



Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights

2013-2014

"The MCR professors, staff and classmates have added a new dimension to my thinking about how we can positively impact the lives of children throughout the world. The synergy of the brainpower in our classroom is electrifying."

Sherry Sacino, CEO, Youth Empowerment Alliance Inc., USA

Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights

INTRODUCTION

The *Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights* (MCR) is an interdisciplinary and international postgraduate programme in children's rights which attracts a diverse range of advanced students from all over the world. The 2013-2014 cycle of this two-year programme starts on 4 February 2013. The deadline for applications is 30 September 2012.

The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has had an enormous impact on States, institutions, national legislation and practice. Increasingly, administrative, judicial and political decisions are taken as a direct or indirect consequence of the implementation of the Convention. The MCR provides students with the in-depth knowledge of the Convention that is required by practitioners currently working in the area of children's rights.

OBJECTIVES

The Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights is a part-time two-year postgraduate programme that combines residential teaching and distance learning. The overall objectives of the MCR are:

- To provide participants with opportunities to acquire extended and specialised knowledge in children's rights in their theoretical as well as in their practical dimensions through the introduction of different concepts and approaches;
- To deepen understandings of the role of international instruments on children's rights in the implementation and monitoring of children's rights, with a particular focus on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- To privilege both an international and an interdisciplinary approach to the study of children's rights;
- To promote critical thinking concerning the effective practical application of the concepts and principles underlying the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

PARTICIPANTS

The programme is designed for professionals who work with children's rights issues including: lawyers, psychologists, sociologists, judges, law enforcement officers, social workers, teachers, government officials, staff from non-governmental organisations, academics and journalists. The participation of students with different backgrounds and levels of professional experience in an interactive learning environment helps to foster exchanges on theoretical and practical problems. Programme alumni hold positions in national and international governmental and non-governmental organisations such as OHCHR, ILO, HCR, UNICEF, ICRC, Human Rights Watch, Save the Children, BICE, national and regional administrations and academic institutions.

ORGANIZATION

Partners

The Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights is jointly organised by:

- The University of Fribourg, Switzerland, represented by its Law Faculty and the Institute for Family Research and Counselling, and
- The Institut Universitaire Kurt Bösch (IUKB), in association with the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE), both in Sion, Switzerland.

An expert committee made up of professors and academic staff affiliated with the partner institutions ensures the quality of the scientific direction and the administration of the programme.

STUDY PROGRAMME

Overview

The programme takes place over a two-year period and requires participants to attend seven week-long residential Modules. In addition to the residential Modules and the completion of exercises and examinations based on the required course reading materials, students are expected to devise an Individual Training Programme (ITP) which consists of the completion of a research paper (Master's thesis), the preparation of a report on conferences or meetings attended and a report (optional) on an internship.

Residential Modules

The programme comprises seven compulsory week-long residential Modules over a two- year period. Each Module of the MCR addresses a specific theme and is held either at the IUKB in Sion or at the University of Fribourg. Students are invited to play an active role during the Modules, which make use of different working methods including lectures, group discussions, field visits, poster sessions and round table discussions. During the Modules, students also have time to prepare and work on their Individual Training Programme (ITP) and meet with their tutors.

A Residential Module typically runs as follows:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	Lecture	Lecture	Fare of ideas	Praxis Groups
Examination	Lecture	Workshop	Lecture	Lecture
Introduction to the module	Group discussion	Lecture	Round Table discussion	Lecture
Lecture	ITP – Meeting with tutors	Project work	Lecture	Preparation for the next Module

Module schedule 2013–2014

- **Module 1 Children's rights in context**
4 – 8 February 2013, University of Fribourg

- **Module 2 Childhood studies and Childhood research methodology**
13 – 17 May 2013, IUKB Sion

- **Module 3 Children's rights and international law**
23 – 27 September 2013, University of Fribourg

- **Module 4 Child labour and education**
2 –6 December 2013, IUKB Sion

- **Module 5 Children in contact with the law**
3 – 7 March 2014, IUKB Sion

- **Module 6 Children's rights in the context of health and in relation to migration**
2 – 6 June 2014, University of Fribourg

- **Module 7 Implementation and monitoring strategies**
24 – 28 November 2014, IUKB Sion

Work related to the modules

In order to encourage critical reading and analysis of the scientific and professional literature on children's rights, students receive a comprehensive set of MCR Readers containing articles published by the lecturers as well as other relevant material. At the end of each module, particular tasks are assigned; these are related to one or more of the topics to be discussed during the following module. Students are also required to work in small groups composed of participants from different disciplinary and geographical backgrounds in order to carry out an assignment that is developed over several modules. Group work can take a variety of forms, e.g. responding to a request for research from external partners including different international organisations and NGOs, or contributing to a conference on children's rights.

Individual training programme (ITP)

The individual Training Programme (ITP) consists of two compulsory and one optional tasks: 1. Participation at an external seminar and/or conference and the presentation of an analytical report (compulsory); 2. The MCR Thesis, a piece of original research work on a particular topic in children's rights (compulsory) which is supervised by a tutor; 3. The completion of a two week internship and the submission of a report detailing the insights gained from the internship (optional).

ECTS Credits

The programme is held over a period of two years and consists of 1,500 training hours, the equivalent of 60 ECTS credits (European Credit Transfer System), whereby 25 hours of student work-load count for 1 ECTS Credit.

LANGUAGE

The language of instruction and discussion during the modules is English. Languages accepted for writing exercises include English, French and German.

TEACHING STAFF

Lectures are given by international experts in the field of children's rights from the academic world, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental institutions. The participation of these prominent academics and highly skilled field experts with various types of expertise and from different countries ensures that a diversity of disciplinary and cultural viewpoints on children's rights issues is presented.

ADMISSION AND SELECTION

Admission requirements

Applicants are required to hold a **university degree** (or equivalent), and are expected to have at least **two years of professional experience** relevant to the programme. Applicants must have a **very good working knowledge of English** in order to participate actively in the modules.

Selection and admission procedure

Applications using the MCR application form (www.iukb.ch/mcr) have to be submitted before **30 September 2012** and should include:

- a letter of motivation;
- copies of degrees and diplomas;
- a curriculum vitae that includes career details and work experience in children's rights;
- two reference letters from people in a position to judge the applicant's professional and/or academic abilities.

The MCR Scientific Committee will examine applications. If necessary, they may seek additional information from the referees or invite the candidate for an interview. All candidates shall be notified of the decision regarding their acceptance to the MCR before 31 October 2012.

Auditors

A limited number of auditors will be allowed to attend one or several individual module(s) of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights. Auditors pay a fee of CHF 2000 (approximately 1,665 EUR / 2,100 USD) per module and receive a certificate of attendance for the (specified) module(s).

ASSESSMENT

Students are assessed at various points throughout the programme based on several criteria:

- Presence and active participation in the modules;
- Examinations and other periodic written assessment tasks;
- Satisfactory completion of homework between the modules;
- Assessment of the individual training programme (Master's thesis, conference reports, internship report);
- Presentation of the thesis.

CERTIFICATION

At the end of the programme, participants who have met all of the requirements for completion of the academic programme receive a degree that is jointly conferred by the Law Faculty of the University of Fribourg and by the IUKB. The degree awarded is the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights.

FEES

Registration fee

CHF 150 (approximately 125 EUR / 160 USD)

Tuition fee

The total tuition fee for the two-year programme is CHF 14,400 (approximately 12,000 EUR / 15,150 USD). This sum is composed of a CHF 2,400 registration fee (CHF 600 per semester) and CHF 12,000 in tuition for the MCR Programme and does not include travel or living expenses.

Cancellation

Cancellations prior to the sixth module will be charged (cancellation costs between 15% and 25% of the total tuition fee + auditor's fee per module attended).

Insurance

Prior to final enrolment, students accepted for the programme are required to provide proof that they are covered for accident and health insurance in Switzerland.

Fellowships

Applicants are responsible for securing their own funding to participate in the MCR. No programme-related fellowships are available.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

"As the director of an NGO that focuses on the rights of children, I have found the course extremely relevant and helpful for my work. It has challenged my own perceptions of children and childhood and has grounded me with a good working knowledge of the CRC. The interdisciplinary approach of the program has broadened my perspective immensely."

James Jolley, Director of Child Rights Advocacy, Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI), Geneva, Switzerland

"This stimulating course really pushed me to link my practical work with the theory that I got access to through the course."

Lucienne Maas, Programme Director, Save the Children, Sanaa, Yemen

"The MCR was an excellent opportunity to broaden my own understanding of children's rights, especially within an international context, while simultaneously creating friendships with other like-minded professionals from all over the world. The privilege of being in an academic setting amongst professionals with expertise in their individual fields created a stimulating environment to reflect upon and learn about pertinent issues in children's rights. I looked forward to each module and consider myself privileged to study at this stage of my career. I would recommend the MCR programme to anyone who is wanting to solidify their knowledge base, challenge themselves and meet an interesting group of people."

Kelley Bunkers, Children's rights consultant, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

"It is an extremely useful programme for professionals interested in children's and human rights. The theoretical knowledge gained is sure to enhance the practical work of the participants."

Deepak Paj Sapkota, Country Director, Karuna Foundation, Nepal



INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE KURT BÖSCH (IUKB)

Located in the heart of the Swiss Alps, in Sion, the Institut Universitaire Kurt Bösch (IUKB) develops an inter- and transdisciplinary approach in academic teaching and research. The Institute concentrates its academic teaching programmes and research activities on two main fields of study, Children's rights and Tourism (www.iukb.ch). The mandate of the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE), that has a comprehensive partnership agreement with IUKB, includes offering information and training programmes on child rights implementation in specific countries and on particular issues (www.childsrights.org).



UNIVERSITY OF FRIBOURG

The Law Faculty of Fribourg is well-known for the quality of its teaching, its bilingualism (French and German), its international character and its numerous teaching and research specialities. It was founded in 1762 as a School of Law and became a Law Faculty by the foundation of the University of Fribourg in 1889 (www.unifr.ch/droit). The aim of the Institute for Family Research and Counselling at the University of Fribourg is to create an interdisciplinary forum in the field of family-related issues, as well as to promote postgraduate programmes, research and counselling in this area (www.unifr.ch/iff).

CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

For further information on the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (MCR), please see the information provided on the web site www.iukb.ch/mcr, or contact:

INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE KURT BÖSCH

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