Special Education

Degree conferred
Philosophiae Doctor in Paedagogia Speciali / Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education (PhD)

Commencement of studies
An application for admission may be submitted at any time.

Regulation
https://studies.unifr.ch/go/1K *(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

The Department of Special Education (formerly curative education) offers a doctoral training in French, in German and in English in the field of special education.

Special Education is the practice of educating students with special educational needs. The Department of Special Education contributes to the development, enrichment and dissemination of scientific knowledge and to the deployment and optimisation of professional skills and practices in the field of special education.

The theses in the Department are likely to cover themes concerning, for example:

– Educational interventions, therapeutic pedagogical measures and systems used in the field of special education and/or clinical speech therapy;
– The learning journeys and/or the characteristics of people – children, teenagers and adults – for the benefit of services in the field of special education and/or clinical speech therapy;
– Monitoring the journeys of people on the academic, developmental or social level depending on living and learning conditions proposed to them;
– The functioning and/or organisation of ordinary and/or specialised environments in welcoming people;
– Contact between these people, the community and/or the immediate or more distant entourage (family, neighbours, school, work, other);
– Training of professionals working in the field of special education and/or clinical speech therapy;
– Social attitudes towards persons receiving services in the field of special education and/or their entourage;
– etc.

The Department of Special Education focuses on fundamental research and on action or application-orientated projects. It is also interested in on meta-research in the field of special education.

In the doctoral programme, doctoral students who speak either German or French can register for the PROWEL (*Social Problems and Social Welfare*) doctoral school, which is led by Prof. Winfried Kronig from the Department of Special Education in collaboration with Prof. Monica Budowski (Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, University of Fribourg) and Prof. Christian Suter (Sociology, University of Neuchâtel). French-speaking doctoral students can also opt to attend the EDSE (*Etudes doctorales en sciences de l'éducation*) offered by CUSO.

During the academic year, a research seminar is organised 6 to 7 times by the Department of Special Education. Doctoral students writing their thesis under the direction of one of the Department's professors periodically present their work within this framework and thus benefit from feedback from other Department researchers. In addition, the Department organises meetings and/or study days for doctoral students, in collaboration with other national and international research teams.

Professors who are eligible to supervise theses

- **Prof. Julia Büttner-Kunert**

Areas of specialisation:
– Neurorehabilitation and clinical linguistics (national and international collaborations)
– Cognitive communication disorders in traumatic brain injury and other neurological disorders
– Neuropragmatics across the lifespan
– Diagnosis, treatment and promotion of communicative participation in neurogenic communication disorders
– Cognitive-linguistic modeling of text and conversation skills throughout the lifespan (test development, specialist articles, specialist didactics, textbooks) Executive functions and language
– Development of guidelines and interdisciplinary consensus papers

Theses can be supervised in German or English.

- **Prof. Winfried Kronig**

Areas of specialisation:
– Analysis of academic systems
– Estimation of academic performance
– Effects of the composition of classes

Theses can be supervised in German or English.

- **Prof. Christoph Müller**

Areas of specialisation:
– Behavioural problems
– Intellectual disability and autism
– Peer influence and peer relations

Theses can be supervised in German or English.

- **Prof. Nicolas Ruffieux**

Areas of specialisation:
– Clinical neuropsychology of children and adults
– Visual disorder
– New technologies at the service of disability

Theses can be supervised in French.

- **Prof. Myriam Squillaci**

Areas of specialisation:
– Behavioural problems
– Health at work, burnout
– Autismus (family, siblings)
– Neurosciences and special education
– Profound and multiple disabilities

Theses can be supervised in French, Italian or English.

- **Prof. Carmen Zurbriggen**

Areas of specialisation:
– Inclusion and social participation in school and leisure settings
– Well-being and emotional experience of children and adolescents
– Emotional and social development (in the context of disability)
– Diagnosis and research methods in special education

Theses can be supervised in German, French or English.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

No ECTS credits can be earned.

Doctoral school

http://education.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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http://studies.unifr.ch/go/fr-specialeducation *(French)*
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/de-specialeducation *(German)*

Doc- Postdoc-portal

http://www.unifr.ch/phd