

The Faculty of Sociology, founded in 1969, is a unique institution in the field of German higher education. The central academic structures of the university were formed and influenced substantially by the sociologist Helmut Schelsky. Norbert Elias, worldwide well known sociologist was honorary doctor and visiting professor of the faculty for several years. Bielefeld is the only German university where sociology enjoys the institutional autonomy of a faculty. Moreover, the Faculty of Sociology in Bielefeld is one of the largest academic institutions of sociology in Europe, the significance of which is reflected by the broad spectrum of current research projects. Besides theoretical fundamental research, like for example the further development of sociological systems theory subsequent to the work of Niklas Luhmann, there are numerous research projects in progress on the topic of contemporary societal problems. Research in the areas of poverty, women's studies, social change in East Germany, the transformation processes in Eastern Europe, and ecological risks are just a few examples to demonstrate the broad orientation in scientific research.

## Faculty of Sociology

The scientific research profile of the faculty is furthermore shaped by cross-national comparative studies like for example the life courses in the globalization process. In the fields of developmental sociology and social anthropology the social and cultural dimensions of market expansion as well as studies in the area of ethnic and religious conflicts in Southeast-Asia, Africa and the Middle East constitute important areas of research interest.

Most of the on-going research projects are integrated in one of three major research units: „Future of Work“, „Sociology of Culture“, and „Sociology of Development“.

Various cooperations with universities in Germany and abroad have been established promoting the international academic exchange in research and teaching. The faculty is pursuing intensive academic relations with European universities (Italy, Great Britain, France, The Netherlands, Poland, Bulgaria, Russia), American universities and – especially in the field of developmental sociology – with universities in Southeast-Asia and Africa. International relations are further intensified by exchange programs for scientists and students.

The University Library offers ideal conditions for studying and literature research. It is very well stocked: the sociology reference library, for example, contains 240.000 books and 411 national and international journals. Studying at the Library is also greatly facilitated by the unusually long opening hours.



Helmut Schelsky



Niklas Luhmann



Norbert Elias

### Units

At present the faculty is divided into eight academic units, which provide the institutional framework for teaching and research:

- I Theory and History of Sociology
- II Methods of Social Research and Social Psychology
- III Economy and Social Structure
- IV Politics and Public Administration
- V Work and Organization
- VI Science and Technology
- VII Social Problems, Health and Social Policy
- VIII Sociology of Development/Social Anthropology

These research themes provide the overall orientation and coherence needed within a faculty whose teaching staff presently comprises 60 members.

### Journals

Among others, the Faculty publishes the following journals:

- Zeitschrift für Soziologie
- Soziale Systeme
- Soziale Probleme
- Simmel-Newsletter

Informations about the publications of the faculty staff are available in the Report of Research of the University of Bielefeld.



Central Hall of the University of Bielefeld

## Studying for different degrees

Students may choose to earn a Diploma in sociology, a Master's Degree (second major) or a minor in sociology for other related courses of studies on a Master's level or for a Diploma. In cooperation with other faculties training for teachers of sociology Sekundarstufe I und II (Secondary School), Primarstufe (Primary School) and in educational science is also offered.

## Studying for a Diploma

Designed to take ten semesters, the course of study is divided into two parts, a basic section of study and an advanced section of study including a so-called "integrated practical semester" and the examination period. Courses during the basic section of study include:

- Introduction to sociology
- Cross-national and historical analysis of social structure
- Special areas of sociology (for example sociology of organizations, sociology of development, sociology of deviant behavior, sociology of administration or sociology of science)
- Methods of Social Research
- Courses in the chosen main subject

With the sociological integration of courses from related disciplines like Political Science, Psychology, Law, Economics, Demography, Women's Studies, Social Anthropology and Social Policy the ties between these disciplines and sociology are being strengthened.

Courses during the advanced section of study include:

- Theories of Sociology
- Practice-related courses
- Optional subject (obligatory)
- Research Training („Lehrforschungsprojekt“)
- Courses in the chosen main subject

During the academic education students are already given the chance of applying theoretical knowledge to problems and areas of social practice by means of the concept of "active professionalization". The so-called practice-related courses (Praxisschwerpunkte) integrate the students in on-going research activities and also allow them to get a first impression of the practical aspects of sociology within, and especially outside the university.

The practical semester, as of recently mandatory for all students, is designed not only to apply theoretical knowledge in an occupational setting, but also to support students in their professional choice. Experience shows that quite a few careers in sociology were started during the practical training period due to personal connections established during that time.

The study of Methods of Social Research during the basic and the advanced sections of study, both quantitatively and qualitatively practice-oriented and focusing on the latest developments in research, is extended and deepened by the "Lehrforschungsprojekt" (research training), which is offered during the advanced section of study and runs over a period of three semesters.

For more details regarding the organisation and contents of the studies as well as for personal counselling please contact the Student Counsellors (Room L3-127, phone: +49(0)521/106-4205). During the semester they can be reached daily.



On the „Soziologentreppe“



Between Lectures

## Possibilities to obtain a doctorate

The department offers a doctoral degree (Dr.rer.soc.). The admission requirement is the completion of an academic degree in the social sciences at a German or foreign university (The doctoral committee will decide on equivalences or additional requirements). It is expected from doctoral candidates that they participate in the department's „Doktorandenkolloquium“.

A postgraduate program (also offering scholarships) „Emergence, Structure, and Consequences of Science and Technology“ accepts applications.

For further information contact the chairman of the doctoral committee, Prof. Dr. Peter Weingart, Room U6-210, phone: +49(0)521/106-6933 or 106-4655

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