Social Problems, Social Policy and Risk Prevention

Degree conferred
Master of Arts in Social Sciences: Social Problems and Social Policy

Options
For information on the optional award of the distinction «Bilingual curriculum, French/German», please contact the relevant Department (see Contact).

Languages of study
Study in French

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

Access to further studies
This master programme qualifies students also for the doctoral programme **Social Policy**.

This master programme aims to develop a critical and scientific understanding of social and health issues and the conditions for their reasoned analysis. It teaches students how to draft appropriate action plans and implement more effective response programmes, training them to become analysts and stakeholders able to grasp complex social realities in the field of social and health policy. There is currently a worrying lack of experts, against a backdrop of a redefinition of social policies and, more broadly, of social cohesion mechanisms in each of the Swiss cantons to varying degrees.
Teaching is based both on sociological theoretical approaches and empirical contributions presented by specialists from various fields (politics, administration, business). The course is rounded off by a three-month (full-time) internship designed to immerse students in the professional reality of social and health work.

Profile of the study programme

The master programme in Social Work and Social Policy, entitled «Social Problems, Social Policy and Risk Prevention», aims to develop a critical and scientific understanding of public health and social inclusion. It aims to foster the conditions for a reasoned analysis of social and health issues for the drafting of appropriate action plans and the implementation of response programmes that enhance the management of these problematic social situations. This master programme trains students to become analysts and stakeholders in the field of social and health policy, able to grasp complex social realities. It is geared towards training social workers who are not merely able to act within a general framework, but who are able to consider complex social realities and collective structural challenges in order to draft periodically assessed guidelines. As administrators and politicians regularly state, there is a worrying lack of social experts, against a backdrop of a redefinition of social policies and, more broadly, of social cohesion mechanisms in each of the Swiss cantons to varying degrees.

Fribourg profile
This study programme at the University of Fribourg questions the implicit factors within the concepts of assistance and risk prevention, concepts which are always to the fore in contemporary social and health work. The teaching modules focus both on theoretical sociological approaches and on empirical contributions presented by specialists from various fields (politics, administration, business). The programme also includes a three-month (full-time) internship designed to immerse students in the professional reality of social and health work. The main aim of the internship is to provide students with a practical understanding of the professional fields of social work and/or public health. In a broader sense, it fosters a practical application of the knowledge obtained at the university, a conceptualisation of field experience and mechanisms, and the development of analytical skills. Duties during the internship may encompass, for example, the analysis of data and situations, monitoring and observation of work, diagnostics and assessments, and/or the drafting of programme analysis tools.

Learning outcomes and career openings
Skills
This master programme is based on four learning objectives:

- Methodically supporting the foundations of theory work in social and public health policy in order to develop critical thinking within the field of social sciences;
- Leveraging professional experience in order to adopt critical understanding of contemporary social and health work;
- Developing analytical skills that can be applied in a variety of situations and used to design increasingly complex types of social work;
- Providing an understanding of the effects of the contemporary changes underway in social organisation and lifestyles on solidarity avenues and social work types.

Career openings
This master programme prepares graduates for research and consulting positions within public administrations, with social partners, public-interest associations, non-profit bodies active in the field of social work and consulting firms. As the current social policy challenges are becoming increasingly complex, this programme could also interest students wishing to take up managerial positions in the field of social policy and the public sector in general. People occupying such positions are often called upon to take decisions based on research conducted by third parties.
The programme therefore provides the skills required in all professional fields in relation to social and/or health work (analysts, stakeholders, project managers, scientific associates, social and public health engineers).

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/pXlgA *(French)*

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 from a Swiss university in Educational Sciences, Curative and Special Education, Communication and Media Research, Political Science, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Ethnology, Religious Studies, Sociology or Social Work and Social Policy **can be admitted to this master programme without any additional requirements**.

Alternatives

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

Contact

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