

Master's in Social Science

● Overview

The Master's in Social Science (MA ScS) at Neuchâtel offers an interdisciplinary training program that is unique in Switzerland, addressing current issues in society and equipping students with the tools to understand their complexity. The courses adopt creative and critical perspectives to shed light on public debates. By enrolling in the MA ScS, you will benefit from personalized supervision, innovative pedagogy and participative teaching about contemporary problems.

The MA ScS is organized around a variety of themes, approached in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. Our courses focus on the following issues: migration and mobility; social innovation; digitization, big data and society; sustainable consumption and lifestyles; utopias and imagination; and the technologies of bureaucratization.

● Structure of the degree: a choice of major focus (pillar)

The Master's in Social Science (90 or 120 ECTS credits) is made up of:

- an interdisciplinary core curriculum
- a main focus, to be chosen from among five disciplines (anthropology, human geography, migration and citizenship, psychology and education, sociology)

● The interdisciplinary core curriculum

Themes

The interdisciplinary core curriculum comprises four types of seminars:

- methods seminars (qualitative or quantitative), providing training in the tools of social analysis
- seminars given by a single lecturer and focused on current themes
- interdisciplinary seminars co-taught by teachers from the different disciplinary focuses within the MA ScS
- "Constructing Tomorrows" workshops, involving the co-construction of knowledge with students and, where appropriate, people and organizations from outside the University.

Objectives

The core curriculum provides the knowledge and skills needed to apply an interdisciplinary, critical and reflexive approach to social problems.

A unique offer

This degree program is uniquely designed to provide crucial tools for understanding contemporary challenges and developing innovative responses, skills that will be invaluable for your future professional activities..



Degree Awarded

Master of Arts in Social Science

Credits

90 to 120 ECTS, 3 to 4 semesters

Languages of instruction

French and English

Conditions for admission

Holders of a Bachelor's degree in the humanities and social sciences from the University of Neuchâtel or in a degree program deemed equivalent by the faculty are admitted unconditionally to a major or minor "pillar" of the MA ScS, provided they have acquired 60 ECTS in the corresponding branch of study. Holders of a Bachelor's degree obtained abroad as well as holders of a Bachelor's degree obtained in any other course of study than the major or minor pillar of the chosen Master's degree may also be admitted. The faculty may ask them to complete additional coursework.

Registration deadline

For the start of the autumn term (mid-September):
August 1 for students from the University of Neuchâtel
April 30 for students from other universities
For the start of the spring term (February): November 30

Immatriculation

Bureau des immatriculations
Av. du 1^{er}-Mars 26, CH-2000 Neuchâtel
+41 32 718 10 00
www.unine.ch/immatriculation

Contact and information

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Studies advisor

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• Anthropology

Orientations

- Political anthropology of agricultural and the environment
- Migration, international aid and development in postcolonial societies
- Socio-anthropology of art, culture and heritage.

Objectives

The anthropology focus (“pillar”) trains you to analyze major contemporary issues from an empirical and ethnographic perspective. You will gain:

- an aptitude for critical distance, long-term inquiry and reflexivity
- close contacts with on-going research and with the activities of the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum
- an introduction to the discipline’s numerous applications.

Specific to Neuchâtel

The 120-credit pillar offers you three professionalizing specializations unique in Switzerland:

- “Cultural professions”: training in ethnographic film and exhibitions
- “Social and environmental action”: includes an internship or a mandate with an NGOs or a government administration
- “Intensive fieldwork”: advanced training in field methods and practice.

• Human geography

Orientations

The general theme of this pillar is the geography of major contemporary issues. It trains you to analyze the key issues facing societies today (digitization, urbanization, migration and climate change) with a possible specialization in “Climate Change and Societies”.

Objectives

The “Human Geography” focus will provide you with:

- the ability to critically analyze the geographical aspects of the major trends in the transformation of contemporary societies
- the means to develop relevant and innovative solutions to major societal problems such as security, urbanization, migration and climate change
- advanced skills in the qualitative and quantitative methods required for your future professional activities
- an option to specialize in “Climate Change and Societies”, with a choice of specific courses and the focus of your dissertation

Specific to Neuchâtel

The teaching team has a particular interest in highly topical issues, and frequently intervenes in public debate (press, audiovisual media, etc.). It is also very active in cutting-edge research.

• Migration and citizenship

Orientations

This focus takes an interdisciplinary approach to two key issues of modern society: the mobility of people and the socio-economic and political integration of societies. These issues are intrinsically linked to the future organization of nation-states and their interconnections with transnational phenomena involving people, economics, law and politics.

Objectives

The pillar enables students to refine and broaden their Bachelor’s training through interdisciplinarity on the one hand and, on the other, a specialization in migration studies (theories and practices of citizenship, mobility, migration policies and transnationalism). Current issues related to debates on migration are systematically covered in seminars. The pillar also enables students to acquire in-depth skills in quantitative and/or qualitative methods, as well as versatility for future professional activities.

Specific to Neuchâtel

Neuchâtel is the only university in Switzerland to offer a degree course in “Migration and Citizenship”. With the National Center of Competence in Research (“NCCR on the move”), the University of Neuchâtel has strengthened its research role in Switzerland, and can offer cutting-edge career possibilities.

• Psychology and education

Orientations

The “Psychology and Education” pillar focuses on the sociocultural psychology of development to study such objects as life trajectories, learning, reasoning, memory, imagination, interactions in training or at work, or institutional arrangements.

Objectives

The pillar enables you to:

- acquire fundamental, advanced and current knowledge in the field
- develop analytical and argumentative skills by participating in collective reflection with peers and experts
- master the tools of research and intervention, accompanied by epistemological and ethical reflection
- define a unique project that matches your interests for the MA thesis.

Specific to Neuchâtel

This pillar offers a training program in sociocultural and interdisciplinary psychology that is unique in Europe, reflecting cutting-edge research at the Institute of Psychology and Education.

• Sociology

Orientations

This pillar deepens theoretical knowledge in sociology by applying it to the major issues of the contemporary world. It deals with socio-economic transformations from different angles: economic sociology (markets, consumption, work); inequalities; sustainability; and processes of political and social contestation. A “digital societies” specialization focuses on the study of the effects of digital technologies on societies.

Objectives

The “sociology” pillar provides you with:

- the ability to identify and problematize major questions and issues challenging societies today
- mastery of a variety of conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches
- acquisition of the independent project-management skills required for positions of responsibility in various sectors of activity

Specific to Neuchâtel

Sociology at the University of Neuchâtel distinguished itself by its empirical orientation, its focus on economic sociology, inequalities and the digital environment, and the pedagogical engagement of its teaching staff.

• Career opportunities

A recent survey of alumni shows that our students easily are integrated into the job market. In addition to acquiring fundamental theoretical knowledge, they learn flexibility and develop such important cross-disciplinary skills as analytical capacity, critical thinking, reflexivity, investigative work, and the monitoring and evaluation of various forms of socio-technical intervention. In addition, all the pillars offered within the Master’s program grant access to doctoral programs.