Language Sciences

Degree conferred
Philosophiae Doctor in Scientia Linguarum / Doctor of Philosophy in Language Sciences (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/Ui3b4
Candidates with foreign qualifications
https://studies.unifr.ch/go/2KPbe

Fribourg profile

Language Sciences is a set of disciplines based on the study of language in general and the diversity of languages.

Language Sciences feature in different domains at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Fribourg: English, Germanistik, Français, Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education. Doctoral research can be pursued in various fields of the discipline: syntax, semantics, pragmatics, textual linguistics, cognitive linguistics, language acquisition, psycholinguistics, language teaching, dialectology, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.

Researchers in Language Sciences study the following subjects at the University of Fribourg:

Germanistik Domain

- Dialectology with a focus on sociolinguistics and perceptual linguistics
- Sociolinguistics and contact linguistics from a synchronic or diachronic perspective
- Linguistic system and pragmatics, at the interface between linguistic variation and language acquisition

English Domain

- Semantic analysis
- Analysis of interpretative processes and of inferential processes involved in meaning construction
- Experimental methodologies applied to pragmatic research (i.e. experimental pragmatics)
- Various interfaces between pragmatics and other linguistic branches (e.g. second language acquisition, discourse analysis, argumentation theory, cognitive sciences)

Français Domain

- The expression of space and time in language and in discourse, syntagmatic constructions and referential chains
- The morphosemantic properties of lexical units, polysemy, semantic annotations in the body, nominal and verbal typologies
- Pragma-syntax
- Language variation
- Spoken French

Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education Domain

- The dynamics of multilingual competencies, multilingual acquisition and cognitive linguistics
- Language and social inequalities, language, power and politics, societal and institutional multilingualism
- Languages in contact, description of minority languages (including Rhaeto-Romance idioms) and synchronic and diachronic linguistics
- Learning and teaching languages; Foreign language didactics and multilingualism didactics; Language testing; developmental paths in language acquisition; influence of input (German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language; French as a foreign language/French as a second language)

Doctoral subjects are chosen together with the thesis supervisor. Each doctoral supervisor offers individual guidance throughout the course of the thesis. Doctoral conferences are regularly organised by the domains or within research groups.

Moreover, two doctoral programmes funded by Swissuniversities and supported by the University of Fribourg help doctoral students to acquire research skills: the *Language and Cognition* programme in partnership with the universities of Neuchâtel and Geneva and the programme *Multilingualism: acquisition, education and society* in collaboration with the universities of Bern and Lausanne.

Other training courses are offered in the frame of the CUSO doctoral programmes in Language Sciences, German language and literature and English language and literature.

Professors who are eligible to supervise theses

Germanistik Domain

- **Prof. Regula Schmidlin**

Areas of specialisation:
– Acquisition of writing and text skills
– Lexicography and phraseology
– Linguistic variation and language standardisation

Theses can be supervised in German.

English Domain

- **Prof. Didier Maillat**

Areas of specialisation:
– Pragmatics
– Empirical and experimental approaches to linguistic meaning
– Cognitive approaches to argumentation and discourse
– Pragmatics of EFL (English as a foreign language)

Theses can be supervised in English or French.

Français Domain

- **Prof. Gilles Corminboeuf**

Areas of specialisation:
– Pragma-syntax
– Language variation
– Spoken French

Theses can be supervised in French.

- **Prof. Richard Huyghe**

Areas of specialisation:
– Lexical semantics
– Constructional morphology
– Syntactic analysis

Theses can be supervised in French.

Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education Domain

- **Prof. Raphael Berthele**

Areas of specialisation:
– Linguistics of language contact
– Variational linguistics
– Psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics

Theses can be supervised in German, English or French.

- **Prof. Alexandre Duchêne**

Areas of specialisation:
– Sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology
– Language, power and politics
– Language and social inequalities

Theses can be supervised in French, German or English.

- **Prof. Matthias Grünert**

Areas of specialisation:
– Languages in contact (particularly in the Rhaeto-Romance area)
– Descriptive linguistics of Rhaeto-Romance
– Variational linguistics and sociolinguistics of Rhaeto-Romance

Theses can be supervised in German, French or Rhaeto-Romance.

- **Prof. Thomas Studer**

Areas of specialisation:
– German as a foreign language/German as a second language
– Acquisition, leaning and testing of foreign language competencies
– Corpus linguistics applied to foreign language studies

Theses can be supervised in German, English or French.

- **Prof. Anita Thomas**

Areas of specialisation:
– Teaching and linguistics of French as a foreign language/French as a second language
– Developmental paths in second and foreign language acquisition
– Input and language acquisition

Theses can be supervised in French, English or German.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

ECTS credits can be earned.

Doctoral school

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/phd-language-and-cognition
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/phd-multilingualism
https://langage.cuso.ch
https://deutsch.cuso.ch
https://english.cuso.ch
https://francais.cuso.ch

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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