German as a Foreign Language / German as a Second Language

Degree conferred
Master of Arts in Languages and Literatures: German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language

Languages of study
Study in German

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

Access to further studies
Ph.D.

Are you interested in supporting people in learning the German language? Do you want to conduct your own research within the field of foreign and second language acquisition? Are you looking for a degree with manifold, interesting and secure career prospects?
If yes, then the master programme German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language could just be the right option for you: it qualifies you as a German language teacher in adult education, as a researcher in language acquisition, and as an expert professional for attractive employment perspectives in areas such as educational policy and migration.
We offer you a first-class, practice-oriented, and evidence-based education that will optimally prepare you for the workplace. In small learning groups you will learn from experts in research and practice how German is learned and taught as a foreign and second language and how German language skills are assessed and evaluated. You can set individual priorities, e.g., in the areas of German as a Second Language/Migration or Multilingualism Research and Didactics.

Profile of the study programme

Learning outcomes
In four modules, you will focus on the different subdomains of German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language (GFL/GSL). You will, inter alia:

- become familiar with language teaching and learning research, as well as with teaching objectives and approaches to develop language and intercultural competence;
- reflect upon aspects that constitute good teaching and instruction. You will therein focus on learning theories and foreign language didactics, for instance by investigating the methods, functions and implications of testing and evaluating language competences;
- choose between a didactic profile, a research profile, or specialisation in German linguistics:
  – Within the didactic profile you will observe GFL classes and gather experience with reference to supervising and supporting German language learners
  – Within the research profile you will become familiar with methods of empirical foreign language research to conduct studies on the status, development, and assessment of linguistic, communicative, and (inter)cultural competences;
- enhance your didactic or research profile and, depending on your individual interests, enrol either in classes of the teacher education programme, the multilingualism programme, or the programme of German literature and language.

Upon graduating from your studies, you will have well-founded and in-depth knowledge about the German language and its use, as well as about specialised areas of the study programme such as task-based learning or evaluating and testing language competences. You will know about the requirements of current foreign language teaching and learning, be able to analyse and evaluate your own and others' language courses, and have the skills to conceptualise proposals to optimise teaching and learning arrangements. Furthermore, you will know about theory and research methods in GFL/GSL and will be able to apply your specialised expertise to research and practice.

Fribourg profile
This university master programme *German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language* is offered exclusively in the French/German bilingual city of Fribourg. The geographical location of the town at the language border offers optimal conditions to gain insight in the German as a foreign language context of the French-speaking part, as well as the German as a Second Language context of the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The GFL/GSL master study programme of the University of Fribourg is renowned for its small learning groups and individual and personal supervision of students.

The master study programme closely collaborates with the university's inter-faculty Institute of Multilingualism, which has been affiliated with the Research Centre on Multilingualism by the Swiss government since 2010. Our students can participate in both institut's regular public lectures and workshops facilitated by international experts on topics related to multilingualism.

The Documentation Centre of the Research Centre on Multilingualism, which is connected with the university library for foreign languages, contains a broad range of relevant publications and journals as well as expert advice that support our students' autonomous learning.

Our programme is suitable for people who are non-native German speakers as well as for people who consider German to be (one of) their first language(s). The enrolment requirements of the master programme encompass a German language proficiency of at least the level C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference. Further, you need to be able to read and understand academic texts in the English language.

Career openings
The master study programme GFL/GSL enables you to:

- work as a subject expert and language mediator of GFL/GSL on a national and international level;
- participate in the development of curricula, teaching and learning materials/textbooks, and evaluation instruments;
- engage with a range of activities in relation to integration courses, exchange programmes, profession-related language support, as well as language support for businesses and organisations;
- find employment in the area of language teaching and learning research.

The master study programme conveys a solid foundation for research activities in language teaching and learning research. If you are interested in pursuing an academic career path, the Institute of Multilingualism offers the doctoral programme «Multilingualism: acquisition, education and society» (https://institut-plurilinguisme.ch/en/doctoral-programme) - the ideal environment for you to continue your studies while setting your own individual research focus.

The completion of the master study programmeGFL/GSL (both the major and the minor programme) is equivalent to the fide «Certificate Language Course Instructor in the Integration Sector» (https://fide-info.ch/de/weiterbildung/zertifikat).

Graduates of the master study programme GFL/GSL may also pursue occupations in areas such as development work for governmental authorities, NGOs, or textbook publishers.

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, 3 to 4 semesters

Curriculum

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/IaFd2

Comments

Language competence in German of at least C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages at the beginning of the master's studies is required.

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.
Holders of a bachelor's degree awarded by a Swiss university in German Language and Literature or German Linguistics are also admitted to this master programme without any preconditions.

Alternatives

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

Contact

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Education
Prof. Thomas Studer
daf@unifr.ch
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/en-multilingualism