Foreign Language Didactics

Degree conferred
Specialised Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Languages of study
Possibility to study in French, in German or in French and German.

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

Access to further studies
Ph.D.

This master programme, which is offered in cooperation with the University of Teacher Education and the University of Ticino, the University of Teacher Education Lucerne and the University of Southampton, educates students about the various approaches and methods used to teach and learn foreign languages. By analysing these, students become skilled in evaluating, developing, and putting into practice teaching and learning concepts for the various levels (elementary to secondary II). In addition to regular classes, the programme also includes a teaching internship in a university of teacher education (HEP/PH). This one-of-a-kind master programme is taught bilingually (French and German), but students also choose their language of specialisation: German, French, English or Italian. Students in the *English* track are required to spend a semester at a university in an English-speaking country.
Students also have access to the Research Centre on Multilingualism in Fribourg, where they can take part in research and in the regularly held lectures and workshops held by internationally renowned experts.

Profile of the study programme

The master programme in Foreign Language Didactics at the University of Fribourg is offered in cooperation with the University of Teacher Education and the University of Ticino, the University of Teacher Education Lucerne and the University of Southampton. It provides intensive theoretical and practical training in foreign language didactics. The programme educates students about the various methods and approaches for teaching and learning foreign languages so that they can put these into practice, develop them further, and assess their usefulness for the different school levels (elementary through secondary II).

– Languages of study: German and French, which means that students will need to attend classes in both languages; some lectures may sometimes be given in English;
– Languages to specialise in: choice between German, French, English and Italian.
Students opting for the *English* or *Italian* option must have a solid grounding in this language, as well as in French and German.

The programme includes courses on language learning and teaching, multilingual competence, the social and political characteristics of multilingualism, multi-language didactics, applied linguistics and general didactics. It also includes a teaching internship and an exchange semester (for the *English* and *Italian* options). Some optional courses make it possible to specialise in certain areas.

Fribourg profile
The bilingual University of Fribourg is the only university in Switzerland to offer a master programme in Foreign Language Didactics. Situated on a language border, the city of Fribourg is the ideal location to gain a deeper insight in the language situation in French- and German-speaking Switzerland.
Close contacts are maintained with the «Multilingualism Studies», «German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language» and «French as a Foreign Language/French as a Second Language» programmes as well as with the **Institute of Multilingualism**, which hosts the Swiss Confederation's Research Centre on Multilingualism. Here, students can attend regularly held lectures and workshops in which internationally renowned experts discuss foreign language learning and teaching as well as individual and societal multilingualism.
In the **Documentation Centre of the Research Centre on Multilingualism** (which is part of our library dedicated to second and foreign language learning), students will find a large number of pertinent publications and magazines and can solicit expert advice on autonomous learning.

Learning outcomes and career openings
Graduates possess in-depth knowledge of the theories and research methods in the field of foreign language didactics and the related fields. They are also able to apply this specialist theoretical knowledge when developing and designing research projects as well as in practical settings. They are aware of the requirements for modern foreign language instruction, and they can analyse and assess language courses in their own or in a foreign language, and they can work out suggestions for optimising teaching/learning arrangements.

Some of the professional fields open to holders of a master's degree in Foreign Language Didactics are:

- Training future foreign language teachers, especially at universities of teacher education;
- Domestic and international language courses in adult education and at universities and universities of applied sciences;
- Activities in connection with integration courses for migrants, exchange programmes and the promotion of multilingualism in professional environments, and more specifically in companies;
- Development work or work as intermediaries in government agencies, NGOs and publishing houses;
- Research and development work in the field of language teaching and learning;

- After receiving the master's degree, graduates can enrol in a doctoral programme and go on to write a thesis in the field of foreign language didactics or multilingualism.

Note:
– This study programme is equivalent to the modules «Educational work with adults», «Foreign and second language education» and «Migration and interculturality» of the Swiss «Certificate for language teachers in the field of integration» (cf. https://fide-info.ch/fr/formation-continue/certificat and https://fide-info.ch/de/weiterbildung/zertifikat).
– Graduates are not automatically entitled to teach foreign languages at state-run schools in Switzerland, be it at the elementary or at the secondary I or II levels.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

90 ECTS credits + 30 ECTS credits as an option in a minor study programme freely chosen or in a specialisation programme, 4 to 5 semesters

Curriculum

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/ikZzC *(French)*
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/IaFd2 *(German)*

Comments

A productive language level equivalent to level **C1** of the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** in French or German (speaking and writing) is a minimum requirement to enrol in this programme. Very good receptive skills should be attained in the other language respectively. In general, the information in the application suffices for the admission jury to estimate this level, so no language certificates need to be included in the application (though they may). Should a student's language level in one of the languages prove to be slightly lower than this requirement, they will be requested to attend a language course at the Language Centre or at the Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education (see additional programme).

Admission

Master's degree programmes are built on the knowledge and abilities that were acquired when obtaining a bachelor's degree. The master programme in Foreign Language Didactics has specific admission requirements.

This study programme is aimed first and foremost at holders of a **degree** (bachelor or master) from a **Swiss university of teacher education**. Admission is based on academic record. A jury decides on the applicant's admission and the **obligation** to complete an **additional programme** (maximum 30 ECTS credits).

Contact

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education
Prof. Raphael Berthele
raphael.berthele@unifr.ch

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/en-multilingualism