduate with a 'major' – ensuring **Depth**
- ❑ And with exposure to a **Breadth** of other subjects, ways of thinking and skills
- ❑ Leadership mentoring, employability

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Year One

Example of **Psychology Major**

40 credits of potential major

60 credits of other interests or other  
potential major

Core liberal Arts and Sciences  
interdisciplinary breadth module

Semester 1: From Big Bang to  
Generation Y: The Making of the  
Modern World

Semester 2: Individual & Group  
Project: Addressing the Challenges of  
the Modern World

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Core liberal Arts and Sciences  
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Example of **Psychology Major**

Perception and attention

Introduction to Learning

Introduction to Mental Health

Memory & Language

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**Politics:** Understanding Politics

**Philosophy:** Knowledge & Reality

**Sociology:** Sociology of the Self and Everyday Life

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Semester 2: Individual & Group Project: Addressing the Challenges of the Modern World

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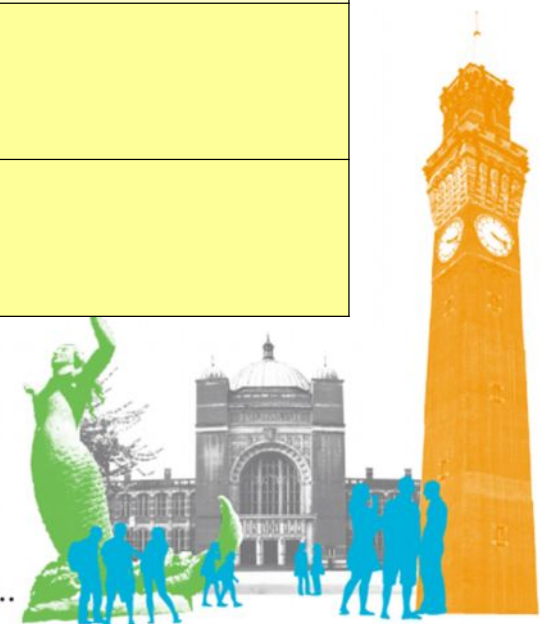


## Year One

## Example

40 credits of potential major (may be up to 60 credits)	
60 credits of other interests or other potential major	
Core Liberal Arts and Sciences Breadth Module	

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Year One	Example
40 credits of potential major (may be up to 60 credits)	Introduction to Evolution and Animal Biology
	Cell Biology and Physiology
60 credits of other interests or other potential major Core breadth module	
Core Liberal Arts and Sciences Breadth Module	

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Year One	Example
40 credits of potential major (may be up to 60 credits)	Introduction to Evolution and Animal Biology
	Cell Biology and Physiology
60 credits of other interests or other potential major Core breadth module	Modern History c. 1800-2000
	Moral & Political Philosophy: The Individual & Society
	English: Story Telling for Page & Screen
Core Liberal Arts and Sciences Breadth Module	

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Year One	Example
40 credits of potential major (may be up to 60 credits)	Introduction to Evolution and Animal Biology
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60 credits of other interests or other potential major Core breadth module	Modern History c. 1800-2000
	Moral & Political Philosophy: The Individual & Society
	English: Story Telling for Page & Screen
Core Liberal Arts and Sciences Breadth Module	The Making of the Modern World and its Challenges

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Year Two	Example
60 credits of potential Major (usually at least 40)	

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Year Two	Example
60 credits of potential Major (usually at least 40)	Core skills for Data Analysis (Biosciences)
	Cell Biology
	Human Evolution, Adaptation and Behaviour

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Year Two	Example
60 credits of potential Major (usually at least 40)	Core skills for Data Analysis (Biosciences)
	Cell Biology
	Human Evolution, Adaptation and Behaviour
40 credits of other interests or other potential major (here English builds on year 1 breadth module).	

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Year Two	Example
60 credits of potential Major (usually at least 40)	Core skills for Data Analysis (Biosciences)
	Cell Biology
	Human Evolution, Adaptation and Behaviour
40 credits of other interests or other potential major (here English builds on year 1 breadth module).	English: Texts in History – Literary Aesthetics before 1800
	English: Approaches to Literature – Literary Aesthetics after 1800

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Year Two	Example
60 credits of potential Major (usually at least 40)	Core skills for Data Analysis (Biosciences)
	Cell Biology
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40 credits of other interests or other potential major (here English builds on year 1 breadth module).	English: Texts in History – Literary Aesthetics before 1800
	English: Approaches to Literature – Literary Aesthetics after 1800
Core liberal Arts and Sciences breadth Module	Themed Projects II

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Example of Year Abroad	Rationale for this example

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Example of Year Abroad	Rationale for this example
2 x modules on Biology	To maintain skills and build further expertise in this area

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Example of Year Abroad	Rationale for this example
2 x modules on Biology	To maintain skills and build further expertise in this area
3 x modules in English Literature focusing on partner country	To expand range and build expertise for a potential major in English

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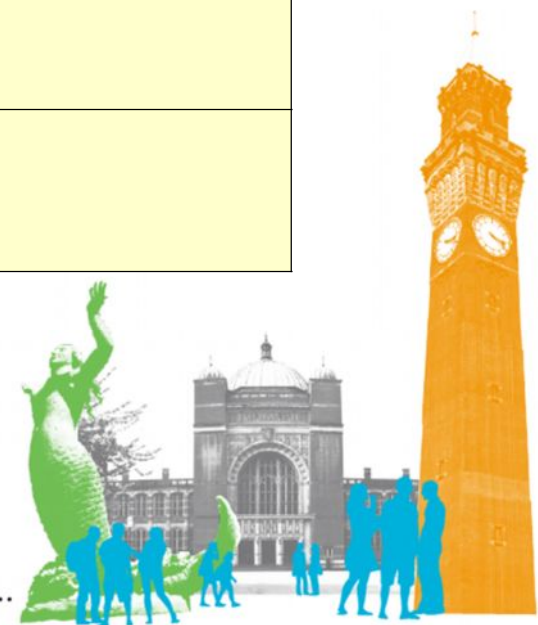
Example of Year Abroad	Rationale for this example
2 x modules on Biology	To maintain skills and build further expertise in this area
3 x modules in English Literature focusing on partner country	To expand range and build expertise for a potential major in English
1 x module on contemporary politics of host country	Opportunity to learn more about host culture

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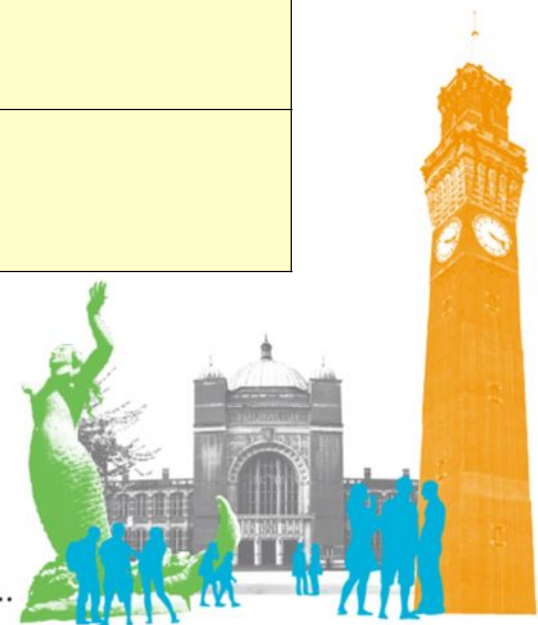
40 credit dissertation focusing on major disciplines (but typically with interdisciplinary dimensions)	

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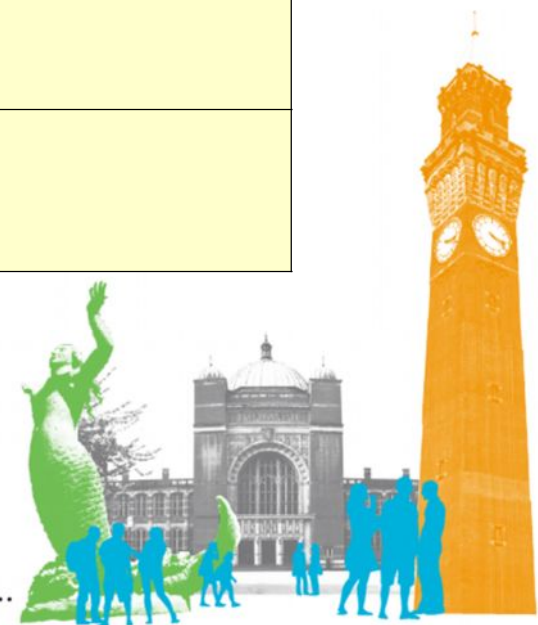
40 credit dissertation focusing on major disciplines (but typically with interdisciplinary dimensions)	The biology of mating: Altruism and promiscuity in the novels of Jane Austin

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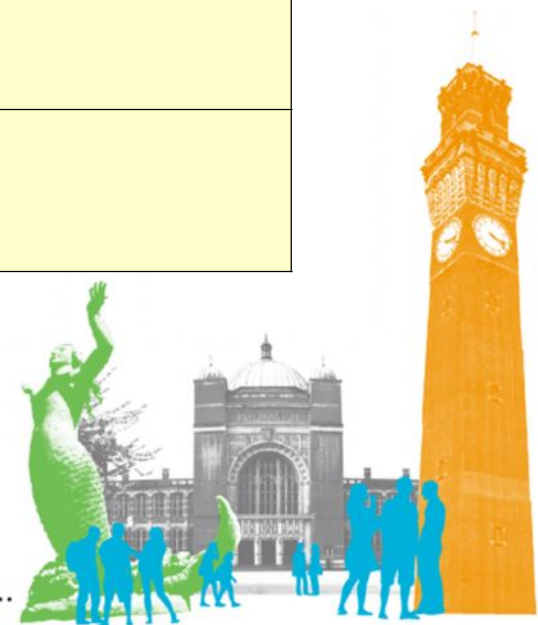
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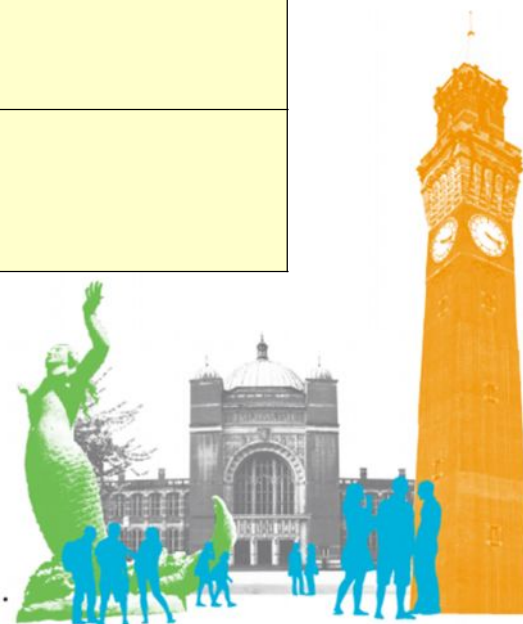
40 credit dissertation focusing on major disciplines (but typically with interdisciplinary dimensions)	The biology of mating: Altruism and promiscuity in the novels of Jane Austin
Between 40 and 80 credits of Major: In this example Biology	Integrated Whole-Organism Biology
	Applied and Environmental Micro-Biology

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Between 40 and 80 credits of Major: In this example Biology	Integrated Whole-Organism Biology
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Up to 40 credits of second major, minor or other options: In this example English	

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40 credit dissertation focusing on major disciplines (but typically with interdisciplinary dimensions)	The biology of mating: Altruism and promiscuity in the novels of Jane Austin
Between 40 and 80 credits of Major: In this example Biology	Integrated Whole-Organism Biology
	Applied and Environmental Micro-Biology
Up to 40 credits of second major, minor or other options: In this example English	Literature, Sexuality and the Body
	Currents and Concerns in recent Postcolonial Writing

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# Possible Science Majors include:

## ☐ A level or IB HL Required:

- ☐ Biochemistry
- ☐ Biology
- ☐ Chemistry
- ☐ Geography
- ☐ Mathematics\*
- ☐ Physics\*

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# Other Science Majors :

**You do not need any specific A-level for the following and AAA+ students will typically be allowed to major in these areas but some mathematics or science is desirable:**

- ☐ Computer science
- ☐ Earth Sciences
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Sport and Exercise Science

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# Arts & Humanities Majors

## □ African Studies

American & Canadian Studies

Anthropology

Archaeology & Ancient History

Classical Literature & Civilisation

Drama

English Language/English Literature

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# More Arts & Humanities

## □ European Studies

French\*

Geography

German\*

Hispanic Studies

History

History of Art

## □ Italian

Mathematics

Music\*

Philosophy

Portuguese

Russian

Theology

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# Social Sciences majors

- Business
- Economics
- Education
- European Studies
- Finance
- Law

- International
- Relations
- Political Science
- Political Economy
- Public Policy
- Social Policy
- Sociology

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