Social Anthropology

Degree conferred
Bachelor of Arts

Options
For information on the optional award of the distinction «Bilingual curriculum, French/German», please contact the relevant Department (see Contact).

Languages of study
Possibility to study in French, in German or in French and German. Some courses are offered in English.

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

Access to further studies
This bachelor programme qualifies students for the master programme **Culture, Politics and Religion in Pluralist Societies**.

Social anthropology analyses social and cultural phenomena in today's world in order to understand and explain them in all their diversity and complexity. This discipline examines socio-cultural practices, beliefs and institutions, which are intertwined in different ways at the local, national, regional and global levels. Concerning the methodology, social anthropology is characterised by long-term ethnographical research. This kind of research typically involves acquiring the local language, observing and participating in the daily life of the group being studied.

Profile of the study programme

What is social anthropology?
Social anthropology explores human action as a whole, including its political, legal, moral, religious, economic, social and material dimensions. In doing so, it offers tools for understanding changes in contemporary society. The topics studied include new forms of organisation, cooperation and conflict, ethnicity and nationalism, different legal systems, migration phenomena, human interaction with the environment, urban life, different forms of social and political mobilisation, new religious movements, tourism, rituals and the use of new technologies.

One of its main features is its specific qualitative methods, involving fieldwork and in particular participant observation and in-depth interviews. The information thus obtained sheds light on the living conditions and perspectives of the social group studied. More generally it also provides food for thought concerning the particularities and diversity of different cultures while at the same time emphasising human commonalities.

Fribourg profile
By analysing local communities and studying social relationships, the bachelor programme in Social Anthropology at the University of Fribourg allows students to understand changes in society, whether western or non western, near or far. At the University of Fribourg, the courses cover the history, theories and major concepts of anthropology. Current issues of anthropological debates are addressed in a variety of geographical and cultural contexts. Activities such as conferences, excursions, visits to museums and summer schools are organised regularly.

Moreover, students have the advantage, rarely offered elsewhere, of multiple perspectives that combine research traditions from the German, French, Italian and English-speaking worlds. The curriculum can be followed in German, French, or bilingually. Staff members teach political, legal, economic and environmental anthropology, based on their research in Europe, Africa and Asia.

The bachelor programme in Social Anthropology at the University of Fribourg offers students a basis in the discipline as well as deeper insights into specific areas which will help them understand contemporary social and cultural issues. It also provides multidisciplinary training in the social sciences, which enables students to pursue a master's degree or seek a professional career.

Learning outcomes and career openings
Training in Social Anthropology may be put forth in a wide variety of professional activities. It offers tools that can be applied in various work contexts: to co-ordinate a social or educational project; to contribute to assessing a political or organisational action; to steer or co-ordinate a group, an association, etc. Consequently, the professional sectors are multiple and varied: associations, social intervention, companies, human resources, consultancy, inter-cultural mediation, NGOs, cantonal and federal associations in Switzerland, Confederation services, diplomatic services, journalism and education. The skills acquired during these studies are also relevant to research activities, scientific expertise or an academic career.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

120 ECTS credits + 60 ECTS credits in a minor study programme freely chosen, 6 semesters

Curriculum

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/NXJf7 *(French)*
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/jHFob *(German)*

Comments

This study programme may be chosen jointly with a study programme worth 60 ECTS credits in the «Social Sciences» domain.

Admission

The following **Swiss school-leaving certificates** grant **admission to bachelor programmes** at the University of Fribourg:

- Swiss academic Maturity Certificate
- Federal vocational or specialised Baccalaureate + supplementary examination of the Swiss Maturity Commission (passerelle)
- Bachelor Degree from a Swiss university, from an accredited Swiss university of applied sciences (HES/FH) or from a Swiss university of teacher education (HEP/PH)

A **complete list of all further recognised Swiss school-leaving certificates** is to be found on the webpages of swissuniversities (*in French and German only*): https://studies.unifr.ch/go/fr-admission-swisscertificates; https://studies.unifr.ch/go/de-admission-swisscertificates
Foreign upper secondary school-leaving certificates are recognised only if they correspond substantially to the Swiss Maturity Certificate. They must qualify as general education. Foreign school-leaving certificates are considered to be general education if, among other things, the last three years of schooling include at least six general education subjects, independent from each other, in accordance with the following list:

1. Language of instruction (at the school)
2. Second language (a foreign language)
3. Mathematics
4. Natural sciences (biology or chemistry or physics)
5. Humanities and social sciences (geography or history or economics/law)
6. Elective (computer sciences or philosophy or an additional language or an additional subject from category 4 or 5)

The general **admission** requirements to the **bachelor programmes** at the University of Fribourg for holders of foreign school-leaving certificates as well as the **admission requirements for individual countries** are to be found on the webpages of swissuniversities: https://studies.unifr.ch/go/en-admission-countries
In addition, applicants with foreign school-leaving certificates must present **proof of sufficient language skills in French or German**. All guidelines are available at *(only in French and German)*: https://studies.unifr.ch/go/adm-guidelines

The assessment of foreign school-leaving certificates is based on the «Recommendations for the Assessment of Foreign Upper Secondary School-Leaving Certificates» adopted by the Chamber of universities of swissuniversities on 21.11.2024 (https://studies.unifr.ch/go/swissuniversities24fr; https://studies.unifr.ch/go/swissuniversities24de). The admission requirements are valid for the respective academic year. The Rectorat of the University of Fribourg reserves the right to change these requirements at any time.

Alternatives

Also offered as a minor study programme (60/30 ECTS credits).

Contact

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Sciences

Social Anthropology Unit
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