English Language and Literature

Degree conferred
Philosophiae Doctor in Lingua et Litteris britannicis / Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature (PhD)

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

Regulation
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/dGLfK (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

Fribourg profile
The Department of English at the University of Fribourg welcomes doctoral research (PhD) in the following fields of study: English Philology, English Linguistics, English Literature, and American Literature.

English Philology
Philology, the study of medieval texts, is a distinct field of study at undergraduate and graduate levels within the Department of English. Graduate students in English Philology can benefit from the resources of Fribourg’s interdisciplinary Medieval Institute as well as close collaboration with medievalists at other Swiss and English universities. The Professor of Philology at Fribourg is Elisabeth Dutton, who specialises in early English drama and medieval English devotional compilations and women’s writing. She currently heads two major research projects on drama in different institutions: medieval Oxford colleges, and English and French medieval convents.

English Linguistics
English linguistics at Fribourg focuses on the analysis of the processes involved in the construction and interpretation of meaning in context. Another specificity of English linguistics lies in the emphasis set on empirical approaches to research. PhD students are invited to use different methodologies in their project, and in particular to evaluate the robustness of theoretical claims against empirical evidence. In that respect, PhD students will receive training in quantitative approaches, involving experimental methodologies and statistical analysis. Prof. Maillat is the director of the Swissuniversities doctoral programme Language and Cognition which offers regular intensive specialised courses on many aspects of doing linguistic research. The kind of topics that are typically covered include persuasion, figurative language, humour, deceptive communication, argumentation theory, linguistics of spatial language.

English Literature
Professor Indira Ghose specialises in the fields of early modern literature, with a focus on early modern drama, and literature of the British Empire. Her current research interests include humour and the comic, Renaissance courtesy literature, and the history of the emotions. She welcomes doctoral students with interests in any of these fields or related areas of study.

Professor Dimiter Daphinoff’s main research interests are in Shakespeare and his contemporaries, the eighteenth-century novel, especially the novels of Samuel Richardson, in the Gothic novel, in twentieth-century drama, and in the links between literature and terrorism. He welcomes PhD students with interests in any of these areas of research.

American Literature
American literature is an integral part of the English curriculum at all levels. Professor Thomas Austenfeld’s research in American Poetry, American Modernism, and regional American literatures – especially the South and the West – indicates his preferred areas for doctoral supervisions. Other fields in American studies may be explored in co-supervised dissertations with Professor Austenfeld’s colleagues in Germany, France, Sweden, Britain, Poland, and the North American continent.

Students who wish to pursue doctoral studies in English Language and Literature at the University of Fribourg are integrated into the Doctoral Programme in English Language and Literature organised by the Conférence Universitaire de Suisse Occidentale (CUSO). Regular workshops offer doctoral students an opportunity to engage with the work of internationally renowned experts, to interact with their peers at other Swiss universities, and to present their work-in-progress to an audience of scholars working in their field.

Professors who are eligible to supervise theses

English Philology
  • Prof. Elisabeth Dutton

Areas of specialisation:
  – Early English drama
  – Medieval English devotional compilations
  – Women’s writing

English Linguistics
  • Prof. Didier Maillat

Areas of specialisation:
  – Studies of meaning in use in English
  – Analysis of interpretative processes, and of inferential processes involved in meaning construction in particular
  – Experimental methodologies applied to pragmatic research (i.e. experimental pragmatics)
  – Various interfaces between pragmatics and other linguistic branches (e.g. second language acquisition, discourse analysis, argumentation theory)
  – Questions touching on the relation between language and cognition
Theses can be supervised in English, or French.

**English Literature**

- **Prof. Indira Ghose**

Areas of specialisation:
- Early modern drama
- Literature of the British Empire
- Humour and the comic
- Renaissance courtesy literature
- History of the emotions

- **Prof. Dimiter Daphinoff**

Areas of specialisation:
- Shakespeare and his contemporaries
- The eighteenth-century novel
- The Gothic novel
- Twentieth-century drama
- Links between literature and terrorism

**American Literature**

- **Prof. Thomas Austenfeld**

Areas of specialisation:
- American Poetry
- American Modernism
- Regional American literatures, especially the South and the West

**Studies organisation**

**Structure of studies**

No ECTS credits can be earned.

**Doctoral school**

[https://english.cuso.ch](https://english.cuso.ch)
[http://studies.unifr.ch/go/phd-language-and-cognition](http://studies.unifr.ch/go/phd-language-and-cognition)

**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 an 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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English Language and Literature  
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[Doc- Postdoc-portal](http://www.unifr.ch/phd)