

universität freiburg

Student Handbook

BA/BSc Program
Liberal Arts and Sciences
Academic Year 2023-24



UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
FREIBURG

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Welcome

Welcome as a new student at University College Freiburg! This booklet is meant to be a key source of information for you. We will welcome you personally during the LAS Welcome Week and introduce you to UCF, its staff and students, the study program and much more. We also know that the Welcome Week can be quite overwhelming and that it is hard to remember some of the details at the moment when you need them. Therefore, we compiled this Student Handbook.

One more thing before we start: Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the last months were especially long and required resilience, flexibility and creativity from students and staff alike. The upcoming semester, your first at UCF, will still be influenced by health data and regulations. At the same time, we are confident that we will be able to establish a *new normal* and maintain a strong and vibrant learning community at UCF – with in-presence teaching, small group work sessions, real-life meetings and discussions, and much more!

Our Mission and Principles

“Liberal Arts and Sciences” (LAS) is not just a program name, but an approach to undergraduate education. Different from other study programs, LAS is not organized around a particular subject area, an academic discipline, or the needs of a particular profession. Rather, LAS is organized around a particular view of people and their development through knowledge.

Our starting point is the students: you have your own combination of past experiences, present needs, and future aspirations. These specific features of each individual are resources for education because they provide motivation for learning. We believe that students are intrinsically motivated learners, people who, by choosing to study LAS, actively seek to make sense of the world and to be competent within it. Of course, extrinsic motivation also has its place in university study and in LAS. Career success, academic competition, social expectations, family obligations, and many other factors motivate students to come to university – and legitimately so. However, we believe that innate curiosity and the desire to be well-rounded people are most congruent with our program and should be the primary motivation to choose it.

Linked to this first conviction is the idea that students' current state of beliefs, needs, goals, abilities, and knowledge are not all that they have been or will become. In fact, education is a way of assisting a person to expand their knowledge and skills, and thus create new abilities and possibilities within themselves. Therefore, our approach to education – unique and heretofore unprecedented in the German public university context – offers each student the opportunity to realize his or her unique intellectual potential.

Our second conviction is that knowledge is an ongoing collective human project. It does not just exist in authoritative books, but extends to what we do with those books and how we interact with the world. Knowledge has to be created, preserved, and transformed through individual hard work and collective effort. This informs our approach to instructional design and teaching methods as well as our emphasis on the performative aspect of student learning.

Based on our convictions about students and about knowledge, we believe that Bachelor education should create a space for self-motivated and dynamic students to become active agents in collective knowledge production. It is the mission of the LAS program to provide you with a structured opportunity to learn broadly about the human and the non-human world, to systematically develop your capacity for high-level intellectual work and exchange with others, and to gradually unfold your own unique abilities and interests in ways suited to your needs and aspirations. Our program is not aimed at gaining mastery of a predefined body of knowledge, training in a specific discipline, or linear professionalization. Instead, we understand our students' educational experience as a project of self-directed exploration (especially in the Major and Electives), coordinated with shared learning (especially in the Core), in a framework that does justice both to the constraints and the possibilities of our time and place.

LAS Students Council Letter of Welcome

Dear first year students,

We warmly welcome you to the city of Freiburg and, more importantly, to the Liberal Arts and Sciences community! Studying LAS means a lot more than reading books and writing papers. It means studying in a group of inspiring individuals, involves questioning your world, broadening your horizon and taking action. So: welcome! We are glad that you have decided to join us on this adventure!

We believe that familiarizing yourself with the UCF Student Council would benefit you to make the most out of the UCF social community and beyond:

The UCF Student Council is the forum for LAS students' expression. It carries the values of Liberal Arts and Sciences into the extracurricular life of the students. The UCF Student Council is responsible for establishing and maintaining an amicable social environment within LAS. It provides a platform to contribute to the academic environment and the community of students and staff at UCF. The UCF Student Council strives for consensus driven decision making, is a platform for students to exchange perspectives, and serves as an intermediary between students and staff.

We are excited to see you in our beloved community, our events, and contributing in various ways!

Eager to get involved? Wonderful! Check out our [website](#) for latest news on events, including Student Council meetings, parties, festive events, and [committee/interest group](#) meetings and workshops. Come to our first General Assembly of the semester to know more about us and the possibilities in UCF! Details will be posted on the website.

If you have any further questions, feel free to get in touch with us or make good use of our Telegram group! We are looking forward to meeting you all soon.

LAS Executive Organizers (Events and General Affairs) – Niko Christen, Sophia Wong, and Antonia Rubilar
studentscouncil@ucf.uni-freiburg.de

LAS Mediators (Community Bridging) – Yavuz Ülker, Nicole Ahn, and Rahel Szirtes
lasstudentsmediator@gmail.com

Delegates to the Board of Studies (Study-and-Examination-Regulations Affairs) –
Jakob Kolberg, Milena Schwotzer, Millie Lemke, and Kimmy Shah
las.bos.studentreps@gmail.com

Secretary of University Affairs (LAS head delegate to the Student Council of the University of Freiburg) –
Alexandra-Christina Xasterouli
stura.ucf@gmail.com

Secretary of Outreach (Bridging UCF with other Universities) – Deborah Krzyzowski
studentsoutreach@gmail.com

Treasurer (UCF Student Council's Finance) – Léna Diakité
laskasse@protonmail.ch

Looking forward to meeting each of you,

The Student Council

Studying at University College Freiburg

In order to have a smooth start to your LAS studies, it is important to understand how UCF is organized, which support structures exist, where to find information and how to communicate.

1 Organization and People

The **Dean of Studies**, Prof. Dr. Frieder Vogelmann, is responsible for the LAS program and ensures that the Study and Examination Regulations (see below) are observed. The Dean of Studies chairs two committees:

- The **LAS Board of Studies** (*Studienkommission* / program committee). This committee deliberates and develops recommendations for the LAS program and is responsible for the LAS Study and Examination Regulations. Members: three professors from different faculties at the University of Freiburg, four academic staff members and four LAS students.
- The **LAS Board of Examiners** (*Prüfungsausschuss* / examination committee) which ensures that the Study and Examination regulations are observed and adjudicates as required. Members: three professors, one academic staff member, and one LAS student (appointed by the Board of Studies).

The **Managing Director**, Paul Sterzel, and the **Administrative Coordinator**, Stefan Adler, are responsible for the daily affairs and strategic development of the college. Both meet regularly with the [Students Council](#) to exchange ideas concerning student life, the LAS program and organizational matters.

The **Academic Program Coordinator**, Thorsten Leiendecker, is responsible for UCF's interdisciplinary teaching team and for semester planning, course organization and **LAS Program Consultation**. Please contact him if you have technical and organizational questions regarding the LAS program or your study progress or in case you have a question and do not know exactly who to address.

LAS Program Consultation

Thorsten Leiendecker

Email: las.consultation@ucf.uni-freiburg.de

Tel.: +49 761 203-67614

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10-12h

Room 01069, Alte Universität, Bertoldstr. 17

The **LAS Examination Office** (Prüfungsamt) lies in the hands of Kathleen Robinson. She is in charge of all student and exam-related administration of the LAS program whether it concerns forms, grades, or transcripts.

Examination Office

Kathleen Robinson

Email: examination@ucf.uni-freiburg.de

Tel. +49 761 203-67342

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10–12h

Room 01070, Alte Universität, Bertoldstr. 17

Postal Address: University of Freiburg, LAS Examination Office, Bertoldstr. 17, 79098 Freiburg

A **Coordinator** is responsible for each study area of the LAS program.

- Core: Thorsten Leiendecker
- Major Earth and Environmental Sciences: Dr. Sabine Sané
- Major Culture and History: Dr. Ryan Plumley
- Major Governance: Dr. Mila Mikalay
- Major Life Sciences: Dr. Simon Büchner
- Study Abroad: Anne Klemperer

The University of Freiburg established two **professorships** in conjunction with UCF and the LAS program:

- Prof. Dr. Veronika Lipphardt holds the **Chair for Science and Technology Studies**. She contributes to the LAS Core with the two mandatory modules “Knowledge in Context” and “Science in Context”. Together with her assistant Dr. Nicholas Buchanan, she also offers courses in the Core, the Major Earth and Environmental Sciences, and the Electives area.
- Prof. Dr. Frieder Vogelmann represents the **Chair for Epistemology and Theory of Science**. He contributes to the LAS Core with the two mandatory modules “Theory of Knowledge” and “Theory of Science”. With his assistant Dr. Melanie Altanian, he also offers courses in the Majors Culture and History and Governance, and in the Electives area.

UCF works with a considerable number of lecturers and [Teaching Fellows](#) from the University of Freiburg and beyond.

2 Advising at UCF

We ask students to take significant individual responsibility for their own education, but individuals in isolation rarely make good choices. Therefore, LAS students have access to a broad range of advising and consultation offers.

2.1 Student-to-Student Peer Advisors

When you begin your studies at UCF, the best way to learn about the sometimes straightforward, sometimes confusing procedures is to speak with those who took the same steps not too long ago. Peer advisors are advanced UCF students who volunteer for the role. They help and support younger students especially throughout their first year of studies. Not only do they give advice on university issues, such as program progression and university administration, peer advisors also help you to become acquainted with student life in Freiburg and the unspoken rules, and values at UCF.

An advising group consists of two peer advisors and about 6-8 advisees. All first-year LAS students are assigned to their peer advisors before or at the latest during the Welcome Week. There are several peer advising meetings throughout the year, each with a different focus depending on upcoming LAS decisions and deadlines. The first meeting is about getting to know each other and sharing first impressions. Your continuing participation in the peer advising is voluntary. You are also free to change your peer advisors if you think another group would be more helpful.

2.2 Administrative and Technical Advising

During your studies, you may at times face administrative issues, for instance during course or exam registration, when arranging your schedule or taking exams. It could also happen that you have a question, yet do not know exactly who could answer it. For these and other technical and organizational questions regarding the LAS program, please get in touch with the Program Coordinator. Come to one of the open office hours (room 01 069), make an appointment via ILIAS or write an e-mail to las.consultation@ucf.uni-freiburg.

2.3 Academic Advising

Your responsibility for your own education is only meaningful when you have the support and means to feel competent and informed about your own decisions. Academic advising brings together students with faculty, creating a relationship that ideally lasts for the full four years of your study. The purpose of this relationship is to provide an additional perspective, advice and guidance as you make important decisions about your studies and your future professional life. Topics to discuss with your advisor could for instance include your choice of Major, whether to pursue an independent project, where to apply to study abroad and - at a later stage of your studies - what to do after LAS.

Moreover, you may run into some difficulties along the way: adjusting to a new cultural environment, dealing with matters in your private life that affect your studies, wondering whether LAS is right for you, struggling to keep up with the workload, failing a course and wondering if you have the right learning strategies, or balancing studies with work. Rather than just struggling through, we strongly recommend to contact your advisor if you face such challenges.

Your academic advisors are people who know from their own life experience what it means to face challenging situations and to make hard choices. They also have years of experience in supporting LAS students. This means that they can provide you with a new perspective on your own situation, help you to think through your options in a systematic and constructive way, and support you with your own decision-making process. The advisor-advisee relationship is intended to be collegial. This means that your advisor is not an authority figure but rather a more experienced collaborator with you on your educational journey. They cannot and will not make decisions for you. Instead, you should cultivate a respectful working relationship with your advisor, one based on reciprocal responsibilities. They should be available to you for the important moments of your education. And you should be sensitive to their other responsibilities – they are also teaching staff, course coordinators, administrators, etc. – and reasonable about requests.

You will be assigned to your faculty advisor during the Welcome Week and be invited to a first meeting during the first weeks of the semester. After this meeting, it is up to you to be proactive and ask your advisor for a meeting.

2.4 Major Advising

The Major consultation helps you with all decision-making processes concerning the Majors of the LAS program: Which Major to choose, which courses to select at UCF or at other departments of the university. Consultation is provided by UCF staff and by LAS students: Major consultation offered by the coordinators focuses on the content and organization of these areas of studies. Please consult the information provided by the coordinators before you make an appointment (e.g. Wikis, Interest Groups on the [ILIAS Info Board](#)).

At least once per semester, LAS students from each Major organize an information evening. Students from the same Major get together to discuss their experience with course offerings and selection, possibilities for additional training or education, etc.

3 IT systems: myAccount, ILIAS and HISinOne

Most information concerning the LAS program can be found online. In the following, we describe the most important information systems.

1. **MyAccount:** The University of Freiburg provides all students with a UserID that gives access to all important IT services. You can manage your UniAccount on the platform [myAccount](#) on which you can administer your passwords and membership in several mailing lists. This account gives access to services such as your university email account, [Campus Management](#), [Wi-Fi](#), [Freiburg's University Library](#) and the [Online Literature Database ReDI](#) as well as the [e-learning platform ILIAS](#).
2. **ILIAS:** [ILIAS](#) is the E-Learning platform of the university. It serves as a communication, course management, and program administration tool.

There is an ILIAS course for every UCF seminar. Students are added automatically after their course registration. Your instructors will provide material and use the ILIAS email function (which is synchronized with your student email account) to communicate with you about the course.

In addition to course-related information, general LAS material can be found on the LAS Info Board on ILIAS: LAS forms (e.g. applications for credit recognition, study abroad, internships...) as well as important publications (e.g. the Module Handbook and Course Catalogs). In order to receive timely information, be sure to sign-up on the Info Board and regularly check for updates.

3. **HISinOne:** The [Campus Management system HISinOne](#) allows you to register for courses and exams, retrieve transcripts and update your personal contact information. This is also the place to look up the grades you have received.
4. **Student email:** Your university email address and ILIAS are official communication channels and will be treated as such by your instructors, administration, and staff. We assume you read information sent to your university email address or published through ILIAS. You should check your university email at least once a day.

4 Communication at UCF

A good way to contact your academic advisor, UCF instructors and admin staff is to visit them during office hours (published at the door of their office) or to send them an email for making an appointment. If you are not sure who to contact for a particular question, please check the respective entry on the LAS Info Board on ILIAS and after that write to las.consultation@ucf.uni-freiburg.de rather than sending the same email to many different people.

4.1 Contacting Instructors and Advisors

Your instructors and advisors are busy professional people who have many responsibilities. While they are generally very happy to talk to you, to help you, and to teach you, you should treat their time with respect. Some instructors and advisors hold student office hours (specific times when they are available in their office for consultation). Others prefer to arrange individual meetings. If you are going to ask for a significant time commitment from an instructor or advisor (e.g. for a letter of recommendation, help with independent supervised study), ask well ahead of the relevant deadline. For most purposes, 3–4 weeks is sufficient.

4.2 Letters to your postal address

Official letters of the examination office (e.g. information about the procedure if you have failed a course) will be sent to your postal address. It is your responsibility to ensure that your current surface mail address (i.e. the address where you actually live) is up to date in the university data base. You can update your address online, via [Campus Management/HISinOne](#), or in person at the University's "Service Center Studium".

4.3 Communication Principles: Intercultural Respect

Beyond the internationality within the LAS community, UCF strives to be an intercultural and inclusive institution that respects and values cultural difference and creates and maintains academic, professional, and personal relationships across cultural differences. This means that we have to make an effort to understand how people communicate differently, behave differently, and participate in community differently. The goal is not for everyone to feel comfortable all the time. To the contrary, one of the advantages of studying and working in an intercultural environment is that we learn to manage the awkward moments, miscommunications, and unintentional offenses that are inevitable in such an environment.

“Intelligent Multilingualism:” English is the language of instruction for the LAS program and the most common language for both spoken and written communication at UCF. However, we are also part of a German university. Some administrative matters are best handled in German. At UCF, it is not unusual to hear two native German speakers interacting in English. Nor is it uncommon for two native English speakers to speak in German. This mix of languages is all to the good, but it requires some thought and self-control to work well. Given our commitment to language learning, we try to practice intelligent multilingualism. Each individual is expected to assess which language is most appropriate in any given situation, taking into account their best understanding of the other participants and the purpose of the communication. Communication and language should be inclusive, not exclusive or divisive.

Formality and Respect: Titles (Dr., Prof., Ms., Mr.), Last or First Name, Sie/du, etc. An intercultural community is founded on mutual respect, but respect takes different forms in different cultural contexts. At UCF, we affirm each individual’s right to forms of address with which she or he is comfortable. Most instructors will make clear, either explicitly or implicitly, how they prefer to be addressed and how they will address you. If you prefer something else, it is your right and your responsibility to make this known.

5 Services for all Students of the University of Freiburg

UCF and the LAS program are part of the **University of Freiburg**. All central university offerings and consultation services are available to LAS students. The “Studying” section of the [Student Portal](#) provides an abundance of information for beginning and advanced students alike. The university also offers an extensive [guide for international students](#).

In case you find yourself in a personal problem situation, you can contact your academic advisor at UCF or:

- [University of Freiburg Central Academic Advising](#): A team of central academic advisors provides help with all problems and questions that may arise before, during, or after your studies. To arrange an advising appointment with one of the [advisors](#), please call their telephone hotline 0761 203-4246.
- [University of Freiburg Advising Service for Students with Chronic Illnesses](#): Ms. Solveig Roscher provides information on compensation for disadvantages in course work and examinations.
- [The Studierendenwerk Freiburg](#) offers psychological counselling, social counselling, legal advice, medical advice, advice on insurances and financial matters, studying with children, studying with disabilities and more.
- The [Intercultural Mentoring](#) offers an exchange between experienced students from all university departments (mentors) with international students at the beginning of their studies (mentees)

For a further overview of services, please see the resources provided [here](#).

Studying Liberal Arts and Sciences: Curriculum

1 Study and Examination Regulations, Module Handbook and Course Catalog

Three important documents inform you about study requirements, modules and courses. They are available on the [UCF website](#). Please make yourself familiar with these documents. The course catalog might at first sight be most interesting to read, yet the Study and Examination Regulations and the Module Handbook specify important examination matters that you need to be aware of for succeeding in your studies.

- The **LAS Study and Examination Regulations** (Studien- und Prüfungsordnung, StuPo, current version: 2020) form the legal foundation of the LAS degree program. They include information on the content and structure of the LAS program, the types of assessments, the number of re-sit exams that are allowed, the orientation and intermediate examination, and specific graduation requirements. LAS students are responsible for complying with Study and Examination Regulations and expected to have carefully read them. If you have questions with regard to the Study and Examination Regulations, please do not hesitate to contact Thorsten Leiendecker at las.consultation@ucf.uni-freiburg.de.
- Whereas the Study and Examination Regulations provide general information on the required modules to complete the LAS degree program, the **LAS Module Handbook** gives detailed information on each module.
- For most modules that are required to complete the LAS program, students can choose between different courses. The courses that are offered and the corresponding modules are published every semester in the **LAS Course Catalog**. In addition, the Course Catalog provides information on course registration procedures and important dates and deadlines during the semester.

2 LAS Study Components: Core, Majors and Electives

The **Core** (56 ECTS) is shared by all LAS students. It encompasses basic and advanced academic skills, reflections on knowledge and science, and a curriculum on Responsibility and Leadership.

The **Majors** (104 ECTS, plus 16 ECTS Major Introductions) provide an in-depth education in a specific academic field that is, in itself, interdisciplinary. After their first year of studies (and no later than the end of the fourth semester), students choose one of the following Majors: Environmental and Sustainability Sciences, Life Sciences, Governance, Culture and History.

In the **Electives** (64 ECTS), students can choose from a variety of courses (e.g. courses of other Majors, courses of other degree programs, and projects (e.g. independent projects) to further shape their educational profile.

3 Your First Year at UCF: The Foundation

The Foundational Year comprises five Core courses and three Introductions to the Majors (54 ECTS).

The LAS program is organized in a combination of block and semester structure. There are two 8-week blocks per university semester allowing for an intense teaching and learning environment. Course dates for each semester are available on the UCF website and in the LAS Course Catalog.

Winter Semester	Block I	Block II
	Research and Presentation	First Year Elective
	English Academic Writing	
	Knowledge in Context: Students and Other Knowers	
	Introduction to Responsibility and Leadership	
	(Language)	

Summer Semester	Block I	Block II
	Introduction to Major 1	
	Introduction to Major 2	
	Introduction to Major 3	
Dealing with Numerical Information		

Most courses in the Foundational Year belong to the Core. The **Core** is a distinctive feature of the LAS program in Freiburg and offers a foundation for knowledge and reflection in academic work and beyond for all LAS students regardless of their Major. Our aim is to bring together different approaches and contributions from a variety of fields and disciplines for a fruitful reflection of academic work, knowledge production, and scientific practice in general, but also in the field of your LAS specialization. Over time and disciplines, understandings vary of what science is, what fundamental ideas underlie it, how scientific work is organized, and what characterizes an accurate and responsible scientific practice. A critical and comparative perspective shows that ways of doing science are multifarious, context dependent, and require careful reflection. The Core program consists of three parts: (1) basic and advanced academic skills, (2) reflections on knowledge and science, and (3) a curriculum on Responsibility and Leadership.

The Core courses in the Foundational Year focus on methods of research and analysis as well as on techniques of writing and presenting. This approach that students' start into academic life at UCF is both stimulating and structured. These academic key skills are complemented with the first Responsibility and Leadership module and the module "Knowledge in Context" from the area Reflections on Science and Knowledge.

You will also have a choice of Introduction to Major courses and should begin to consider which Major interests you most and fits your study goals best. The introductory Major courses provide an important methodological background for further study. Their successful completion is a prerequisite for most second year courses in the respective Major. We strongly recommend that you take three Introduction to Major courses in your first year.

Important requirements Year 1

- **Orientation Examination:** The examination of the module Knowledge in Context as well as one of the three Introductions to Majors constitute the LAS “Orientation Examination” (see Study and Examination Regulations §19). You must complete this examination by the end of your second semester.

4 Years Two to Four

In your second, third and fourth year of study, you will focus on your Major, additional Core courses and the Electives. In the following, we will shortly introduce a general study outline in relation to the study components.

Year	Study Outline
Two	<p>In general, you will declare your Major and start expanding your Major-specific methodological and theoretical knowledge, especially in the Compulsory Modules (see below). If you did not do so in your first year, you must successfully complete three Introduction to Major courses by the end of this year.</p> <p>Important requirements for Year 2 By the end of the fourth semester, you need to have completed/declared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Choice of Major (Study and Examination Regulations § 6.3) ▪ Proof of Language Proficiency in English plus additional language(s) (Study and Examination Regulations § 4a)
Three	<p>You will complete the Compulsory Modules, cover the Compulsory Elective Modules (see below), and start looking into Specialization Options. Year 3 offers opportunities for you to develop your academic profile. Beyond courses at UCF, you may also want to take advantage of the offerings in the rest of the University and/or the study abroad opportunities.</p>
Four	<p>Typically, you will complete all necessary module requirements in your fourth year. Building on your developed profile and interests and with view to your own intellectual and professional goals, your last year at UCF leads towards your Bachelor thesis, the capstone of your LAS studies. The preparation for your Bachelor thesis is complemented by the Core Module Research Design across Disciplines.</p>

4.1 LAS Majors

In the LAS program, we offer four Majors that each provide an in-depth education in a specific academic field:

- Environmental and Sustainability Sciences
- Life Sciences
- Governance
- Culture and History

In order to make an informed choice, you must complete three out of four ‘Introduction to Major’ courses. We strongly recommend taking the Introductions in your second semester at UCF. After your first year (and no later than the end of the fourth program semester), you declare your Major by submitting the form “Declaration of Major” (available on the Info Board on ILIAS) to the LAS Examination Office.

LAS and the LAS Majors allow and oblige you to identify and actively pursue your intellectual interests. The recommendations below provide orientation for the choice of courses within your Major during your LAS studies. They are intended as a guide rather than a plan, and much will depend on your individual choices, your own motivation and initiative. While choosing courses within your Major, take into consideration your current interests, but also plans for future studies and professional outlook. We strongly recommend that you join the Interest Groups on the ILIAS platform of all Majors that are of interest to you and consult information resources such as

- the LAS Study and Examination Regulations as well as the Module Handbook
- the comprehensive Governance Wiki
- the Life Sciences Wiki
- the student-run ESS website at <http://ucf.earth/>
- the Culture and History Interest Group on ILIAS
- the Major Coordinators

Each LAS Major comprises modules that must be covered by taking concrete (LAS) courses. The table below lists the modules in each Major and the recommended year of your studies to take them. If you declare your Major towards the end of the second year, adjustments to the recommendations will be necessary.

Compulsory Modules provide you with the foundation required for the successful completion of your Major at UCF. Advanced Modules allow you to gain knowledge in a narrower topic of each Major. Over the time of your studies, different courses will be offered which can be counted for an Advanced Module. Specialization Options provide the opportunity for even more focused and research-oriented study in your Major. These modules can be pursued within courses or as a Supervised Independent Study. They can serve as the starting point for the development of your Bachelor thesis.

The following table provides an overview of compulsory and advanced modules per Major. Between brackets you find an indication of the recommended year of your studies for taking this module.

	Compulsory Modules: Basics	Elective Modules: Profiling
Environmental and Sustainability Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (1) ▪ Ecology and Biodiversity (2) ▪ Environmental Chemistry (2) ▪ Earth System (2) ▪ Mathematics for the Sciences (2) ▪ Methods of Observing Nature (2) ▪ Sustainability Sciences (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Humans and Environment I (3,4) ▪ Humans and Environment II (3,4) ▪ Methods I (3,4) ▪ Methods II (3,4) ▪ Specialization I: Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (3,4) ▪ Specialization II: Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (3,4) ▪ Senior Profile: Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (3,4)
Life Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Life Sciences (1) ▪ Cell Biology (2) ▪ Foundational Chemistry (2) ▪ Mathematics for Sciences (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced Life Sciences I (2,3) ▪ Laboratory Work for the Life Sciences (2,3,4) ▪ Advanced Life Sciences II (2,3,4) ▪ Methods I (2,3,4) ▪ Methods II (2,3,4) ▪ Advanced Life Sciences III (3,4) ▪ Specialization I: Life Sciences (3,4) ▪ Specialization II: Life Sciences (3,4) ▪ Senior Profile: Life Sciences (4)
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Governance (1) ▪ Political Theory (2) ▪ International Relations (2) ▪ Law (2) ▪ Comparative Politics (2,3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economics (2) ▪ Advanced Governance I (2,3,4) ▪ Advanced Governance II (2,3,4) ▪ Methods (2,3,4) ▪ Regional and Area Studies (2,3,4) ▪ Research in an Area of Governance (3,4) ▪ Senior Profile: Governance (3,4) ▪ Specialization Governance (3,4)
Culture and History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Culture and History (1) ▪ Theory of Culture (2) ▪ Theory of History (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Culture: Arts (2,3,4) ▪ Culture: Peoples and Practices (2,3,4) ▪ History: Ancient, Medieval, or Early Modern (2,3,4) ▪ History: Modern or Contemporary (2,3,4) ▪ Philosophy (2,3,4) ▪ Culture and History I (3,4) ▪ Culture and History II (3,4) ▪ Culture and History III (3,4) ▪ Specialization I: Culture and History (3,4) ▪ Specialization II: Culture and History (3,4) ▪ Senior Profile: Culture and History (4)

4.2 Core

30 ECTS of the Core are typically gained in your first year of study (see Foundational Year). The remaining 24 ECTS are gained in years 2-4. Each Core Module is offered in form of concrete courses. Detailed descriptions are available in the Module Handbook and the Course Catalog. The following Core Modules that are not part of the Foundational Year. Between brackets you find an indication of the recommended year of your studies.

- Theory of Knowledge (2)
- Theory of Science (2)
- Science in Context (3,4)
- Advanced Academic Skills (2,3)
- Responsibility and Leadership II (2-4)

4.3 Electives

Electives allow students to supplement their Major and to shape their specific academic profile. Depending on their intellectual interest and future plans, students use the Electives to either deepen or broaden their studies. Some students take courses from another LAS Major as Electives. Others choose from a wide range of courses at the [University of Freiburg](#). The Elective section is also designed to accommodate studies abroad or internships. Academic advisors are ready to support students in making well-informed and meaningful choices regarding their Electives. Please note the regulations on the Electives as defined in the [Study and Exam Regulations](#).

5 Study Abroad

Many LAS students integrate a year abroad into their curriculum. UCF encourages you to broaden your personal and academic horizon in that way. A year abroad makes most sense in the third year of study. There are many options, and you need to research and weigh them carefully. Apart from the resources below and the wealth of information available on the internet, you can ask other students and/or your academic advisor for information and advice.

Scholarships are available (e.g. from the DAAD or the Fulbright Commission), but need advanced planning. Also, you can apply for Auslands-Bafög for your study abroad even if you do not receive Bafög during your regular studies in Freiburg. While it is sometimes possible to arrange housing via the host institution, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with regard to housing, insurance, travel, and visas. It is important to be organized and allow enough time for the processing of visas, etc.

5.1 UCF Exchanges

UCF offers a range of study abroad opportunities to destinations both within Europe and beyond. Please see UCF's website for current information on the programs that are available. There are two study abroad application periods (mid-November and late January). Deadlines for applying are announced in the LAS Academic Calendar (available in the LAS Course Catalog). More detailed information on the application procedure and the application forms are available on the Info Board on ILIAS.

One unique exchange opportunity is the double degree program with University College Maastricht (please see our website for more information).

Studying abroad is often costly, in spite of the fact that students do not have to pay tuition fees on any of UCF's exchanges. Students going abroad on Erasmus programs (to European destinations) receive a monthly stipend (the amount of which varies by destination). These stipends, however, do not cover all expenses, especially for destinations with high costs of living (such as London). We hope to be able to offer some financial help in the future, but there are currently no stipends available for students participating in UCF's non-Erasmus exchanges.

5.2 International Office Exchanges

Study abroad places administered by the International Office are open to all students of the University of Freiburg. Deadlines for the different programs vary and some are up to one year in advance. For more information on destinations, scholarships and funding, and on the application procedures, please refer to the [International Office website](#).

5.3 Erasmus "Restplätze"

There is also the possibility to go abroad through the Erasmus Programs of other University faculties by [applying](#) for left-over places (*Restplätze*). An overview of all Erasmus Partnerships is available at the [Student Portal](#). Please note that deadlines, terms, and conditions vary between the departments. Some partnerships only allow you to take courses in a specific discipline while on others students can study in different departments. For specific questions, please contact

- the Erasmus coordinator of the particular faculty
- or the [Erasmus Office](#)

5.4 EUCOR – The European Campus

The "European Confederation of Upper Rhine Universities" (EUCOR) allows students of the University of Freiburg to take classes at [University of Basel](#), [Université de Haute-Alsace](#), [Karlsruher Institut für Technologie](#), and [Université de Strasbourg](#). For more information, please see the [university's Student Portal](#).

5.5 Free Mover

You have the most freedom to choose a destination as a free mover. This option gives you a lot of freedom but it also means that you are responsible for all organization and administration yourself and that you will have to pay tuition fees at the host university.

5.6 EPICUR

The alliance EPICUR (European Partnership for Innovative Campus Unifying Regions) is a pilot project for the European University of the future. The University of Freiburg and its seven EPICUR partner universities, provide a European-wide campus for 307,000 students. The focus is on innovative teaching and learning geared to the new generation of European citizens, to face the great societal challenges of the Europe of tomorrow. At the heart of EPICUR's educational provision is the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) tradition and a firm belief that students and teachers alike benefit from collaborative approaches. You can find more information on [EPICUR](#) and the [EPICUR team at UCF](#) on our website. EPICUR offers courses with spaces reserved for LAS students. These seminars can be found in the LAS Course Catalog as well as in the comprehensive [EPICUR course catalog](#). For course registration, please read the relevant sections in the course catalogs.

Course Evaluations and Suggestions for the Program

The quality of teaching and interaction between students and lecturers in LAS courses is important for us all. Therefore, at the end of each course you will have a formal possibility to give feedback to the lecturer on such points as the clarity of the material, course organization, and learning outcomes. You will receive a standard online **questionnaire** with single-choice questions (agree/disagree with suggested statements) and two open-text questions asking you to point out aspects of the course particularly useful for your learning and to formulate suggestions for possible improvement based on your experience in the course. The instructors will provide time to fill in this questionnaire during the course. We value your feedback and strongly encourage you to participate in each survey.

These questionnaires are administered by the university's central administration who aggregate the data and establish reports with average values for each question and summarized free-text comments. These reports are sent to the lecturers and the academic management of the LAS program. We see the reports as useful information for gaining an overview of learning experiences in LAS courses and as a source for inspiration to improve this experience for students and instructors. Therefore, the reports are discussed in several groups: between the Major Coordinator and the Instructor, between the Dean of Studies and the Major Coordinator, between the Dean of Studies and student members of the LAS Board of Studies. Furthermore, each semester, the conclusions from these discussions are presented to the Board of Studies.

In addition to this formal feedback possibility, we encourage you to provide feedback on the course and your learning experience directly to the instructor during or after the course. LAS instructors are usually open to such exchanges as it allows them to adapt the courses to the individual learning interests and styles. Please note that individual preferences and feedback students give on the course differ from person to person, and that instructors take into account these multiple interests when designing and carrying out courses. If the instructor is not responsive to your feedback, you may want to approach the Major Coordinator who can collect impressions from several students and back your requests.

In case you have suggestions for a program component (e.g. Core or Major), please approach the responsible Coordinator. If you have suggestions for LAS overall, please approach the Managing Director or the Academic Program Coordinator. In case of sensitive issues or if you are not sure how to best proceed, the mediators of the [Students Council](#) and the student members of the [Board of Studies](#) can advise you.

If you want to have a structural impact on shaping LAS and UCF, we would like to encourage you to become active in the [Students Council](#).

Credits and Examination

1 Credit Points and Grades

1.1 ECTS – What are they?

The “European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System” (ECTS) helps to organize study programs and award and compare higher education qualifications. LAS is a four year or eight semester degree program and consists of coursework equivalent to 240 ECTS credits. Hence, to keep up with your studies, you should take courses equivalent to 30 ECTS credits per semester. One ECTS credit within the LAS program is equivalent to an average workload of 30 hours. Most LAS courses carry a 6 ECTS workload. This means that you will spend 180 hours on activities related to the course, of which a minimum of 40 hours will involve active class participation. Please note that “ECTS” and “credits” are often used interchangeably.

1.2 Grading System

UCF applies a German 5-point grading scale to evaluate student performance:

1	= excellent	= excellent achievement
2	= good	= achievement that significantly exceeds requirements
3	= satisfactory	= achievement that meets average requirements
4	= adequate	= achievement that still meets requirements despite deficiencies
5	= not adequate	= achievement that does not meet requirements due to substantial deficiencies

Intermediate grades can be awarded by 0.3 adjustments; the grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7, 5.3 are not used.

2 Exam Registration and Withdrawal, Illness, Failure

Most LAS courses entail a pass/fail assessment (*Studienleistung*) and a graded assessment (*Prüfungsleistung*). Details on the assessments are announced at the beginning of the courses. Students must register for both, pass/fail and graded assessments.

While course registration occurs before the semester starts, exam registration and withdrawal takes place during the specified exam registration and withdrawal periods.

You must register for all assessments (both the graded and pass/fail assessment) that you want to take during the current semester through the Campus Management system. If you miss registering for an exam you will not be able to take it during that semester, but have to wait until the course is offered again! Detailed information on exam registration periods are announced in the LAS Academic Calendar in the LAS Course Catalog. Students can register for and withdraw from exams via the Campus Management.

Please note: it is only possible to register for or withdraw from an exam during the registration period; failure to register for an exam means that you are not allowed to take the exam. If problems arise with the exam registration, students must contact the LAS Examination Office (examination@ucf.uni-freiburg.de) during the registration period, not afterwards.

Exam registration is binding. If you register for a graded assessment and then do not take it, you automatically receive a failing grade and are required to take the next possible resit exam (*Wiederholungsprüfung*).

In case of **illness**, you can withdraw from an exam outside of the regular withdrawal period by immediately submitting the form “Withdraw from Examination” (available on the Info Board on ILIAS) to the Examination Office. If you miss an exam due to illness, you must submit the official form with a medical doctor’s signature and/or a doctor’s note. In this case you will need to take the exam the next time it is offered, which is often the time of the resit exam. If you are ill for a longer period of time, please consult the university information on [leaves of absence](#) or the [University of Freiburg Advising Service for Students with Chronic Illnesses](#).

Failing an exam. You fail an exam if it is assessed with the grade “not adequate” (5.0). In general, a failed exam may be retaken only once. A maximum of five failed assessments may each be retaken three times, but this does not apply to assessments that are part of the **orientation examination, the intermediate examination or the Bachelor Thesis**. The third attempt to pass an exam usually requires renewed participation in the respective course (see Study and Examination Regulations § 17). The Examination Office will inform you about the date, time, and location of the resit exam by postal mail (not by email!) at least one week ahead of time. For this, it is important that your postal address is up to date. Instructors will announce the specific dates for resit examinations. They usually take place within the first two weeks of the following semester (exceptions are possible).

3 Students with a Long-Term Illness or Chronic Medical Condition

Students with a long-term illness or chronic medical condition can submit requests for special compensatory arrangements. Before submitting a request, please read § 33 of the Study and Examination Regulation (see below) and consult the University of Freiburg's advisor for students with long-term illness or chronic medical conditions.

Solveig Roscher
Advisor for students with a long-term illness or chronic medical condition

Service Center Studium
Sedanstr. 6, Zi. 02/ 029
79098 Freiburg
Email: roscher@service.uni-freiburg.de
Tel.: +49 761 203-67380

Study and Examination Regulations

§ 33 Arrangements for students with special needs

1. In the case of students disadvantaged in assessment situations due to a long-term illness or chronic medical condition unrelated to the assessment, the Examination Committee may, upon written request, take appropriate measures to compensate for these disadvantages; the demonstration of skills and abilities which form part of the core competencies under examination must not be waived. Compensatory measures with regard to written work may specifically include an appropriate extension of time limits, the opportunity to take breaks not counted toward the allotted time, and the permitted use of personal or material aids.
2. Before making any decisions pursuant to Paragraph (1) in contentious cases, the Examination Committee should – with the agreement of the student – seek the views of the representative for students with a disability/chronic illness or another specialist.
3. Requests for special compensatory arrangements should be submitted when registering for a specific exam or no later than one month before that specific exam date. Affected students must explain their special circumstances and provide evidence in the form of a medical certificate containing the medical facts and findings necessary to evaluate the case.
4. In case of disadvantage in pass/fail assessments situations due to long-term illness or a chronic medical condition, the regulations in Paragraphs (1) through (3) apply accordingly.

4 Participation and Attendance Rules for LAS Courses

A central aim of the LAS program is to develop and maintain a learning community. Classrooms are seen as places where knowledge is co-created and developed. Most teaching formats at UCF rely on student participation, whether it is in class discussion, group work, group projects and presentations, or by simply asking a question in a lecture that no one else is brave enough to ask. Moreover, ECTS points are attributed based on the calculation of hours spent by students actively engaging with the course material: in class, in independent and team work, and in completing assignments. Therefore, attendance is required in most LAS courses.

In accordance with learning goals, lecturers define and announce specific attendance requirements in their courses. These regulations are binding. For instance, attendance of all or particular classes can be defined as a part of the *Studienleistung* (pass/fail assessment; see Study and Examination Rules § 9) for the course. If this is the case, you need to attend all defined classes in order to obtain the *Studienleistung*.

For those courses where instructors do not formulate specific attendance rules, the general [LAS Attendance Policy](#) applies. Please note that instructors can choose to apply a more liberal or a stricter attendance policy. In cases of uncertainty, inquire about attendance policy in each course during the first session.

The LAS "attendance policy" suggests that instructors can allow students to miss 15% of a course for whatever reason and another 15% with necessary proof.

In some cases, absence from class is not a matter of choice. Such reasons as illness, close family members in need of care, death of close family members, and urgent problems relating to visa and residence permits can prevent students from attending classes. Inform lecturers about such cases as far in advance as possible. In case of illness, a formal doctor's certificate (*Krankschreibung*) is needed unless the lecturer determines otherwise. When students miss more than 15% of class due to illness or serious problems and can catch up with the course material, lecturers may allow them to complete the course. In such cases, make up work may be assigned, there is however no obligation for the lecturer to offer this possibility. In cases of longer illness or problems that impact attendance, students should contact the LAS Program Consultation (las.consultation@ucf.uni-freiburg.de) for advice.

For courses organized by other departments of the university, the attendance rules of the other degree program apply.

5 Plagiarism

5.1 What is Plagiarism?

According to the rules of academic practice, an author has to clearly identify all sources used in the preparation of a piece of academic writing. In the case of Bachelor students, short responses, reviews, essays, theses, or any other written assignments are considered pieces of academic writing. In order to meet the requirement of verifiability, adequate information pertaining to sources needs to be provided, including:

- the name of the author cited or quoted,
- the title of the article, book or online material,
- in the case of articles and books (also electronic versions) – the page(s) cited or quoted,
- the date and place of publishing,
- as well as the date of access for internet sources.

Plagiarism is considered to have been committed when an author:

- submits ready-made essays and assignments from the internet or works by other students,
- compiles parts of several works,
- makes use of long passages without quotation marks,
- only slightly reformulates another author's text without mentioning the source,
- paraphrases a passage without indicating the source.

Cases that do not constitute plagiarism but exemplify instances of bad academic practice and are considered indicators of low quality academic writing include:

- providing an incomplete list of references, such as only mentioning the author at the end of the paragraph,
- usage of (nearly) identical wording as found in the original source,
- extensive usage of directly quoted or paraphrased text from other sources in lieu of own original argumentation and writing – even if the quoted source is adequately referenced.

Being unaware of referencing rules or lacking substantive experience in academic writing are not excuses for plagiarizing. In case of uncertainty, you are encouraged to consult your instructor for referencing instructions.

Plagiarism is harmful. First of all, plagiarism harms students who commit it, since vital academic skills such as critical and analytical reading, thinking and writing remain undeveloped. In addition, plagiarism spoils students' reputation, a critical asset in one's studies and career. Plagiarism also harms other students, since they invest more effort into studies and may be disadvantaged compared to students whose plagiarism may go undetected. Finally, plagiarism harms the College, since its reputation depends on the conduct of its students, their ability to assume responsibility and deliver academic work of high standard.

5.2 How is Plagiarism Dealt with at UCF?

If an instructor detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a student's assignment or examination, he or she reports it to the LAS Examination Office. The Board of Examiners examines the suspected instance of plagiarism by soliciting testimony from all relevant parties (i.e. student, instructor). If the Board comes to the conclusion that the student committed plagiarism, it will impose an appropriate sanction. The severity of the sanction increases with the extent of plagiarism, the academic seniority of the student, and previous instances. All plagiarism cases will be recorded in the Examination Office. The following sanctions can be applied:

- a warning and requirement to redo the assignment
- a failing grade on the assignment
- a failing grade for the course
- suspension for one or more semesters
- exmatriculation.

The following educational measures can be added:

- an assigned paper related to ethics or academic integrity
- required participation in a non-credit seminar on ethics or academic integrity.

6 Credit Recognition

While UCF offers most courses you need, there will be occasions when you want to complement our program by taking courses at other departments of the University of Freiburg or abroad. Such a choice should correspond to a clear intellectual interest that cannot be satisfied at UCF and thus be undertaken in later semesters rather than at the beginning of your studies. The same holds for practical projects or supervised independent studies.

6.1 Courses of other Degree Programs at the University of Freiburg

Courses offered by other degree programs can be found in the Course Catalog of the University of Freiburg. The LAS Examination Board can recognize credits only after the course has been completed. The number of credits recognized at UCF and possible forms of assessment (graded or pass/fail) comply with the regulations of the degree program that offers the course. There are two options for courses to be recognized:

As an **Elective**: The main considerations here are the fit of the course with your general study plan as well as the resulting workload and potential overlap in class time or assignments' due dates with the other courses you are taking. In cases where there is overlap, preference should always be given to LAS courses.

As part of your studies in the **Core** or **Major**: These are central elements of the LAS program. We do not encourage replacing LAS Core and Major courses by outside courses unless (1) the course is not offered within the LAS program at the point in your studies when you need it, (2) the course is a very good fit for a Core Module or for an "Advanced Module" or a "Specialization Option" in your Major. The fit of the course with a module will be pre-checked by the appropriate Core or Major Coordinator. Applications for external courses to be counted towards the Major need to be submitted in 6-ECTS packages. That is, you may take a 6-ECTS course and ask to count it towards a module or combine two 3-ECTS courses (or a 4-ECTS and a 2-ECTS course) on one larger topic into one LAS module. It is your responsibility to come up with such course packages. External courses must be graded in order to be counted towards the Core or Major.

Information on the application procedure and the application form are available on the Info Board on ILIAS.

6.2 Study Abroad

Information about applying for credit recognition from studies abroad can be found on ILIAS, in the folder "Academic Program Administration."

There are two credit recognition deadlines each year – one in each semester. The exact dates are announced in the student calendar. You need to apply for credit recognition during the semester when you return to UCF. The final decision on credit recognition for studies abroad is made by the Examination Board after you apply. There are therefore no guarantees before you leave concerning what courses will be recognized.

6.3 Language Courses at the SLI

As part of their Electives, students can earn credits through language courses taken at the University's Sprachlehrinstitut (SLI). The Course Catalog and further information about course registration are available at: www.sli.uni-freiburg.de/kurskatalog.

UCF will pay the course fee (normally 80-160 Euros) for the following SLI language courses:

1. Semester-long German courses up to an A2 level of proficiency. UCF provides financial support amounting to 160 euros for intensive German language courses. Students agree to reimburse UCF if they fail to attend.
2. Language courses in a modern foreign language taken with the intention of demonstrating an A2 level of proficiency. This subsidy only applies to one language. Students agree to reimburse UCF if they fail to attend.

Registration for courses paid by UCF is only possible if your application has been approved by UCF. Detailed information on the application procedure and an application form for courses paid by UCF is available on the Info Board on ILIAS.

6.4 Practical Projects and Internships

LAS is an academic program that also seeks to be supportive of students' professional and career aspirations. To that end, internships (e.g., in a company, a branch of government, an NGO, etc.) and practical projects (e.g. in the fields of education, social work, the arts, or in certain cases sports) can receive ECTS credit to the extent that they are academically relevant and undertaken as a form of self-directed inquiry. Credit for internships and practical projects is assessed as pass/fail (*Studienleistung*) and counts towards your Electives.

Credit is not recognized for the internship or project as such (e.g. work in an organization), but rather for the documented academic relevance and spirit of inquiry of the work. Credit recognition is based on the quantity of academically relevant work and study hours, not the total time invested in the project or internship. Internships

and projects should be broadly congruent with your academic and professional goals and should tangibly contribute to your intellectual development and/or knowledge base. Detailed guidelines are available on ILIAS.

6.5 Supervised Independent Study

In order to create flexibility in the curriculum and to promote self-motivated study in students, LAS allows students to receive credit for supervised independent study. Supervised independent study is reserved for students in their third or fourth LAS year and is designed primarily to meet two goals. First, it is for those students who need specific coursework in order to enter a Master program and cannot find a suitable solution in the LAS curriculum or in other courses at the University of Freiburg. Second, it is for exceptionally motivated students who wish to pursue advanced scholarly or scientific study not available in the curriculum. Credit for supervised independent study contributes to your Major as a Specialization Option. In exceptional cases, it may count towards the Electives.

Supervised independent study can take a variety of forms, depending on disciplinary norms and your goals. In all cases, the intellectual, academic, and scientific standards for supervised independent study must meet the research standards of their field (at the Bachelor level). Even if the project does not produce original research in the narrow sense, it should deal directly with research in a specific discipline or field of study. Guidelines and short descriptions of what is appropriate in your Major are available through on the ILIAS Major Interest Group and/or the Major Wiki.

LAS Teaching and Exam Registration Dates 2023/24

1 Teaching Periods and Dates

The university is closed on public holidays and during the university Christmas break (December 22 – January 7).

Teaching Period	Dates
Block I	October 16 – December 8
Block II	December 11 – February 16
University Semester	October 16 – February 9 (semester-long LAS courses run according to the university semester)
Resit Period	April 2 – April 26, 2024 (resit examinations that require students' presence only)

2 Exam Registration Periods and Dates

Period	Dates	Exams
2	October 16 – 27	Exam registration for courses of Block I and semester long courses in HIS-inOne
3	December 11 – 22	Exam registration for all courses of Block II and non-LAS courses in HIS-inOne

University College Freiburg
University of Freiburg
Bertoldstraße 17
79085 Freiburg, Germany
Tel. +49 761 203-67342
studyinfo@ucf.uni-freiburg.de

For more information, please
visit www.ucf.uni-freiburg.de
and join us on Facebook www.facebook.com/ucf.las
or follow LAS students on: www.instagram.com/universitycollegefreiburg/