Foreign Language Didactics

Degree conferred
Specialised Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

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

Languages of study
Study in two languages, in French and German

Commencement of studies
Commencement of studies in the Autumn Semester (September) or in the Spring Semester (February)

Access to further studies
Ph.D.

This Master’s programme, which is offered in cooperation with the Universities of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule [PH]/Haut Ecole Pédagogique [HEP]) of Fribourg and Bern, instructs students in the various approaches and methods used to teach foreign languages; analysis of such enables students to evaluate, develop and apply teaching and learning concepts for the various levels (elementary to secondary II). In addition to lectures, the programme also includes educational and practical language training.

Teaching in this Master's programme, which is only offered in Fribourg, is bilingual (German/French). In addition, the students choose a language to specialise in: German, French, English or Italian. If they wish, students can attend language courses at the university's language centre.

They also have access to the Research Centre on Multilingualism in Fribourg, where they can attend the regularly held public lectures and workshops held by international experts.

Profile of the study programme

The Master's Programme in Foreign Language Didactics at the University of Fribourg is offered in cooperation with the Universities of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule [PH]/Haut Ecole Pédagogique [HEP]) of Fribourg and Bern.

The Master's Programme in Foreign Language Didactics focusses on deepening theoretical and practical training in foreign language didactics. The course instructs students in the various approaches and methods used to teach foreign languages; analysis of such enables students to evaluate, develop and apply teaching and learning concepts for the various levels (elementary to secondary II). Languages pay a major role in this obligatory bilingual Master's degree. We differentiate between

- Languages of instruction: obligatory German and French – which means that lectures in both languages must be attended;
- Languages to specialise in: currently German, French, English and Italian.

A further language, in addition to German or French, can thus be chosen as the language to specialise in (currently English or Italian). The Master’s degree is trilingual, however, no official diploma is issued for this trilingual aspect.

The programme includes classes for language learning and teaching, for multilingual competence, for societal-conceptual factors of multilingualism, for multi-language didactics, for applied linguistics, general didactics and inter-culturality, as well as a training internship and a language internship. Optional courses make it possible to expand the spectrum of languages that are studied and to concentrate on certain areas.

Fribourg profile

The bilingual University of Fribourg is the only university in Switzerland to offer a Master's programme in foreign language didactics. The city's location on the language border makes it possible for students to gain insights both into the foreign language context of the French-speaking part of Switzerland as well as the German-speaking part.

Close contacts are maintained to both the course of study of German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language and the course of study of French as a Foreign Language/French as a Second Language, as well as with the Institute of Multilingualism at the University and the University of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule [PH]/Haut Ecole Pédagogique [HEP]) Fribourg, which was designated the Federation's Research Centre on Multilingualism. Here, students can attend the regularly held public lectures as well as the workshops with international experts that are offered in the fields of language learning, and teaching foreign languages, as well as individual and societal multilingualism.

In the Documentation Centre of the Research Centre on Multilingualism, which is affiliated with the foreign language library of the University, students will find a large number of pertinent publications and magazines as well as specialist advice to support autonomous learning.

Students who want to go further can attend courses in French, Italian, English and German at the University's Language Centre. The affiliated self-learning centre provides a rich choice of materials for learning further languages or for improving specific existing language competencies.

Learning outcomes and career openings

Graduates who have successfully completed the course of studies possess in-depth knowledge of the theories and research methods in the field of foreign language didactics and the reference sciences. Students are also able to apply this theoretical knowledge when developing and designing research models as well as in practical settings. They are aware of the requirements for modern foreign language instruction, and they can analyse and assess their
own and others’ language courses and develop suggestions for optimising teaching/learning arrangements.

Some of the professional fields open to persons with a Master's Degree in Foreign Language Didactics are shown below:

- Training future foreign language teachers, especially for universities of teacher education;
- Domestic and international language courses within adult education at universities and universities of applied sciences;
- Activities in connection with integration courses, exchange programmes, professional and in-house language support;
- Development work or work as intermediaries in government agencies, NGOs and publishers;
- After receiving a Master's degree, graduates can enrol in a doctoral programme, and go on to write a dissertation in the field of foreign language didactics.

Note: This Master's degree does not provide a direct path to teaching a foreign language in public schools in Switzerland, whether at the elementary school level or secondary levels I or II.

Organisation des études

Structure of studies
90 ECTS credits + 30 ECTS credits as an option in a minor study programme freely chosen or in a specialisation programme, 3-4 semesters

Curriculum
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/lCeda (French)
http://studies.unifr.ch/go/laFdG (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 within the corresponding discipline (requires the acquisition of minimum 60 ECTS credits at Bachelor level in the corresponding discipline) 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.

Holders of a Bachelor’s degree awarded from a Swiss university or 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, can be admitted to a Master's degree programme within another discipline with prerequisites (must be successfully completed before starting the Master's degree programme) or additional requirements (can be completed during the Master's degree programme). 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.