



Master of arts (MA) in political science

GENERAL OUTLINE

This course differs from traditional academic approaches to this subject and address politics in its various dimensions - local, national, international, economic, social, and civic - but without losing touch with the reality of the contemporary world. This practical approach helps to highlight the “multi-professional” and innovative dimension of the training offered. It is unusual in offering a programme of study that is both specialised and can be tailored to your interests, as well as using a range of innovative teaching formats.

Objectives

The Master's degree in Political Science is a cycle of training and specialisation aimed at the acquisition of analytical and research skills specific to a wide variety of professional fields. It allows to specialise in the areas of globalisation, political action, or international history.

Career prospects

University studies in political science develop a great many skills which are valuable and transferable when students enter the job market: analytical and summarising faculties, communication, critical thinking, abilities in research, project management and so on.

This skills, combined with specialist knowledge acquired in the course of studies, prepare for a wide range of employment opportunities such as:

- Public or private administrations
- Non governmental and international organisations, diplomacy
- Political parties, trade unions, lobbies, national and international think tanks
- Journalism, media, public relations, communication, advertising
- Research and teaching at universities or universities of applied sciences
- Market research and survey institutes, consulting firms.
- Banks, insurance companies, industry (human resources, marketing, analysis, etc.)
- Others: associations and cultural or social institutions, smaller associations, companies, SMEs, etc.

Alumni move into a wide variety of roles, for example as project manager, communications officer, information officer at a federation or in a public institution, or trade union secretary.

Other positions and alumni testimonials:
unil.ch/perspectives/unil-et-apres

Is power
always where we
expect it to be?

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organiser

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences:
www.unil.ch/spp

Degree awarded

Master of Arts (MA) in Political Science

ECTS credits

120

Duration

4 semesters

Teaching language

French. Recommended level: C1.

Study advisor

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More information

www.unil.ch/spp/master > Science politique

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Description

The training benefits from the resources of the Institute of Political Studies (IPS) and its various research groups. IPS is currently, for the number of its teachers/researchers, one of Switzerland's foremost centres of research and teaching in political studies. It is characterised by its openness to interdisciplinarity between its members and other collaborations within UNIL (sociology, history, gender studies, etc.), as well as with other institutions in Switzerland (DHEAP, UNIFR) and abroad.

The syllabus for the Master of Arts in Political Science comprises three parts. This allows you to combine a specialist course with creating a syllabus that reflects your particular interests.

The core curriculum

The core curriculum is aimed at the acquisition of skills oriented towards the conducting of an analysis in political studies, which will then be tested and applied in practice in the context of the Master's thesis. It gives a common basis of training for research and awareness of the problems of contemporary politics.

The specific orientations

Your area of specialisation is determined by which of the three orientations you choose. Each comprises a series of specific classes that together create a specialist course combined with optional classes, which can be tailored to the interests and objectives of each student.

Globalisation

This orientation is designed for students who wish to work in a wide range of public and private organisations whose role requires them to meet the challenges of globalisation. It offers the students an opportunity, which is unique in the French-speaking world, to extend their expertise in global economics. This field of study of international relations establishes links between national and transnational aspects and is focused on the analysis of power relations between the worlds of politics and the economy. The fields covered include, in particular, development, the environment, migration, gender, labour, trade and finance.

Political action: from local to global

From protests against the concentration of power and wealth to global strikes for women and the climate, there is an increasing level of mobilisation at the crossover between the local and the transnational, in both democratic and authoritarian contexts. The “Political action: from local to global” orientation offers a unique opportunity in the French-speaking world to acquire a deeper understanding of these phenomena from a range of perspectives, including public action, interest groups and elites, social movements and revolutions. This orientation is based on the fact that a significant number of political science students move into

professions requiring solid skills in these areas after their studies.

The courses offered in this orientation explore how activists contribute to defining and resolving social problems through varied forms of participation and modes of action.

International history

This orientation focuses on the major questions of contemporary international history and aims to demonstrate the process of historical construction in the collective memory and the power relationships that underpin contemporary political, social, economic or cultural issues. It tackles a variety of themes, such as colonial and post-colonial issues, Swiss and international elites, fascism, media coverage of conflicts, social mobilisation, the capitalist system and the production of inequalities. Students are encouraged to analyse various types of source material such as archive documents, images and audiovisual documents, oral sources and press articles. Ultimately, this orientation allows students to acquire skills to gain a better understanding and analyse the development of contemporary societies and the challenges they face, which are valuable skills in numerous professional areas.

The orientation includes an “optional” module consisting of an internship, exchange or optional classes. In addition to the classes specific to each orientation, this module offers a wide range of options. It can include a credited internship in a professional environment or you can choose to study part of your course during an exchange with a Swiss or foreign partner university, or take optional classes in another field, another faculty or another Swiss university.

The Master's thesis

The thesis is the final part of the specialist programme and involves a piece of personal research that combines a mastery of theoretical elements and their application to specific empirical contexts, under the close supervision of a member of teaching staff chosen by the student.

SYLLABUS

Core curriculum - 27 ECTS credits

Orientations - 63 ECTS credits

- Specific subjects
33 ECTS credits
- Mobility, internship or optional courses
30 ECTS credits

Research work, Dissertation

30 ECTS credits

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Admission requirements

The candidate must hold a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science awarded by a Swiss university. The holders of Bachelor's degrees in Political Science awarded by other universities as well as the holders of Bachelor's degrees in other social science disciplines may be admitted on the basis of their personal case file. Holders of a Bachelor's degree in Social Science with a minor in Political Science awarded by the UNIL are admitted unconditionally to the Master of Arts in Political Science.

Another degree or academic title may be judged equivalent and give access to the Master's degree in Political Science, with or without conditions.

Enrolment and final dates

It is possible to start the programme of the Master of Arts in Political Science degree in the autumn or spring semester. Applications to be submitted before the deadline to the Admissions Office:
www.unil.ch/immat
Autumn semester: 30 April
Spring semester: 30 November
Candidates needing a visa to study in Switzerland must apply for enrolment at least two months prior to these deadlines.

Start of courses

Autumn semester: mid-September
Spring semester: mid-February
Academic calendar: www.unil.ch/central/calendar

Part-time Master's degree

Under certain conditions, a Master programme can be followed part-time.
www.unil.ch/formations/master-temps-partiel

General information on studies, guidance

www.unil.ch/soc

Accommodation and financial assistance

www.unil.ch/sasme

International

www.unil.ch/international