Theological Studies

**Degree conferred**  
Philosophiae doctor in studiis theologicis / Doctor of Philosophy in theological studies (PhD)

**Commencement of studies**  
An application for admission may be submitted at any time.

**Regulation**  
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/nVIBN (French and German only)

**Application procedure**  
**Candidates with Swiss qualifications**  
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/0bJpN

**Candidates with foreign qualifications**  
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/4a2qV

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**Fribourg profile**

The Faculty of Theology in Fribourg is the largest faculty theology in Switzerland and one of two Catholic theology faculties integrated into a state university. It is subject to national law, like the other University faculties, but in addition is acknowledged by the Church and is supported by the Dominican Order and the Swiss Bishops Conference.

Theology differs from other scientific fields insofar as it has its own unique outlook: it deals primarily with God and humans, to the extent they refer to God as their origin and purpose. It reflects its own position as well as that of every Church in the community. Theologians share the responsibility for the planet’s sustainable development with a human face. In light of the deregulation of religion and ethics (fundamentalist and esoteric movements) and the search for a peaceful world where different religions and cultures can coexist, theology plays a critical role in engaging a discourse on the question of truth and values.

From this perspective, the Faculty of Theology serves the Church as a community, as well as its individual members, and also serves society as a whole. The issues explored through the study of theology using a variety of scientific research methods play a critically constructive role.

The doctorate in theological studies focuses on students who have completed their studies in theology as a main programme (with a minor).

**Professors who are eligible to supervise theses**  

**Biblical studies**

- **Prof. Luc Devillers**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Origins of Christianity
- Canonical gospels

- **PD Dr. Philippe Hugo**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Hebrew Bible
- Greek Septuagint Bible

- **Prof. Philippe Lefebvre**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Bible
- Relationship between the Bible (Christianity) and culture, the Bible and literature, cinema

- **Prof. Thomas Schumacher**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Exegesis of the New Testament

- **Prof. Hans-Ulrich Steymans**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Exegesis of the Old Testament

**Patristics and Church History**

- **Prof. Mariano Delgado**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- History of the Church
- Church and society in Latin America
- Church and society in Europe in general, with a focus on Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Spain
- Dialogue between religions
- Religion and violence
- Religion and migration
- Multiculturalism
- Christianity/Church and politics

- **Adj.Prof. Gregor Emmenegger**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Patristics and the history of the Church

- **Prof. Paul-Bernard Hodel**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- History of the Church in the Middle Ages, modern and contemporary times

- **Prof. Franz Mali**

**Areas of specialisation:**

- Early Christianity
- History of Christianity in the East, particularly in the Middle East

**Faith and Religious Studies, Philosophy**
• Prof. Benoît-Dominique de La Soujeole
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Dogmatic theology

• Prof. Gilles Emery
  Areas of specialisation:
  – The question of God
  – The Trinity
  – Christ
  – Creation
  – The Christian vision of mankind
  – Life after death

• Prof. Barbara Hallensleben
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Ecumenical questions
  – Churches in the East
  – Theology and spirituality of Churches in the East
  – Questions on faith and the teachings of the Catholic Church
  – Questions concerning the promotion of research

• Prof. Veronika Hoffmann
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Dogmatic theology
  – German-language theological currents of the 20th century
  – The theological reception of Charles Taylor and Paul Ricoeur
  – The doctrine of salvation
  – Faith and religious indifference

• Prof. Joachim Negel
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Fundamental theology

• Adj.Prof. François-Xavier Putallaz
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Ethical, bioethical and societal issues

• Adj.Prof. Bernard Schumacher
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Ethical, bioethical and societal issues

• Prof. Helmut Zander
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Comparative history of religions and interreligious dialogue

Moral theology and ethics

• Prof. Daniel Bogner
  Areas of specialisation:
  – General moral theology and ethics

• Prof. Thierry Collaud
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Special moral theology and Christian social ethics

• Prof. Hansjörg Schmid
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Islam and society, interreligious ethics

• Prof. Michael Sherwin
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Spirituality
  – Moral development
  – Virtue ethics
  – The theology of charity
  – Philosophy and psychology of love

• Adj.Prof. Markus Zimmermann
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Foundation of Christian social ethics
  – Theological bioethics
  – Equal distribution of health
  – Decisions at the end of life
  – Ethics of palliative care
  – Work and social security
  – Migration and integration

Practical theology

• Prof. François-Xavier Amherdt
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Pastoral issues
  – Parishes and dioceses, religious education and catechism
  – Theology and humanities, particularly psychology and sociology
  – Public Relations

• Prof. Astrid Kaptijn
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Canon law

• Prof. Martin Klöckener
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Liturgy
  – Worship
  – Celebration of the Sacraments
  – Liturgical periods and celebrations, Church year
  – Rites
  – Prayer
  – Piety
  – Popular piety
  – Liturgical space, construction and furnishing of churches

• Prof. Salvatore Loiero
  Areas of specialisation:
  – Pastoral theology

Studies organisation

Structure of studies
No ECTS credits can be earned.

**Doctoral school**

**Admission**

In order to be admitted to a doctorate the candidate must have been awarded an academic **bachelor's and master's degree** or an equivalent qualification by a university recognised by the University of Fribourg.

Before applying for a doctorate the candidate must contact a **professor** who would be willing to supervise the thesis work.

There is **no general right** to be admitted to a doctorate.

*The respective conditions of admission for each doctoral study programme are reserved.*

**Contact**

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Theological Studies  
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[http://studies.unifr.ch/go/fr-theology](http://studies.unifr.ch/go/fr-theology) (French)  
[http://studies.unifr.ch/go/de-theology](http://studies.unifr.ch/go/de-theology) (German)

**Doc- Postdoc-portal**

[http://www.unifr.ch/phd](http://www.unifr.ch/phd)