



JACOBS
UNIVERSITY

Foundation Year Handbook

Foundation Year Program, 2016-17



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General Information: The Foundation Year Program

Purpose of the Program

The Foundation Year Program is a high-quality academic program that has been designed to provide high school graduates with the opportunity to develop skills essential for academic success, to gain subject orientation before enrolling in an undergraduate program, and to acquire the credentials required for admission to English-language universities.

Major goals of the Foundation Year are:

- to bridge the transition from high school to university by providing subject orientation and academic guidance,
- to individually prepare students for their studies through intensive math and statistics training, revision of fundamentals in the chosen discipline, academic English classes, SAT training and an introduction to scientific methods,
- to support students in their choice of major through an individualized career advising system and participation in undergraduate classes from various disciplines,
- to allow students to expand their academic and personal qualifications through academic advising as well as academic and professional skills training,
- to broaden students' socio-cultural horizon and intercultural skills through study trips, on-site visits, and involvement in the diverse international campus community

Options after the Foundation Year

Upon successful completion of the program Foundation Year graduates will be granted admission to the university's undergraduate programs (→ view section 2 to passing criteria). Those students who enter the program to qualify for studies at another international university will receive individual support in the application process to other universities. In the past years, over 80% of graduates have chosen to continue their education at Jacobs University.

Program Structure

The Foundation Year program runs over two semesters. The Fall Semester begins on September 1 (following an orientation period) and ends in late December. Students who are required to take the SAT (standardized university admissions test) return to campus during our Intersession in January for two weeks of intensive preparation before taking the test on the last Saturday of that month. The Spring Semester begins in the first week of February and ends after the graduation ceremony in the first week of June.

The Curriculum

Students can tailor the curriculum according to their own needs and discuss their course selection with both the Academic Advisor and the Foundation Year team. The curriculum contains a) preparatory courses and b) orientation classes:

a) Preparatory courses offered as part of the program include Academic English, Mathematics and Statistics, SAT training, fundamental skills training in all three focus areas as well as academic and professional skills workshops. Placement tests at the beginning of the Fall semester determine whether students should take part in the preparatory courses. Participation in APS workshops and SAT training is mandatory. Students who have reached the set benchmark of 1100 points on the SAT (CR & Maths) prior

to entering Jacobs University are exempted from the latter requirement. During Intersession (January), intensive SAT preparation and the SAT test are offered on campus.

b) In order to gain subject orientation, students may participate in regular undergraduate classes and FY triangle courses (for credit or as audit). Typically, students will choose one undergraduate CHOICE module and take two further undergraduate courses (as audit or for credit). Students who have been exempted from some or all preparatory courses may take further undergraduate courses after consultation with the Academic Advisor. In the Spring, students have the opportunity to participate in Foundation Year triangle courses that will allow them to explore a new subject area. "German Politics and Culture" is mandatory for students who have not grown up in Germany as part of the German culture experience. Additionally, students must select at least one further FY triangle class. Students collect transferable ECTS credits through participation in university-level and triangle courses.

The registration for courses in both semesters must be approved by the Academic Advisor.

Initial Assessment & Placement Tests

The initial assessment and placement tests take place during the first two weeks of the Fall Semester. During the assessment phase, students can attend undergraduate courses; the status of their registration (normal registration, audit or no registration) will be decided upon after the assessment has been completed. For Spring, the individual study plan is based upon the student's performance during the Fall semester.

Course Structure

Foundation Year courses follow the general format of courses at Jacobs University. Lectures, seminars, labs and tutorials may be taught in single, double slots or triple slots as indicated in the respective schedule publicized on CampusNet. The workload in the Foundation Year (not counting tutorials) is similar to five university-level courses with two 75-minute time slots per week.

The curriculum consists of three types of courses: a) mandatory courses, b) mandatory electives and c) elective courses:

a) Mandatory courses (m) have to be taken by all program participants. These courses include Academic and Professional Skills (APS) and German Politics and Culture (except for students who grew up in Germany). Methods and Skills courses may be defined as mandatory courses based on a student's placement tests at the beginning of the semester (m*) and the student's previous performance on the SAT. Further mandatory courses may be assigned individually.

b) Mandatory elective courses (me) include one undergraduate CHOICE module taken for credit, two further undergraduate course taken as audit OR for credit, as well as two Foundation Year triangle courses in the Spring Semester.

c) Elective courses (e) are additional courses that Foundation Year students may take if approved by the Academic Advisor. Such courses may include language courses (e.g., German) or additional university-level courses from selected undergraduate modules.

Excursions

The Foundation Year Program includes two guided study excursions. The first excursion will take the students to the capital of Germany, Berlin, the second one to the European capital Brussels.

Important regulations for Foundation Year students

Policies

Jacobs University's undergraduate policies generally apply to Foundation Year students. For detailed information on grading regulations, please consult the regulations on the Jacobs University website (Students Records Office).

Grading

For graded courses, the following grading scheme applies; the same grading scheme also applies to undergraduate and graduate study at Jacobs University.

Jacobs University grading scheme

Percentage	Numerical grade	Letter Grade	ECTS
≥ 95%	1.00	A+	Excellent (A)
≥ 90%	1.33	A	
≥ 85%	1.67	A-	Very Good (B)
≥ 80%	2.00	B+	Good (C)
≥ 75%	2.33	B	
≥ 70%	2.67	B-	Satisfactory (D)
≥ 65%	3.00	C+	
≥ 60%	3.33	C	
≥ 55%	3.67	C-	Sufficient (E)
≥ 50%	4.00	D+	
≥ 45%	4.33	D	
≥ 40%	4.67	D-	Failing (F)
< 40%	5.00	F	

Audit requirements are determined by the respective course instructor; however, Foundation Year students who audit an undergraduate course must be able to certify that they attended at least 80% of the course (including excused absences). It is the student's responsibility to present an attendance sheet with the instructor's signatures at the end of each semester.

In elective undergraduate courses, attendance requirements and grading schemes are set by the respective instructors. All undergraduate courses a student has registered for will appear on the transcript. Failed courses or withdrawals will be indicated as such.

Excuse Policy

For all Foundation Year courses the following attendance and excuse policy applies: In general, attendance is mandatory and absence has to be officially excused by a doctor's note submitted to the Student Records Office. Overall, participation of less than 60% of classes (lectures and associated tutorials) automatically leads to failing a course. Furthermore, attendance/participation may contribute to the final grade, if specified under partial grade listings for a particular course in the course schedule on CampusNet. Depending on the individual study plan, attendance of mandatory tutorials will also count towards the grade. Make-up examinations or delayed submission for homework assignments will only be granted if a student has been officially excused by the Student Records Office and has followed the official excuse policies at Jacobs University.

Graduation Requirements

In order to receive guaranteed admission to the undergraduate programs, Foundation Year students must successfully pass the program according to the general curriculum guidelines. The passing criteria are laid out as follows:

- Successful completion of the Foundation Year curriculum with a minimum GPA of 3.33
- Students who have not taken the SAT prior to entering the program or were unable to reach a combined score of 1100 points will need to take the SAT as part of the program and present the results prior to June 1. Students who have obtained a German Abitur are exempted from taking the SAT.

Students who pass the program will be able to progress to undergraduate studies directly. Each student will be required to submit the CommonApp form to allow the administration to transfer student data to the undergraduate admission data base. All application forms are processed with the forms of other applicants of the application rounds. This way, students may already receive their admission papers to undergraduate studies earlier. The admission papers are conditional on passing the program.

Students who do not meet the passing requirements but would still like to continue their studies at Jacobs University will be reviewed by a special admission committee consisting of the Director of Admission and a Dean of Study. The review will be based on a transcript and a report submitted by the pre-degree team. Students may be invited to a hearing and are advised to stay on campus until June 5.

At the beginning of the Spring Semester, each student will receive an official individual performance assessment from the Student Records Office demonstrating their progress in the program (including Fall Semester achievements as well as an assessment from the Foundation Year team). The assessment will indicate where each student stands academically.

Scholarships

Upon completion of the Foundation Year program, all students who reach an SAT score of 1100 points (CR & Maths) are evaluated by the undergraduate scholarship committee. Scholarship candidates are selected based on their academic and social achievement in the Foundation Year. Students with an SAT score of less than 1100 points cannot be considered for scholarships.

Academic Advising

An integral part of the Foundation Year Program is an intensive, personalized advising program that closely monitors the academic achievements of individual students. A goal of Jacobs University's academic advising system is to provide detailed information to students concerning their academic possibilities in the program and above all to provide support in enabling the students to perform to the best of their abilities.

Foundation Year Students should meet with their Academic Advisor at least once in the Fall semester and twice in the Spring semester (beginning and end). Furthermore, students are encouraged to meet with the Foundation Year team for a personal counseling session at least once per semester. In general, academic advising sessions are confidential. However, if necessary, joint sessions with the Foundation Year Coordinator or additional instructors may be scheduled.

Academic Advising includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Approval of course registrations
- Development of an individual study plan
- Regular feedback regarding academic standing
- Recommendations and feedback regarding academic maturity and skills

More Information and Contact

For more information please contact the Faculty Program Coordinator or the Foundation Year Coordinator:

Faculty Program Coordinator

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Appendix 1: Mandatory Course Plan

Jacobs University Bremen reserves the right to substitute courses by replacements and/or reduce the number of mandatory/mandatory elective courses offered.

Foundation Year Curriculum 2016-2017												
Undergraduate Modules					Jacobs Track Modules (General Education)							
Choice Module I (credit)	Type	Transfer	Status	Semester	Credits	Course No.	Type	Transfer	Status	Semester	Credits	
Lecture 1 (t) ¹	Lecture	CHOICE	me	1	5	001101, 001102	Service Course	no	m*	1&2	0	
Lab 1	Lab	CHOICE	e	1	2.5	TBA	Service Course	no			2	
Lecture 2 (t)	Lecture	CHOICE	me	2	5							
Lab 2	Lab	CHOICE	e	2	2.5							
Choice Module II ² (audit or credit)												
Lecture 1	Lecture	CHOICE	me	1	0-5	001103	Lecture	Triangle	m*	1	2.5	
Lecture 2	Lecture	CHOICE	me	2	0-5	001133	Lecture	Triangle	m*	1	2.5	
Choice Module III ² (optional)												
Lecture 1	Lecture	CHOICE	e	1	0-5	001111, 001112	Service Course	no	m*	1	0	
Lecture 2	Lecture	CHOICE	e	2	0-5	001141	Service Course	no	m*	1	0	
Lecture 1	Lecture	CHOICE	e	1	0-5	001134	Service Course	no	m*	1&2	0	
Lecture 2	Lecture	CHOICE	e	2	0-5	001143	Service Course	no	m	1	0	
Choice Module IV ² (optional)												
Lecture 1	Lecture	CHOICE	e	1	0-5	JTSK-990100	Service Course	no	m	1&2	0	
Lecture 2	Lecture	CHOICE	e	2	0-5							
Module: Triangle Area ⁴												
Lecture 1	Lecture	CHOICE	e	1	0-5	001121	Lecture	Triangle	m	2	2.5	
Lecture 2	Lecture	CHOICE	e	2	0-5	001191	Lecture	Triangle			2.5	
Module: Language												
One or two German courses							TBA	Seminar	Language	e	1&2	2.5-5.0
Total ECTS: min. 20, max. 45												

m = mandatory, m* = mandatory unless exempted by Academic Advisor or placement test; me = mandatory elective, e = elective course, tba = to be announced, (t) = tutorial is may be offered

¹Tutorials are mandatory for all FY course participants.

²Students take at least 10 credit points from one CHOICE module. Furthermore, students are encouraged to take at least two further undergraduate courses from an additional CHOICE module as "audit" or for credit. Orientation students who have been exempted from one or more preparatory courses may take further lectures from a third or even fourth CHOICE module after consultation with the Academic Advisor (audit or credit). Students should note that only two or three CHOICE modules can be transferred to the CHOICE area of the undergraduate student transcript depending on the final choice of major. If a student takes courses from a third or fourth module, these courses can only be transferred to the Triangle area (max. 15 credits).

³Placement tests determine which courses from the modules "Methods" and "Skills" students need to take. APS Seminars are mandatory for all students. Students who have taken the SAT and who have reached 1100 points (CR + Maths) do not need to retake the SAT. Students who hold a German Abitur may participate in the training and the test, but are not required to.

⁴Students take at least two Foundation Year triangle courses in the Spring semester. German Politics and Culture is mandatory for all FY students. Only students who have grown up in Germany may be exempted from taking the course.