Digital Society

Degree conferred
Master of Arts in Social Sciences: Digital Society

Languages of study
Studies in English. Some elective courses can be taken in French or German.

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

Access to further studies
Ph.D.

The interdisciplinary master programme *Digital Society* teaches students about digital media in society as well as technological change. Students acquire specialist knowledge and methods from sociology, social anthropology and science&technology studies (STS) alongside the fundamentals of IT. The programme provides students with an in-depth exploration of the social dimensions of digital technologies in contemporary societies. Graduates will be prepared to apply the specialist knowledge and methods of both social sciences and technology to issues of digital transformation and fostering interdisciplinary thinking and work. The course is taught in collaboration between the Department of Social Sciences, the Department of Social Work, Social Policy and Global Development and the interfaculty Human-IST Institute of the University of Fribourg.

Profile of the study programme

The master programme aims to educate students on issues of the digital society and research into technological change. It explores the social dimensions of digital technologies and their profound impact on communication, labour and social participation. Through this interdisciplinary master programme, students develop a comprehensive understanding of social and cultural issues relating to digital transformation. The programme examines not only how digital technologies reshape social structures and hierarchies, but also how social factors influence the development and introduction of these technologies. It sheds light on the emergence of new digitally driven professional groups and social milieus, as well as on movements which are positioning themselves against digital technologies. Students acquire knowledge in culture, political economics, digital technologies and epistemology, enabling them to critically analyse and understand the digital transformation currently in progress.

Fribourg profile
The University of Fribourga is a pioneer in offering an interdisciplinary study programme on digital-society issues. It provides students with a holistic view of digital change and instructs them in the methods and specialist knowledge of the disciplines involved. This interdisciplinary approach is enriched by diverse backgrounds of master students who attend the same teaching units, engage in discussions and exchange ideas. A particular feature of the programme is that students work in small groups, which enables them to engage with the course content in great depth. The *Digital Society Study Week* provides a unique opportunity to explore current issues of the digital society in a concentrated format. The link between theory and practice connects scientific knowledge with its practical application by confronting students with real-world challenges in various areas of digital transformation. Students may complete the study programme in English only, but have the choice of attending elective courses in French or German.

Learning outcomes and career openings
After completing their master's degree, graduates will be equipped to apply the specialist knowledge and methods of both the social sciences and technology to digital-society issues. The course prepares students for careers in public and administrative organisations, the private sector or consultancy firms, with a focus on digital transformation and AI governance. The interdisciplinary expertise gained in this interdisciplinary master programme is relevant to the media and communications sector, cultural projects and institutions, civil-society bodies and foundations, professional associations, trades unions, political organisations and humanitarian organisations. Furthermore, the programme paves the way for an academic career or work in applied research.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

90 ECTS credits, 3 semesters

Curriculum

https://studies.unifr.ch/go/1x

Admission

Master's degree programmes are built on the knowledge and abilities that were acquired when obtaining a bachelor's degree.

Holders of a bachelor's degree awarded by a Swiss university are admitted to a master's degree programme without any preconditions if they have earned 60 or 90 ECTS credits – depending on the chosen master's degree programme – within the corresponding discipline. However, additional requirements can be required. The same applies to holders of a bachelor's degree awarded by a foreign university, provided that the bachelor's degree is recognised and considered equivalent by the University of Fribourg.

Holders of a bachelor's degree awarded by a Swiss or a foreign university, provided that the bachelor's degree is recognised and considered equivalent by the University of Fribourg, who do not fulfil this condition can be admitted to a master's degree programme with

preconditions (which must be successfully completed before starting the master's degree programme) and/or additional requirements (which can be completed during the master's degree programme). The preconditions and/or additional requirements may not exceed 60 ECTS credits in total. The same applies to holders of a bachelor's degree awarded by a Swiss university of applied sciences, according to existing agreements.

The respective conditions of admission for each master's degree programme are reserved.

Alternatives

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

Contact

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https://studies.unifr.ch/go/human-IST-institute