

Politics and Society

Degree conferred

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Languages of study

Study in German. Some courses can be given in French or English.

Commencement of studies

Commencement of studies in the Autumn Semester (September) or in the Spring Semester (February)

The 60 ECTS credits bachelor programme «Politics and Society» is primarily oriented towards political science. It is focusing on topics related to the political system of society. This includes the analysis of governance systems as well as the discussion of central actors of the political system. In addition, it deals with questions of political sociology: what are the social prerequisites of political power? How autonomous are the political system and its state? How should the state's ability to solve problems be assessed, especially in times of political crisis?

The different developments in Western and Eastern Europe are analysed from comparative perspective. Apart from autocratic «tendencies» which can be observed in many regions, there are increasing doubt about democracy and the question of whether, and to what extent established elites are able to solve the major political problems.

Profile of the study programme

The programme provides knowledge of general and current political issues. It combines analyses of political sociology with critical appraisal of regional political systems in Eastern and Western Europe.

Fribourg Profile

The language of tuition for the programme in Fribourg is German, a number of lectures may be offered in French or English.

While the introductory module *Fundamentals of Social Sciences* gives an overview of some classical works on the history of the subject and presents selected theoretical approaches and central concepts, the bachelor programme in political science is chiefly based on three pillars:

1. The basics of political systems analysis

This module focuses on the analysis of political systems and their institutions. It traces the development of political systems around the world and in particular in the states of Central and Eastern Europe. In this region of the world, very different political systems have emerged after the common experience of totalitarianism and state socialism. The political transformations that took place after the fall of the USSR are not the same in all countries. The courses in this module aim to explain these differences. They approach the

question by analysing the various factors that condition the emergence of political systems. It also compares democracies and autocratic political systems in terms of stability, efficiency and the ability to learn from the past.

2. The analysis of political systems in Eastern and Western Europe

This module focuses on the concrete and comparative analysis of systems of government and their states. The case study is approached through the analysis of Russia's political system and its evolution in the context of domestic and foreign policy. Comparative analysis of systems of government in Eastern and Western Europe is also explored in depth. The focus is on institutions and individual actors.

3. Specific themes in the field of political science

The module addresses themes that, in the comparative analysis of political systems, are partly dealt with under the rubric of political culture or belong to the fields of political actors and government or governance. Various topics such as governance (including informal governance), political leadership, political actors (parties, civil society), political trust, social capital, populism, clientelism and corruption can be studied.

Learning outcomes and career openings

The bachelor programme «Politics and Society» qualifies students to analyse political systems and their actors in the relevant social context. In addition to this, students should be able to give a critical review and comment on scholarly literature, and conduct targeted literature research. The programme provides a solid foundation for the pursuit of a career in areas such as research, diplomatic service, international organisations, journalism, non-governmental organisations and development cooperation.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

60 ECTS credits as a minor study programme

Curriculum

<https://studies.unifr.ch/go/c> (German)

Contact

Faculty of Humanities
Department of European Studies and Slavic Studies
Pauline Dummermuth, study advisor
pauline.dummermuth@unifr.ch
Marlies Vaucher, secretary
marlies.vaucher@unifr.ch
<https://studies.unifr.ch/go/fr-politicalscience> (French)
<https://studies.unifr.ch/go/de-politicalscience> (German)