STUDY PLAN · 2026

Three-Year Humanities & Social Sciences Curriculum

A bachelor-style humanities and social sciences programme: from reasoning and writing to psychology, research methods, societies, international politics and education, using university courses on Coursera and free textbooks.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Foundations	Methods and societies	Today's world and teaching
397 h	**434 h**	**389 h**

1,220 h of core coursework

6 semesters

74 courses

15 universities

9 reference textbooks

Data collected from coursera.org in November 2026 · Textbook availability checked on the same dates

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1. About the curriculum

This curriculum reproduces, for self-study, the structure of a humanities and social sciences bachelor's degree: three years, five areas and a progression from intellectual tools to analysing societies and teaching. It is designed for a motivated beginner who reads English who can devote about ten hours a week to study.

THE FIVE AREAS

- **Reasoning and writing.** logic, argumentation, academic writing and revising.
- **Psychology and philosophy.** positive, cognitive and clinical psychology, philosophy of science.
- **Methods.** quantitative and qualitative research, statistics, questionnaires, social data.
- **Societies.** public policy, law, archaeology, history and international relations.
- **Communication and education.** public speaking, education systems, learning design.

THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE ORDER

- **Intellectual tools first.** Reasoning and writing (S1) are used in every later semester.
- **The individual before society.** Psychology (S2) comes before the study of groups, institutions and law (S4).
- **Methods in the middle.** Research methods (S3) come before the topics that need them: public policy and social data.
- **Teaching to finish.** Communicating, teaching and designing learning (S6) draw on everything before.
- **One project per semester.** Each semester ends with a project, and the curriculum with a dissertation.

LANGUAGES AND TOOLS

R for statistics (S3), Stata or R for surveys (S3, optional), presentation tools (S6). No paid software is required.

2. Overview and workload

YEAR	SEM.	CONTENT	HOURS
Year 1 Foundations **397 h**	**S1**	**Reasoning and writing** Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking (81 h) Academic English: Writing (76 h) Good with Words: Writing and Editing (63 h)	220 h
	S2	**The human mind** Foundations of Positive Psychology (62 h) The Science of Mind and Decision Making (49 h) Abnormal Psychology (39 h) Question Reality! Science, Philosophy, a Search for Meaning (27 h)	177 h
Year 2 Methods and societies **434 h**	**S3**	**Research methods** Methods and Statistics in Social Sciences (107 h) Survey Data Collection and Analytics (102 h)	209 h
	S4	**Societies, law and the past** Social Impact & Public Policy (60 h) Foundations of American Law (66 h) Introduction to Archaeology (64 h) American History Through Baseball (35 h)	225 h
Year 3 Today's world and teaching **389 h**	**S5**	**International politics and data** American Politics, Foreign Policy, and US-India Ties (134 h) Computational Social Science (57 h)	191 h
	S6	**Communicating and teaching** Dynamic Public Speaking (59 h) Transforming Education in an Interconnected World (96 h) An Introduction to Learning Experience Design (LXD) (43 h)	198 h
Core curriculum total			**1,220 h**
Options (optional)			+ 223 h

COURSE HOURS PER SEMESTER



SUGGESTED PACE

Over 40 study weeks a year, the curriculum takes about **10 h per week in year 1**, **11 h in year 2** and **10 h in year 3**. Lengths are Coursera's estimates; allow an extra 20 to 30% for reading and projects.

YEAR 1 · 397 HOURS

Foundations

Learn to reason, read and write like a scholar, then discover psychology, the mind and the philosophy of science

S1

YEAR 1 · 220 HOURS · ≈ 11 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

Reasoning and writing

> Understand, build and evaluate arguments, avoid fallacies, and write clear, structured and well-sourced texts.

TARGET SKILLS

- Reconstructing an argument: premises and conclusion
- Deductive and inductive reasoning
- Spotting and naming fallacies
- Grammar, punctuation and word choice
- Structuring, drafting and revising a text
- Researching and citing sources

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A 2,000-word argumentative essay on a social question, with an argument map, a formatted bibliography and two rounds of revision.

THINGS TO WATCH

- All the curriculum's courses are in English: Academic English (UC Irvine) also works as a language refresher.
- Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking (Duke) is long (81 h): follow it at a steady pace all semester.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 81 H

Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking

Duke University · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Think Again I: How to Understand Arguments	Beginner	26 h	4.6 (3,145)
2	Think Again II: How to Reason Deductively	Beginner	13 h	4.3 (428)
3	Think Again III: How to Reason Inductively	Beginner	24 h	4.6 (523)
4	Think Again IV: How to Avoid Fallacies	Beginner	18 h	4.7 (469)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 76 H

Academic English: Writing

University of California, Irvine | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Grammar and Punctuation	—	16 h	4.7 (19,647)
2	Getting Started with Essay Writing	Intermediate	13 h	4.7 (3,295)
3	Advanced Writing	—	18 h	4.7 (1,969)
4	Introduction to Research for Essay Writing	—	19 h	4.7 (1,190)
5	Project: Writing a Research Paper	—	10 h	4.7 (514)

3

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 63 H

Good with Words: Writing and Editing

University of Michigan | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Writing and Editing: Word Choice and Word Order	Beginner	20 h	4.7 (2,036)
2	Writing and Editing: Structure and Organization	Beginner	15 h	4.7 (576)
3	Writing and Editing: Drafting	Beginner	14 h	4.8 (374)
4	Writing and Editing: Revising	Beginner	14 h	4.8 (410)

FURTHER READING

forall x: Calgary. An Introduction to Formal Logic

A. Thomas-Bolduc, R. Zach

Propositional and predicate logic, to go further than Think Again.

Free, CC BY 4.0 · forallx.openlogicproject.org

Writing Guide with Handbook

OpenStax

Drafting, arguing, citing sources and revising: the curriculum's writing handbook.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/writing-guide

S2

YEAR 1 · 177 HOURS · ≈ 9 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

The human mind

> Discover scientific psychology: well-being, cognition, emotion and decision-making, mental disorders, and the philosophical questions raised by science.

TARGET SKILLS

- Positive psychology: strengths, resilience and well-being
- Cognitive psychology and neuropsychology
- Emotion, memory and learning
- Mental disorders and the history of psychiatry
- Behaviour change and motivational interviewing
- Philosophy of science: cosmos, matter, mind

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A small study on yourself or a group: test a positive psychology intervention for three weeks and report on it like a research article.

THINGS TO WATCH

- The Cambridge and Dartmouth courses have few reviews: their rating is less robust than Penn's or Wesleyan's.
- Question Reality! (Dartmouth) draws on physics: no equations are required.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 62 H

Foundations of Positive Psychology

University of Pennsylvania · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Positive Psychology: Martin E. P. Seligman's Visionary Science	Beginner	17 h	4.9 (6,426)
2	Positive Psychology: Applications and Interventions	Beginner	13 h	4.8 (2,267)
3	Positive Psychology: Character, Grit and Research Methods	Beginner	12 h	4.4 (1,245)
4	Positive Psychology: Resilience Skills	Beginner	14 h	4.9 (2,369)
5	Positive Psychology Specialization Project: Design Your Life for Well-being	—	6 h	4.8 (939)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 49 H

The Science of Mind and Decision Making

University of Cambridge · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: Interest in psychology

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology and Neuropsychology	—	9 h	4.5 (118)
2	The neuropsychology of decision making	Beginner	7 h	4.3 (43)
3	The Psychology of Emotions: an introduction to embodied cognition	Beginner	11 h	4.6 (32)
4	Learning and memory in the brain: a guide for teachers	Beginner	22 h	4.9 (42)

3

SPECIALIZATION · 3 COURSES · 39 H

Abnormal Psychology

Wesleyan University | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Introduction to Abnormal Psychology	Beginner	14 h	4.9 (515)
2	History of Mental Illness	Beginner	15 h	4.6 (155)
3	Creating Behavioral Change	Beginner	10 h	4.8 (205)

4

SPECIALIZATION · 3 COURSES · 27 H

Question Reality! Science, Philosophy, a Search for Meaning

Dartmouth College | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Question Reality: Cosmos	Beginner	13 h	4.8 (26)
2	Question Reality: Matter	Beginner	7 h	4.8 (11)
3	Question Reality: Mind	Beginner	7 h	4.5 (16)

FURTHER READING

Psychology 2e

OpenStax

The introductory textbook: cognition, emotion, development, disorders and therapy.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e

Introduction to Philosophy

OpenStax

Logic, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and political philosophy.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/introduction-philosophy

YEAR 2 · 434 HOURS

Methods and societies

Master quantitative and qualitative research methods, then understand societies: public policy, law and the past

S3

YEAR 2 · 209 HOURS · ≈ 10 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

Research methods

> Design a study, collect data through questionnaires and interviews, and analyse it with descriptive and inferential statistics.

TARGET SKILLS

- Research designs, causality and ethics
- Interviews and qualitative analysis
- Descriptive statistics, tests and regression in R
- Data collection modes: online, phone, face-to-face
- Questionnaire design and sampling
- Missing data and weighting

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A complete survey: research question, piloted questionnaire, sample of at least one hundred respondents, statistical analysis and a ten-page report.

THINGS TO WATCH

- Methods and Statistics in Social Sciences (Amsterdam) uses R: the basics are taught in the course.
- Dealing With Missing Data (Michigan) is rated 3.8 and uses Stata or R: rely on OpenIntro Statistics.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 107 H

Methods and Statistics in Social Sciences

University of Amsterdam | Beginner | R Programming

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Quantitative Methods	Beginner	30 h	4.7 (2,441)
2	Qualitative Research Methods	Intermediate	27 h	4.6 (1,423)
3	Basic Statistics	Beginner	17 h	4.6 (4,688)
4	Inferential Statistics	—	15 h	4.4 (615)
5	Methods and Statistics in Social Science - Final Research Project	Beginner	18 h	4.4 (71)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 6 COURSES · 102 H

Survey Data Collection and Analytics

University of Michigan, University of Maryland, College Park | Beginner | Stata, R

Stated prerequisites: Introductory statistics helpful for later courses

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Framework for Data Collection and Analysis	Beginner	10 h	—
2	Data Collection: Online, Telephone and Face-to-face	Beginner	21 h	4.6 (353)
3	Questionnaire Design for Social Surveys	Intermediate	17 h	4.5 (467)
4	Sampling People, Networks and Records	Beginner	26 h	4.3 (113)
5	Dealing With Missing Data	—	18 h	3.8 (139)
6	Combining and Analyzing Complex Data	—	10 h	4.2 (70)

FURTHER READING

Research Methods in Psychology, 4th ed.

R. S. Jhangiani, I. A. Chiang, C. Cuttler, D. C. Leighton

Experimental designs, surveys, research ethics and descriptive statistics.

Free, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 · kpu.pressbooks.pub/psychmethods4e

OpenIntro Statistics

D. Diez, M. Çetinkaya-Rundel, C. Barr

Descriptive statistics, tests and regression.

Free PDF · www.openintro.org/book/os

S4

YEAR 2 · 225 HOURS · ≈ 11 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

Societies, law and the past

> Understand how public policy and law organise society, and how archaeology and history reconstruct the past.

TARGET SKILLS

- Public policy, advocacy and social justice
- Social work and community organising
- Constitution, liberties, criminal and private law
- Scientific methods of archaeology
- Cultural history: globalisation, gender and identity

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A four-page policy brief on a local problem, grounded in the applicable law and in the problem's history.

THINGS TO WATCH

- Foundations of American Law (Illinois) is recent (October 2026) and not yet rated; it covers US law.
- The American History Through Baseball courses are not yet rated individually: the specialization is rated 4.5.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 60 H

Social Impact & Public Policy

University of Michigan · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Using Public Policy for Social Change	Beginner	14 h	4.9 (194)
2	Social Work Practice: Advocating Social Justice and Change	Beginner	13 h	4.8 (449)
3	Community Organizing for Social Justice	Beginner	8 h	4.8 (327)
4	Sustainability Leadership Development	Beginner	25 h	4.8 (14)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 66 H

Foundations of American Law

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: Basic law knowledge helpful

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Foundations of American Law: History and Constitution	Beginner	15 h	—
2	Rights, Liberties, & Criminal Law	Beginner	15 h	—
3	Regulation and Private Law: Torts, Property, Contracts	Beginner	19 h	—
4	Legal Processes: Family Law, Procedure, and Evidence	Beginner	17 h	—

3

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 64 H

Introduction to Archaeology

Rice University | Beginner | Google Slides, Padlet

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Introduction to Archaeology: Knowing The Past	Beginner	13 h	4.7 (33)
2	Introduction to Archaeology: Archaeology as Science	Beginner	18 h	—
3	Introduction to Archaeology: Reconstruction of The Past	Beginner	17 h	—
4	Introduction to Archaeology: Archaeology as Activism	Beginner	16 h	—

4

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 35 H

American History Through Baseball

University of Colorado Boulder | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Moneyball and Globalization	Beginner	9 h	—
2	Race, Gender, and Culture	Beginner	9 h	—
3	Baseball and Americanism	Beginner	10 h	—
4	Baseball into the Millennium	Beginner	7 h	—

FURTHER READING

Introduction to Sociology 3e

OpenStax

Culture, socialisation, stratification, institutions and social change.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e

Introduction to Anthropology

OpenStax

Cultural and biological anthropology and archaeology, alongside the Rice courses.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/introduction-anthropology

YEAR 3 · 389 HOURS

Today's world and teaching

Analyse international politics and large-scale social data, then communicate, teach and design learning

S5

YEAR 3 · 191 HOURS · ≈ 10 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

International politics and data

> Understand foreign policy and relations between major powers, and study society with networks, simulation and AI.

TARGET SKILLS

- US institutions and society
- How foreign policy is made, and diplomacy
- Geopolitics, culture and economics of bilateral relations
- Social network analysis
- Simulation and agent-based models
- Big data, AI and ethics

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A five-page analysis of an international issue, complemented by a network study (alliances, trade or online debates).

THINGS TO WATCH

- American Politics, Society, and History (O.P. Jindal) is long (59 h) and has only ten reviews, rated 4.0.
- Computational Social Science (UC Davis) requires no programming; the Python for Everybody option lets you go further.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 3 COURSES · 134 H

American Politics, Foreign Policy, and US-India Ties

O.P. Jindal Global University · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	American Politics, Society, and History	Beginner	59 h	4.0 (10)
2	The Making of US Foreign Policy	Beginner	41 h	4.5 (12)
3	India-US Relations: Geopolitics, Culture, and Business	Beginner	34 h	4.5 (11)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 57 H

Computational Social Science

University of California, Davis | Beginner | IBM Watson

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Computational Social Science Methods	Beginner	11 h	4.7 (357)
2	Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Ethics	Beginner	9 h	4.6 (784)
3	Social Network Analysis	Beginner	10 h	4.7 (248)
4	Computer Simulations	Beginner	13 h	4.5 (87)
5	Computational Social Science Capstone Project	Intermediate	14 h	4.7 (44)

FURTHER READING

Introduction to Political Science

OpenStax

Institutions, ideologies, public policy and international relations.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/introduction-political-science

S6

YEAR 3 · 198 HOURS · ≈ 10 H PER WEEK OVER 20 WEEKS

Communicating and teaching

> Speak in public to inform, persuade and inspire, understand education systems and design learning experiences.

TARGET SKILLS

- Public speaking: informing, persuading, inspiring
- Visual aids and peer feedback
- Transforming education systems
- Collaborative continuous improvement
- Learning experience design
- Writing a reasoned dissertation

END-OF-SEMESTER PROJECT

A final dissertation (15 to 20 pages) on a humanities or social science question, presented orally in fifteen minutes.

THINGS TO WATCH

- Transforming Education (Michigan) has three 31-hour courses: take one a month.
- The dissertation brings together the skills of all six semesters: reasoning, writing, methods and public speaking.

PROGRAMME

1

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 59 H

Dynamic Public Speaking

University of Washington · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Introduction to Public Speaking	Beginner	12 h	4.7 (2,337)
2	Speaking to Inform: Discussing Complex Ideas with Clear Explanations and Dynamic Slides	Beginner	14 h	4.8 (484)
3	Speaking to Persuade: Motivating Audiences with Solid Arguments and Moving Language	Beginner	17 h	4.8 (367)
4	Speaking to Inspire: Ceremonial and Motivational Speeches	Beginner	16 h	4.7 (207)

2

SPECIALIZATION · 4 COURSES · 96 H

Transforming Education in an Interconnected World

University of Michigan · Beginner

Stated prerequisites: Some related experience recommended

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Series Orientation: Transforming Education	Beginner	3 h	4.8 (37)
2	Envisioning Educational Transformation	Beginner	31 h	4.8 (15)
3	Reimagining Educational Innovation	Beginner	31 h	4.9 (24)
4	Practicing Collaborative, Continuous Improvement	Beginner	31 h	5.0 (16)

3

SPECIALIZATION · 3 COURSES · 43 H

An Introduction to Learning Experience Design (LXD)

University of Michigan | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Learning Experience Design: Orientation to the Profession	Beginner	18 h	4.7 (92)
2	Learning Experience Design: Theories and Frameworks	Beginner	14 h	4.9 (45)
3	Learning Experience Design: Development and Evaluation	Beginner	11 h	4.7 (46)

FURTHER READING

Writing Guide with Handbook

OpenStax

Drafting, arguing, citing sources and revising: the curriculum's writing handbook.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/writing-guide

Psychology 2e

OpenStax

The introductory textbook: cognition, emotion, development, disorders and therapy.

Free (OpenStax) · openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e

6. Options

These specializations are not counted in the total. They suit the end of year 3 or after the curriculum, depending on the chosen direction.

Teaching writing: process, reluctant writers, genres and assessment (Johns Hopkins). For a move into teaching.

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 98 H

Teaching Writing

Johns Hopkins University | Beginner

Stated prerequisites: Teaching experience helpful

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Teaching Writing Process	Beginner	20 h	4.6 (49)
2	Teaching Reluctant Writers	Beginner	15 h	—
3	Teaching Texts and Forms	Beginner	21 h	—
4	Responding, Revising and Assessing Student Writings	Beginner	21 h	—
5	Teaching Writing Final Project	Beginner	21 h	—

Plot, character, setting and style (Wesleyan), up to writing a short story.

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 46 H

Creative Writing

Wesleyan University | Beginner | Scrivener, Dramatica Pro, Outline 4D, Movie Magic Screenwriter

Stated prerequisites: No prior experience required

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Creative Writing: The Craft of Plot	—	8 h	4.7 (5,091)
2	Creative Writing: The Craft of Character	—	9 h	4.5 (1,975)
3	Creative Writing: The Craft of Setting and Description	—	9 h	4.7 (1,421)
4	Creative Writing: The Craft of Style	—	12 h	4.7 (1,209)
5	Capstone: Your Story	—	8 h	4.6 (468)

Programming in Python (Michigan) to analyse the S3 and S5 data yourself.

SPECIALIZATION · 5 COURSES · 79 H

Python for Everybody Specialization

University of Michigan | Beginner | Python, SQL, SQLite

Stated prerequisites: No prerequisites; designed as an on-ramp to programming

#	COURSE	LEVEL	LENGTH	RATING (REVIEWS)
1	Programming for Everybody (Getting Started with Python)	Beginner	17 h	4.8 (233,775)
2	Python Data Structures	Beginner	20 h	4.9 (97,365)
3	Using Python to Access Web Data	Beginner	19 h	4.8 (44,591)
4	Using Databases with Python	Beginner	14 h	4.8 (21,659)
5	Capstone: Retrieving, Processing, and Visualizing Data with Python	Beginner	9 h	4.7 (14,483)

7. Bibliography

All 9 works can be read free online, under the conditions stated.

1. **A. Thomas-Bolduc, R. Zach**. *forall x: Calgary. An Introduction to Formal Logic*. Free, CC BY 4.0. forallx.openlogicproject.org
2. **OpenStax**. *Writing Guide with Handbook*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/writing-guide
3. **OpenStax**. *Psychology 2e*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/psychology-2e
4. **OpenStax**. *Introduction to Philosophy*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/introduction-philosophy
5. **R. S. Jhangiani, I. A. Chiang, C. Cuttler, D. C. Leighton**. *Research Methods in Psychology, 4th ed.*. Free, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. kpu.pressbooks.pub/psychmethods4e
6. **D. Diez, M. Çetinkaya-Rundel, C. Barr**. *OpenIntro Statistics*. Free PDF. www.openintro.org/book/os
7. **OpenStax**. *Introduction to Sociology 3e*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e
8. **OpenStax**. *Introduction to Anthropology*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/introduction-anthropology
9. **OpenStax**. *Introduction to Political Science*. Free (OpenStax). openstax.org/details/books/introduction-political-science

8. Method and caveats

- **Data source.** Courses, lengths, levels and ratings come from coursera.org pages collected in November 2026, and from the “Humanities & Social Sciences Specializations” and “Data Science Specializations Coursera” files.
- **How hours are counted.** Totals add up the length stated for each course; a course that appears in two specializations is counted once.
- **What the curriculum does not cover.** Coursera offers few university specializations in sociology, general history, linguistics or moral philosophy; several specializations focus on the United States. The free textbooks fill these areas.
- **Catalogue changes.** Coursera regularly changes its courses, lengths and ratings. Check each page before enrolling.
- **Textbooks.** Free availability was checked on the authors' and publishers' websites; licences differ.