**Master of Science (MSc) in Biogeosciences**

**General Outline**

**Objectives**
The Master of Sciences in Biogeosciences is the result of the integration of two fields of natural sciences: biology and geology. It reflects the emergence of new fields of research in the many areas of contact between these two disciplines. Its main objective is to train students in new trans-thematic disciplines based on an integrated approach to both natural and anthropised environments.

**Skills development and career prospects**
University studies develop, in addition to specific academic skills, a great many transverse skills such as: oral and written communication, critical, analytical and summarising faculties, abilities in research, the learning and transmission of knowledge, independence and the ability to make judgements in the field of specialisation and overlapping areas.

This panoply of skills, combined with specialist knowledge acquired in the course of studies, is excellent preparation for a wide range of employment opportunities, notably in the following fields:

- Research and development in environmental sciences
- Federal and cantonal administrations
- Non governmental organisations
- Consulting firms
- Conservation and management of nature
- Conservation and management of soils
- Environmental health
- Natural materials industry
- Academic careers

**General Information**

Organisers
Faculty of Geosciences and Environment of the University of Lausanne
Faculty of Science of the University of Neuchâtel

Degree awarded
Master of Science (MSc) in Biogeosciences

ECTS credits
120

Duration
4 semesters

Teaching language
French, some courses in English. Recommended level: C1.

Enrolment
The candidate's application must be submitted to the Admissions Department before the final date: www.unil.ch/immat

Contact
Ms Marie-Christelle Pierlot
Faculté des GSE
Quartier UNIL - Mouline
Géopolis
CH – 1015 Lausanne
Tel. +41 (0)21 692 35 13
Fax +41 (0)21 692 35 05
Marie-Christelle.Pierlot@unil.ch

www.unil.ch/masters

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Subject to changes

Only the official texts are authentic.
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Description
The objective of this Master’s degree is to train high-level scientists in the field of integrated natural sciences or Biogeosciences. It aims, through training based on the most modern techniques, to provide the essential knowledge and tools necessary for the discovery, understanding and management of natural environments in perpetual evolution on scales that are variable in time and space.

The degree course is organised as five blocks: four teaching blocks and one research block. The teaching activity is divided into three parts: one third of ex-cathedra courses, one third of practical work, and one third of field internships. The four teaching blocks are composed as follows:

• Block A teaches the basic knowledge required in relation to the discipline originally studied by each student. If the student has a Bachelor’s degree in Biology, then the courses will focus on the complementary teaching of Geology, and vice versa for holders of a Bachelor degree in Geology.

• Block B teaches the analytical and technical basics of laboratory and field work, as well as the use of tools for spatial modelling and multivariate statistics.

• Block C provides the main training in Biogeosciences. After an introduction to the concepts relevant to Biogeosciences, the training focuses on the geobiosphere and ecosystems. This is followed by subjects related to surface biogeochemistry and the major elementary cycles, such as the carbon, phosphor or iron cycles. The evolution of organic matter is approached from the standpoint of both biological sciences (the role of fauna, flora and microflora) and geochemistry (the fate and monitoring of organic matter through isotope methods, for example). A module dedicated to the critical zone underlines the importance of the interfaces between living beings and minerals. Virtual campus sessions and free-choice courses complete this block.

• Block D offers a choice of one of two specialised teaching options: “Interactions Between Soil and Vegetation” or “Interactions in the Geobiosphere”.

Examinations
Subjects taught for the master’s degree are divided into two series. Series 1 consists of core courses and specialised courses in the chosen orientation. The detailed rules are set by the examination regulations. A pass is obtained if the student earns a total of 60 credits. Series 2 consists of the master’s degree work. The examinations and master’s degree work are successfully completed if the student obtains a mark of 4 or higher for each examination and the master’s degree work.

Mobility
Subject to the prior agreement of the mobility Commission, students enrolled on a Master’s cycle may study for one or two semesters in an institution recognised by UNIL or UNINE while continuing to be registered with the University of Lausanne.

SYLLABUS
1st–2nd semesters
Basic teaching courses
• Block A
6 ECTS credits
Common trunk core courses
• Block B (12 ECTS credits)
• Block C (30 ECTS credits)
42 ECTS credits
Specialised courses (free choice)
• Block D
12 ECTS credits
3rd–4th semesters
Block E: Research work (Master’s dissertation)
60 ECTS credits

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Admission requirements
Candidates must be holders of a Bachelor of Science in Geosciences and Environment, subject area Geology, awarded by the University of Lausanne or of a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Another degree or academic title may be judged equivalent and give access to the master’s degree course, with or without further conditions.

Other useful information
Web site of the Master of Science in Biogeosciences:
www.biogeosciences.ch
Web site of the Faculty of Geosciences and Environment:
www.unil.ch/gse
Final enrolment date
30 April
Candidates needing a visa to study in Switzerland: 28 February. This particular time limit is applicable to enrolment at the UNIL only.

Start of courses
Mid-September

Part-time Master’s degree
See Directive 3.12:
www.unil.ch/interne/page44629.html#3

Academic calendar
www.unil.ch/central/page4804.html

General information on studies, career prospects and guidance
Vocational Guidance and Careers Service:
www.unil.ch/soc

Accommodation and financial assistance
Office for Socio-Cultural Affairs:
www.unil.ch/sasc

International students
www.unil.ch/international

Study abroad opportunities
www.unil.ch/echanges