Islam and Society

More than practically any other subject, Islam is a key conflict issue in European societies. In national and international politics, education and social services, there is a struggle to achieve constructive interaction between Islam and society. The «Islam and Society» programme, which is unique in Switzerland, teaches skills for a differentiated approach to complex debates, in which central matters of the religious self-understanding of Muslims are raised and solutions to meet social challenges are proposed and established. The programme is offered by the Swiss Centre for Islam and Society (SZIG) at the University of Fribourg.

Profile of the study programme

The programme teaches skills related to the complex interactions between Islam and society. Through the examination of Islam, different fundamental issues relating to the self-understanding of European societies are broached from a new angle. On the one hand, based on social science or socio-philosophical theories and social practice, the course looks at the situation of Muslims in Europe. In relation with legal, political and social conditions, Islam is undergoing key transformation processes. On the other hand, it deals with the issue as to how Islamic thought develops based on its multiple traditions of knowledge in the European context and how it is positioned in ethical, philosophical and social discourses. How was and how is the heritage of Islamic traditions of knowledge, such as in the field of interpretations of the Quran or ethics, introspectively processed and made effective for the European context?

Fribourg profile

The study programme is based on offers from the Swiss Centre for Islam and Society (SZIG) and other Domains at the University of Fribourg. The SZIG is a centre of competence for current social issues related to Islam in Switzerland, resulting from a long-term dialogue process at federal level. The SZIG pursues a multi-perspective approach which also includes Islamic self-reflection. It is committed to a differentiated perception of the diversity of Islam at the level of individual identities and organisations. The SZIG maintains close contacts with different actors in the fields of politics, religion and civil society. Due to its varied advanced training programme and through the preparation of briefs on current themes, the SZIG has proven highly relevant in recent times. As an inter-faculty centre of the Faculties of Theology, Law and Arts and Humanities, it brings together different skills related to Islam and religion, which facilitate a varied study programme. Regular meetings and guest lectures with international guests broaden the study programme.

Learning outcomes and career openings

The programme is for students seeking an in-depth qualification with practical content in relation to Islam and society. In many of today’s professional fields, skills connected to cultural and religious diversity are required. Therefore, the subject of Islam plays an important role for teachers, in health and social occupations, as well as for jobs in public administrations, culture, economy, finance and civic organisations. It is thus possible to combine the study programme with all major programmes. Graduates acquire skills which they can bring to different areas of activity. They can use their Islamic-legitimated practices in a wide range of traditions. They are able to critically analyse interfaces between Islam, politics, law and ethics and make comparisons between different country contexts. Lastly, they can assess to what extent Muslim organisations can be involved in civic areas of activity. In this way, and combined with knowledge from other study programmes, they can function as mediators in complex and controversial situations.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies

30 ECTS credits as a minor study programme

Curriculum

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/K119 (French)
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/mS38b (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 from a Swiss university can be admitted to a Master's degree programme without any additional requirements. 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. According to existing agreements, holders of a Bachelor's degree awarded from a Swiss university of applied sciences can also be admitted with prerequisites or additional requirements.

Contact

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