English Language and Literature

The study programme covers all major fields of Anglophone literature from England and the States, English linguistics, and the historical forms of the English language from Beowulf to the English we use today. Close attention is paid to writing skills and an interdisciplinary approach is a key aspect of the work. Students have an opportunity to learn about medieval women, act in plays, do linguistic field work in sociolinguistics, study English detective fiction, discover the rich intellectual world of the English and European Renaissance, and investigate the American Western or meet contemporary American poets. Students in Linguistics may work with the nationally recognized Research Centre on Multilingualism. Students in Literature are invited to cross-enroll in classes offered by the Institute of Comparative Literature. Scholars of international acclaim are regularly invited to give talks. There are also exchange partnerships with universities in Nebraska, Mississippi, and Arizona.

Profile of the study programme

What are we like?
Did you know that English is the largest language department in the multilingual world of the University of Fribourg? Our five professors were born in five different countries, hold doctoral degrees from Bern, Berlin, Oxford, and Virginia, and are deeply committed to their teaching and research.

What do we do?
We offer a solid, comprehensive curriculum ranging across all major fields of Anglophone literature in England and the United States, English linguistics, and the historical forms of the English language from Beowulf, through Chaucer and Shakespeare to the English we speak and write today. Interdisciplinary work is key to our identity at Fribourg. Our professors publish their research in peer-reviewed journals and with internationally renowned presses such as Oxford University Press, Manchester University Press and the University Press of Virginia. They are involved in prestigious international research projects in Oxford, in the United States, and in Australia. In addition, they contribute regularly to national and international conferences as well as to events offered by the Institute of Comparative Literature, which was founded by a member of the English department.

What can you do here?
Our students come from Switzerland and abroad, and English is our exclusive language of communication in the hallways as well as in the classroom. Studying with us gives you the opportunity to learn about medieval women, act in plays, do linguistic field work in sociolinguistics, study English detective fiction, discover the rich intellectual world of the English and European Renaissance, and investigate the American Western or meet contemporary American poets. You will meet scholars of international acclaim who are regularly invited to give talks at our University. We have exchange partnerships with universities in Nebraska, Mississippi, and Arizona, in particular for first- and second-year BA students. Our students have won literary prizes and published their manuscripts. They have enjoyed intensive weeks of theatre-going in London, and performed in Renaissance plays and shot films in Oxford Colleges. Others have won travel awards to academic conferences from Albuquerque to Puerto Rico. Students in Linguistics may work together with the nationally recognized Research Centre on Multilingualism. Students in Literature are invited to cross-enroll in classes offered by the Institute of Comparative Literature.

How will you learn?
Our study plan makes sure that you experience all the facets of the world of English literature and linguistics, not just a sliver here and there. A good academic program offers you more than content: it gives you methodology, bibliography, theory, and the tools to think like a professional. We also give close attention to your writing skills. Those who work with literary texts are most effective when they manage to transmit their ideas clearly, distinctly, and persuasively. When you get ready to write your BA thesis, there will be a research colloquium of your peers, with professors to accompany you, to help you give your thesis the best possible shape.

In the recent past, we have successfully experimented with intensive weekend seminars for some of our classes. In these seminars, students and professors meet in a congenial setting to investigate a subject in detail. And for those who want more, there are opportunities for doctoral study down the road.

Where will you go from here?
Our Bachelor and Master programs are designed to fit together. We want you to get the full benefit of five years of study in Fribourg, with all its diversity, to see you succeed with a Master’s thesis which—who knows?—might turn out to be publishable. Many of our recent graduates have secured employment in the Swiss school system. When you complete your Master’s degree, you can choose from among French-speaking or German-speaking teacher education programs right here in Fribourg. Other graduates work internationally, in journalism or the world of publishing, or in non-profit organizations.

Studies organisation

Structure of studies
120 ECTS credits + 60 ECTS credits in a minor study programme freely chosen, 6 semesters

Curriculum

http://studies.unifr.ch/go/TaufR (French/German)

Admission

The following Swiss school-leaving certificates grant admission to Bachelor programmes at the University of Fribourg:

- Swiss academic Maturity Certificate
- Swiss vocational or specialised Baccalaureate in conjunction with the supplementary exam certificate from the Swiss Maturity Commission
- Bachelor Degree from a Swiss university, from an accredited Swiss university of applied sciences (HES/FH) or from a Swiss university of teacher education (HEP/PH)

A complete list of all further recognized Swiss school-leaving certificates is to be found on the webpages of swissuniversities (in French and German only): http://studies.unifr.ch/go/en-admission-swiss-certificates

Foreign upper secondary school-leaving certificates are recognised only if they correspond substantially to the Swiss Maturity Certificate. They must qualify as general education. Foreign school-leaving certificates are considered to be general education if the last three years of schooling include at least six general education subjects, independent from each other, in accordance with the following list:

1. First language (native language)
2. Second language
3. Mathematics
4. Natural sciences (biology, chemistry or physics)
5. Humanities and social sciences (geography, history or economics/law)
6. Elective (an additional language or an additional subject from category 4 or 5)

The general admission requirements to the Bachelor programmes at the University of Fribourg for holders of foreign school-leaving certificates as well as the admission requirements for individual countries are to be found on the webpages of swissuniversities: http://studies.unifr.ch/go/en-admission-countrylist

In addition, foreign candidates must present proof of sufficient language skills in French or German.

The assessment of foreign school-leaving certificates is based on the «CRUS Recommendations for the Assessment of Foreign Upper Secondary School-Leaving Certificates, 7 September 2007» (http://studies.unifr.ch/go/crus07en). The admission requirements are valid for the respective academic year. The Rectorat of the University of Fribourg reserves the right to change these requirements at any time.

Alternatives

Also offered as a minor study programme (60 ECTS credits).