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unine
UNIVERSITÉ DE NEUCHÂTEL

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Master of Arts in Public Opinion and Survey Methodology (MA POSM)

An innovative and practical programme

Surveys and public opinion polls have grown in importance in recent years in social, consumer, political and policy research, and their value is increasing as researchers explore their potential to provide insights in combination with big data sources. In the digital age, methods of data collection as well as techniques and tools for the analysis and interpretation of data have become fundamental skills for social and political science graduates. There is a recognised need for professionals who are able to combine a strong theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge of survey research, with the ability to manage, analyse and visualise data, and the skills to apply all this to complex research challenges.

This interdisciplinary practical programme, the fruit of collaboration between the Faculty of the University of Neuchâtel, the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences of the University of Lausanne, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Lucerne, is characterized by its multilingualism and multidisciplinarity, with the emphasis on both academic and practical aspects. The course takes place on three university sites, requiring students to attend various locations.

Acquired skills and objectives

This Master's programme is intended to teach students how to produce a survey independently, from design to data processing. Alongside, students will learn how to perform statistical analyses of data using a variety of methods and how to visualise the results. These practical skills are combined with a theoretical background in the social and psychological processes underpinning public opinion formation and expression, and social and consumer behaviour.

Students gain methodological insight and knowledge and develop theoretical skills that allow them to understand how chosen methods and research questions can affect results.

The course also develops a large number of cross-disciplinary skills such as: discernment, analytical and summarising skills, research experience, and so on. This range of skills, combined with specialist knowledge acquired during their studies, prepares students for professional careers in very varied sectors of activity.

Degree awarded
Master of Arts in Public Opinion and Survey Methodology

Credits
90 ECTS credits, 3 semesters

Teaching languages
Mainly English for the compulsory courses, and the languages of the three partner universities (optional).
Recommended level: C1.

Admission conditions
Candidates must hold a Swiss Bachelor's degree in one of the following fields: Sociology, Political Science, Media and Communication, Sciences, Psychology, Political Economy and Finance. They must have a basic knowledge of statistics and quantitative methods. Another degree or university qualification may be deemed equivalent, allowing access to the MA program with additional requirements.

Application deadline
April 30 for the autumn semester (mid-September)
Start date: Autumn Semester

Registration
Bureau des immatriculations
Av. du 1er-Mars 26
CH-2000 Neuchâtel
www.unine.ch/immatriculation

Information
Institute of Statistics
Phone: +41 32 718 13 80
www.unine.ch/mscosr

Joint programme:

UNIVERSITÄT LUZERN

UNIL | Université de Lausanne

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July 2018

Programme structure

The Master of Arts comprises 90 ECTS credits and is composed of three parts:

- a common programme of compulsory courses
- elective courses
- Master's thesis (which may or may not be related to an internship).

The common programme is split into three modules. Module 1, "Theoretical foundations of SRM and of opinion formation", provides a deep understanding of the definitions and theories underlying the concepts of public opinion and social, political and consumer behaviour. Module 2, "Survey research methodology", covers the various tools and techniques required to organize a survey, with respect to both quantitative and qualitative methods. Module 3, "Analysing and presenting survey data", focuses on the analysis of survey data and the visualization of results. It also provides an introduction to advanced methods of statistical analysis and programming in R.

Career

Jobs open to graduates of this programme include non-governmental and international organizations, public statistics institution, and private and public organizations providing polling, data collection and analysis (social and market research and advertising), federal and cantonal public administration. This Master's programme also paves the way to careers in journalism, media, public relations and communication, as well as in scientific research and teaching at a university or a Swiss haute école.

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Master program

Compulsory courses (first three semesters)

Module 1: Theoretical foundations of survey methodology and opinion formation
- Designing and planning social science research
- Social processes and social structures
- Social psychology of opinion formation
- Researching lifestyles, consumption, and beliefs in the digital era

Module 2: Survey research methodology
- Survey research methods
- Data production, quality and equivalence
- Introduction to survey statistics
- Questionnaire design

Module 3: Analysing and presenting survey data
- Statistical analysis for survey research
- Introduction to data management and statistical software
- Geometric and visual data analysis
- Exploratory techniques, data visualization and data presentation

Master's thesis or internship with report (30 ECTS credits)

Elective courses
To be chosen from courses offered by partner faculties.

For further information
www.unine.ch/mscosr/