Culture, Politics and Religion in Pluralist Societies

Degree conferred
Master of Arts in Social Sciences: Culture, Politics and Religion in Pluralist Societies

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

- Social and Cultural Dynamics
- Social Anthropology, Politics, Technology
- Religion and Society

Languages of study
Possibility to study in French, in German or in French and German. Some courses are offered in English.

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 interdisciplinary master programme is unique in Switzerland. It offers original and innovative training that combines the disciplines of sociology, social anthropology and religious studies. It aims to study developments in diverse and globalised societies resulting from socio-economic changes, the transformation of nation-states and population mobility. Students acquire the knowledge and skills to explain changes in the political, legal and religious spheres and to understand recent developments in social relations. The programme offers three options. Students select one option upon registering for the course: 1. Social and Cultural Dynamics: this option studies the rules and challenges of «living together» and diversity in all its dimensions (social, cultural, economic, political, etc.), equipping students with the skills to manage these issues in their future careers; 2. Social anthropology, Politics, Technology: In this option, students learn how social transformations arise, how technologies influence social life and how new social and political orders are created; 3. Religion and Society: this option investigates and analyses religion as a defining element of contemporary societies from an interdisciplinary Religious Studies perspective.
This course of study, which promotes field research and unique learning experiences, can be taken in French, German or both languages to obtain the «Bilingual curriculum, French/German» distinction.

Profile of the study programme

This master programme is cross-cutting: it combines methods of sociology, social anthropology and religious studies in an innovative way, making it a unique course of study in Switzerland. Composed of interdisciplinary modules and one option (to be selected), it provides the analytical and methodological tools which are key to understanding developments in diverse and globalised societies.

Fribourg profile
In addition to the interdisciplinary modules, students follow specialised modules in their selected option.

1. **Social and Cultural Dynamics** option
   This option focuses on knowledge and analytical tools, derived mainly from sociology, to study social plurality. It trains students to study the most visible aspects of this diversity: migration phenomena, interethnic relations, cultural standardisation and diversification, social and economic inequality, new forms of citizenship and their effects on individuals. More broadly, this option looks at the lifestyles and values which are emerging in various areas of society: families, social networks, groups of young people, associations, migrant communities, public institutions, professional groups and businesses. It considers new means of «living together» and relationships between individuals and groups, such as interethnic, intergenerational, interprofessional and gender relations. Students acquire the skills to decipher issues in the public arena and in the media, to analyse interactions and communication within political, legal and health institutions, and to evaluate changes in the labor sector.
   Interactive sessions and qualitative empirical research techniques conducted within institutions and with the populations under study train students in the use of individual interviews, focus groups and life stories, institutional document analysis and audio-visual techniques.
2. **Social Anthropology, Politics, Technology** option
   This option is anchored in the discipline of social anthropology. Social anthropology deals with contemporary societies in different regions of the world in order to better understand local and global dynamics, and to create necessary knowledge about them. It also analyses the emergence of cultural patterns and categorisations as well as political and social inequalities in order to contribute to a fairer and more open society. The focus of the option is on the contemporary challenges surrounding the relationships between humans, nature and the built and technological environment. These relationships tend to reflect the existing power structures and dominant societal values. The option also focuses on the question of how different actors transform societies through their actions, how social change arises, how technologies influence social life and how new political orders are created.
   The diverse and interactive forms of teaching provide students with theoretical and practical knowledge. An essential component of this study option is the preparation and implementation of a field research.
3. **Religion and Society** option
   The objective of this option is to further the study of religion

and its related challenges in modern and contemporary societies, particularly in Europe and Switzerland. Using methods and theories from social sciences such as sociology, anthropology and history, the option promotes understanding and analysis of religion at the level of individuals, groups, organisations, institutions as well as societies as a whole. Issues relating to religious diversity, pluralism and social integration are central to this option, with a focus on globalisation-linked trends. It takes an interdisciplinary, cross-cutting approach to examining the intersection of religion and questions involving youth, the media, gender issues, transnationalisation, economics, politics, identity, recognition, health, education and the role of religion in the public sphere, in the West and elsewhere. Teaching units address theoretical and empirical approaches, with an emphasis on group discussions and individualised seminar papers.

Career prospects
Given its interdisciplinary focus, this master programme provides access to a variety of professional contexts, and the knowledge and skills acquired meet the needs of today's labour market. Graduates have a command of the organisational, relational, cultural, identity and comunication issues that arise within different types of groups and institutions:

- Public and administrative institutions;
- Private sector, personnel management (HR);
- Media and communication;
- Political associations, trade unions;
- Humanitarian aid organisations, foundations and non-governmental organisations;
- Museums and art projects;
- Migration and intercultural relations;
- Youth and family work, social work;
- Cultural and animation sector;
- Health sector;
- Social interventions;
- Academic career, applied research.

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

https://studies.unifr.ch/go/qN68x *(French)*
https://studies.unifr.ch/go/A0cJ8 *(German)*

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 and as a specialisation programme (30 ECTS credits).

Contact

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