

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK  
**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom  
**Band:** - (1948)  
**Heft:** 1084  
  
**Artikel:** Switzerland's universities  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-687425>

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## SWITZERLAND'S UNIVERSITIES.

Most nations are increasingly aware that education is perhaps the most vital key to world peace and progress. This realization has long been translated into action by the Swiss. Their enthusiastic support of schools and universities has paid handsome dividends, for Switzerland to-day has no illiteracy.

There are nine institutions or university standing in the alpine democracy. Seven are supported by the individual cantons or states in which they are located. Three are in the German-speaking part of the country, in Basle, Berne and Zurich. Three are in French-speaking Switzerland, in Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchâtel. The Catholic university of Fribourg is situated on the linguistic border. St. Gall has its Swiss school of Economics and Public Administration, subsidized by grants from the Federal Government, the Canton and City. Finally, there is the world famous Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, supported by the Federal Government to the amount of almost a million dollars a year. Add to this figure almost five million dollars spent in the last ten years for alterations and equipment, and you can see that the Swiss, a thrifty people, feel that education is a good investment.

As a rule the universities are organized in five faculties: philosophy (with history and philology), science (mathematics, biology, chemistry, geology), jurisprudence (law, sociology, political economy), medicine and theology. There are departments of pedagogy at Fribourg and Geneva, special commercial science departments at Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchâtel. A School of Architecture and a School of Engineering are attached to the University of Lausanne.

All these institutions enjoy complete academic freedom. The students, too, who come to these Universities from far corners of the globe, are free to choose their courses and lectures. Some faculties draw up plans for study, but these are merely advisory.

Most of the Swiss university teachers belong to the National Union of Swiss University Teachers, a member of the International Association of University Professors and Lecturers. The local student unions together form the League of Swiss Student Unions, with headquarters in Zurich. All universities, except Fribourg, are co-educational.

**UNIVERSITY OF BASEL.** The University of Basle, founded by Pope Pius II in 1460, is the oldest in the country. In the ancient building on the left bank of the swift flowing Rhine, world famous scholars taught, including Paracelsus, Nietzsche, Jakob Burckhardt and many others. The University of Basle had many ups and downs during its five century career. Its very existence was threatened during the Reformation, the Burgundian Wars and French Revolution, and especially in 1833 when the city of Basle separated from the rural districts. To-day, in new and beautifully equipped buildings and lecture rooms on the Petersplatz, the university is in its heyday.

There are five faculties at the University of Basle: theology, jurisprudence, medicine (including dentistry), philosophy I (including economics), and philosophy II. Teaching is conducted by 216 professors and lecturers, and the number of students is approximately 2,300.

**UNIVERSITY OF BERNE.** In the picturesque Swiss capital of Berne, the university, with 218 professors

and lecturers and 2,500 students, is one of the largest in Switzerland. It traces its history back to 1528, when it began as a school of theology. At the beginning of the 18th century, it was enlarged into an academy, and graduated in 1834 to university status.

Its seven faculties include Protestant theology, Old Catholic theology, jurisprudence, medicine (with dentistry), veterinary science, philosophy I (philology, languages, history, art, music), philosophy II (mathematics, science). The school of pedagogy trains secondary school teachers. Most lectures are held in German, but there are also courses in English, French and Italian.

**UNIVERSITY OF FRIBOURG.** The bilingual University of Fribourg began humbly in the 18th century, when the Jesuits teaching at St. Michael's College, introduced lectures in theology and law. A school of law

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was developed, and in 1889, the University was founded as a cantonal institution largely through the efforts of Georges Python, State Councillor of Fribourg. Faculties of theology and science were added to those of law and philosophy. In 1941, the University of Fribourg moved into new buildings that are as modern as its courses. There are magnificent sports grounds, a gymnasium, a fencing-hall and stadium.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA.** In 1559, Calvin founded the Schola Genevensis, which he intended to be a seminary for theology and pedagogy. This character was retained until the 17th century, even though chairs of jurisprudence and philosophy were added. By the end of the 18th century, three new departments were added: mathematics, physics and astronomy. With the addition of a medical faculty in 1892, the Geneva Academy was declared a university. A few years later the number of faculties was increased to seven by the addition of sociology and commercial science.

Perhaps the most unusual course now offered is the School of Interpreters, which was created in 1941 and has enjoyed great success. About 220 professors and lecturers compose the University of Geneva's teaching staff, while the average number of students in recent years has been 1,900.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LAUSANNE.** Also on the shores of Lake Geneva, with Mont Blanc and the Dents du Midi crowning the horizon, is the University of Lausanne. In 1537, a school for the clergy was founded at Lausanne, at that time the cultural and economic centre of the country. This school developed into the Lausanne Academy, which with the addition of a medical faculty in 1890, became a University.

To-day, the University of Lausanne has five faculties: Protestant theology, law, medicine, letters and sciences, as well as an Institute of Technology. In addition to the usual degrees, the Faculty of Law awards diplomas in legal, economic and consular studies, the Faculty of Medicine a Certificate of Higher Medical studies, and the Faculty of Science diplomas in chemistry and geology. The teaching staff numbers approximately two hundred professors and lecturers, the students about 1,400.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL.** As early as the 16th century, the small town of Neuchâtel became an important cultural centre in French-speaking Switzerland. To-day, with about 25,000 inhabitants, the town is still profoundly influenced by its University.

The University began as an Academy in 1838, and numbered among its alumni such famous scholars as the geologists Agassiz and Guyot, the historians Matile and Dubois de Montperreux. In 1909, the Academy was transformed into a university by cantonal decree.

Since then, the University of Neuchâtel has had faculties of theology, jurisprudence, philosophy and science. Later, various institutes were added: the University School for teachers of French, the Department of Economics and Commercial Science, and the Chemical, Physical and Zoological Institutes. Close collaboration is also maintained with the Cantonal Observatory and the Swiss Laboratory of Research in Watchmaking.

Although small, with about 50 professors and lecturers and an average of 450 students, the University of Neuchâtel has made and continues to make impressive contributions.

**UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH.** To the liberal movement in Switzerland in the early 19th century, Zurich owes its constitution, its educational system and its university, the largest in the country to-day. While it can trace its beginnings to the school founded by the Zurich reformer Zwingli in 1523, the University as such was created by public vote in 1833. This decision is commemorated by the inscription "By the Will of the People" over the main entrance.

From the beginning, the University of Zurich has been a cradle of intellectual freedom. It was the first University in Europe to open its doors to women, and has always attracted a large percentage of students from foreign countries.

Internationally famous names are always found on its staff, among them Theodor Mommsen, F. A. Lange, Oswald Heer, Alexander Schweizer, Auguste Forel and the two Nobel prize-winners for chemistry, Alfred Werner and Paul Karrer. The University of Zurich has six faculties: theology; jurisprudence (including economics and commercial science); medicine, with dentistry and veterinary science; Philosophy I with departments of philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, philology, history, art history and music; and philosophy II, with departments of exact science (mathematics, physics, chemistry and astronomy), geology, mineralogy and geography, botany, zoology and anthropology.

The University of Zurich has about 265 teachers and lecturers and 3,000 students.

**THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.** The only institution of university standing in the country which is nationally supported and under the jurisdiction of Federal authorities is the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, founded by the Confederation in 1855.

Since its foundation, the institute has accented the training of students in independent scientific research, and coordinates lectures and laboratory work, with practical work and field excursions.

The Federal Institute of Technology is composed to-day of twelve departments: architecture, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrotechnics, chemistry, pharmacy, forestry, agriculture, agricultural engineering and surveying, mathematics and physics, natural science and military science. There are one-year courses for gymnastics and sport, and a department for optional subjects that provides a general education. A regular course of study is also offered to give students a first-hand knowledge of the enormous technological achievements by Switzerland as a whole. At present there are about 3,500 regular students, and 1,500 attending lectures at the Federal Institute of Technology. In addition to the regular staff, a large number of engineers and workers are employed in the laboratories and research institutes, conducting research under the direction of the professors.

*(Amerikanische Schweizer Zeitung.)*

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