

English Language and Literature

Degree conferred

Philosophiae Doctor in Lingua et Litteris britannicis / Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature (PhD)

Commencement of studies

An application for admission may be submitted at any time.

Regulation

<http://studies.unifr.ch/go/dGLfK> (French and German only)

Application procedure

Candidates with Swiss qualifications

<https://studies.unifr.ch/go/Uj3b4>

Candidates with foreign qualifications

<https://studies.unifr.ch/go/2KPbe>

Fribourg profile

The Department of English at the University of Fribourg welcomes doctoral research (PhD) in the following fields of study: English Philology, English Linguistics, English Literature, and American Literature.

English Philology

Philology, the study of medieval texts, is a distinct field of study at undergraduate and graduate levels within the Department of English. Graduate students in English Philology can benefit from the resources of Fribourg's interdisciplinary Medieval Institute as well as close collaboration with medievalists at other Swiss and English universities. The Professor of Philology at Fribourg is Elisabeth Dutton, who specialises in early English drama and medieval English devotional compilations and women's writing. She currently heads two major research projects on drama in different institutions: medieval Oxford colleges, and English and French medieval convents.

English Linguistics

English linguistics at Fribourg focuses on the analysis of the processes involved in the construction and interpretation of meaning in context. Another specificity of English linguistics lies in the emphasis set on combining theoretical with empirical approaches to research. PhD students are invited to use different methodologies in their project, and in particular to evaluate the robustness of theoretical claims against empirical evidence. PhD students will be invited to participate in national and international doctoral workshops and summer schools to acquire the necessary skills and to be exposed to state-of-the-art research in the field. The Professor of English Linguistics at Fribourg is Didier Maillat. His research focus is on pragmatics, within the wider scope of cognitive approaches to language. His current research interests include (but are not limited to) persuasion, figurative language, humour, deceptive communication and misinformation, or deictic uses of

language. Dr Steve Oswald's area of expertise lies at the interface of pragmatics, argumentation theory and cognitive science. He welcomes PhD applications related to these fields.

English Literature

Professor Indira Ghose specialises in the fields of early modern literature, with a focus on early modern drama, and literature of the British Empire. Her current research interests include humour and the comic, Renaissance courtesy literature, and the history of the emotions. She welcomes doctoral students with interests in any of these fields or related areas of study.

Literature never exists in «splendid isolation». It is an integral part of the social and cultural fabric underlying our communities and is closely tied to other forms and media of artistic expression. As Professor of Modern English Literature (c. 1780-21st century), Julia Straub investigates the intersections between literary and media history in her research and explores the interactions between literature and digital technologies as well as other media such as photography or the visual arts. She welcomes research proposals from prospective PhD students who would like to work in these or other areas, such as Victorian Literature, contemporary anglophone fiction, transatlantic literary relations, canon theory, melodrama or cultural memory studies.

American Literature

American literature is an integral part of the English curriculum at all levels. Professor Thomas Austenfeld's research in American Poetry, American Modernism, and regional American literatures – especially the South and the West – indicates his preferred areas for doctoral supervisions. Other fields in American studies may be explored in co-supervised dissertations with Professor Austenfeld's colleagues in Germany, France, Sweden, Britain, Poland, and the North American continent.

Students who wish to pursue doctoral studies in English Language and Literature at the University of Fribourg are integrated into the *Doctoral Programme in English Language and Literature* organised by the Conférence Universitaire de Suisse Occidentale (CUSO). Regular workshops offer doctoral students an opportunity to engage with the work of internationally renowned experts, to interact with their peers at other Swiss universities, and to present their work-in-progress to an audience of scholars working in their field.

Professors who are eligible to supervise theses

English Philology

- Prof. Elisabeth Dutton

Areas of specialisation:

- Early English drama
- Medieval English devotional compilations
- Women's writing

English Linguistics

- Prof. Didier Maillat

Areas of specialisation:

- Pragmatics

- Studies on meaning in use and meaning in context
- Cognitive approaches to language
- Experimental pragmatics

Possible topics:

- Analysis of interpretative processes, and of inferential processes involved in meaning construction
- Analysis of playful and creative uses of language (e.g. humour, figurative language, fiction)
- Analysis of misleading and deceptive uses of language (e.g. manipulation, disinformation, propaganda)
- Analysis of L2 interference on pragmatic processes (e.g. reference assignment, implicature derivation)
- Analysis of context-dependent expressions (e.g. deixis, reference frames)

Theses can be supervised in English or French.

- **Dr Steve Oswald**

Areas of specialisation:

- Pragmatics
- Argumentation theory
- Discourse analysis

Topics:

- Manipulation, deception and covert speech acts more broadly
- (Implicit and explicit) Meaning in argumentative processes
- Rhetorical effectiveness of fallacious and non-fallacious argumentation
- Classical pragmatic phenomena: metaphor, humour, implicature, etc.

Theses can be supervised in English or French.

English Literature

- **Prof. Indira Ghose**

Areas of specialisation:

- Early modern drama
- Literature of the British Empire
- Humour and the comic
- Renaissance courtesy literature
- History of the emotions

- **Prof. Julia Straub**

Areas of specialisation:

- Contemporary English literature and digital technologies
- Intermedial configurations from 1800 to the present day
- Transatlantic literary relationships
- Victorian literature, especially the reception of Dante Alighieri's works
- Melodrama: its history, forms and functions
- Theories of literary canon formation and cultural memory

American Literature

- **Prof. Thomas Austenfeld**

Areas of specialisation:

- American Poetry, especially Modern and Contemporary

- American Modernism
- American Drama
- Regional American literatures, especially the South and the West
- Memoir and Life Writing

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

No ECTS credits can be earned.

Doctoral school

<https://english.cuso.ch>

<http://studies.unifr.ch/go/phd-language-and-cognition>

Admission

In order to be admitted to a doctorate the candidate must have been awarded an academic **bachelor's and master's degree** or an equivalent qualification from a university recognised by the University of Fribourg.

Before applying for a doctorate the candidate must contact a **professor** who would be willing to supervise the thesis work.

There is **no general right** to be admitted to a doctorate.

The respective conditions of admission for each doctoral study programme are reserved.

Contact

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Doc- Postdoc-portal

<http://www.unifr.ch/phd>