



Is power  
always where we  
expect it to be?

## 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, professions in politics, or international policy and 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: smaller associations, companies, SMEs, etc.

Alumni move into a wide variety of roles, for example as a head of the press and media service at a festival, information officer at a federation or in a public institution, or trade union secretary.

Other positions and alumni testimonials:  
[www.unil.ch/perspectives/sciencepolitique](http://www.unil.ch/perspectives/sciencepolitique)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Organiser

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences:  
[www.unil.ch/ssp](http://www.unil.ch/ssp)

#### 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/ssp/master](http://www.unil.ch/ssp/master) > Science politique



## EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

### Description

The training benefits from the resources of the Institute of Political and International Studies (IEPHI) and its various research groups. IEPHI is currently, for the number of its teachers/researchers, one of Switzerland's foremost centres of research and teaching in Political Science. It is characterised by its open-minded interdisciplinary approach based on collaboration within the UNIL (sociology, history, gender studies, etc.), as well as with other institutions in Switzerland (IDHEAP, UNIFR) and abroad. The study plan of the Master of Arts in Political Science degree consists of four parts:

#### The common trunk

The common trunk is aimed at the acquisition of skills oriented towards the conducting of a political analysis, 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 a mastery of specific methods associated with that training.

#### The specific orientations

You choose one of the three orientations that constitutes the main specialisation of your degree course. Each orientation is composed of a set of specific courses plus a set of free-choice courses, study mobility or an internship.

The set of specific courses forms the core of the orientation, whilst the free-choice set is dedicated to deepening skills specific to that orientation and offers, in particular, the opportunity to do an internship in a professional environment. It is also possible to study for a semester, under a mobility arrangement, at a partner university abroad or in Switzerland. Lastly, you can follow free-choice courses at the Master level. The free-choice set allows you to pursue your professional education, to take advantage of study mobility options and to specialise according to your preferences.

#### 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 Francophone 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.

#### Professions in Politics

This orientation is based on the observation that an increasing number of political science students at the end of their education enter professions that have a strong political dimension and/or require solid expertise in that field. The professional contexts involved are extremely diverse: the secretariat of a political party or

a special-interest group; the headquarters of a union organisation or an association; the organisation of a social movement; participation in the NGO sector and in humanitarian work; or providing support services for parliamentary work.

This option of the Master's degree therefore aims to meet a specific training need by developing theoretical and practical knowledge of how to cope reflexively with professional worlds that are largely structured by the logic of collective action, or direct engagement in the life of associations, or even local, national or international political institutions.

#### Politics and International History

This orientation focuses on the major issues of contemporary international history. It strives to decipher the historical processes and mechanisms of collective memory building in order to better understand contemporary political, social, economic or cultural challenges. The historical topics covered through the analysis of various types of documentation (archive documents, TV/radio broadcasts, interviews with witnesses of the events, and press articles), include colonial and postcolonial realities, European and US corporations, globalisation, media and film, the World Wars and the Cold War.

#### The Master's thesis

The objective of the Master's thesis is to give you an opportunity to complete a sizeable personal work assignment, combining a mastery of the theoretical elements with their application to particular empirical contexts, under the close supervision of a teacher.

## SYLLABUS

### Core curriculum - 33 ECTS credits

#### Orientations - 57 ECTS credits

- Specific subjects  
27 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](http://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](http://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/tempspartiel](http://www.unil.ch/formations/tempspartiel).

### General information on studies, guidance

[www.unil.ch/soc](http://www.unil.ch/soc)

### Career prospects

[www.unil.ch/perspectives](http://www.unil.ch/perspectives)

### Accommodation and financial assistance

[www.unil.ch/sasme](http://www.unil.ch/sasme)

### International

[www.unil.ch/international](http://www.unil.ch/international)



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