The City of Bielefeld and Bielefeld University

With an area of 258 sq. km and a population of 330,000, Bielefeld is one of the twenty largest cities in Germany and the economic and cultural centre of East-Westphalia–Lippe. Bielefeld offers a wide range of attractive opportunities for culture lovers and sports fans alike, such as independent theatre, political cabaret and local concerts, as well as large international cultural events. Bielefeld also has a large university, so there are many places for students to go.

Bielefeld University, founded in 1969, combines classic higher education traditions with innovative research and teaching structures. The university currently has about 16,000 students enrolled in 13 faculties.

The Faculty of Sociology

The Faculty of Sociology at Bielefeld University holds a unique position in that it is the only autonomous faculty of sociology in Germany. It is also one of the largest academic institutions of sociology in Europe. Its research and teaching profile includes various areas of social sciences such as political science and social anthropology.

Currently, the Faculty offers ten areas of study:

- Theoretical Sociology
- Qualitative and Quantitative Methods
- Sociology of Organization
- Society and Politics
- Social Structure and Social Inequality
- Transnationalization, Migration and Development
- Science, Technology and Media Studies
- Gender Studies
- Didactics of Social Sciences
- Work and Economy.

The Faculty offers three BA degree programmes (3 years/6 terms) and two MA degree programmes (2 years/4 terms):

- BA Sociology (major)
- BA Social Sciences (interdisciplinary)
- BA Political Science (with a sociological focus)
- MA Sociology (including international courses taught in English)
- MA Political Communication.

In addition, the Faculty participates in the following interdisciplinary degree programmes, in some cases taking a leading role:

- MA History, Philosophy and Sociology of Science
- MA Interdisciplinary Media Studies
- MA Gender Studies
- MA European Societies at Saint Petersburg State University.

The broad scope of the Faculty and its interdisciplinary relations are reflected in a diverse range of research options. Research at the Faculty covers a variety of areas, including social structures and social inequality, organizations, labour and markets, mass media, science and technology, gender issues, transnational relations and migration, and world society. The Faculty is also home to the Collaborative Centre of Research on “From Heterogeneities to Social Inequalities” and the Institute for World Society Studies.

At the postgraduate level, the Faculty offers prospective students a unique opportunity to enrol in a structured PhD programme at the Bielefeld Graduate School of History and Sociology (BGHS).

Faculty facts and figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full professors</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic teaching staff</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>1,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International students</td>
<td>152 (8.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Students’ Voices

I would always consider, I’m really glad to have come to Bielefeld university. Bielefeld is a great city. It was really calm and clean. The Erasmus Programme here, like me, came from a small city, and the students are very friendly. The courses are very good. The teacher at the University was very organized, and the students are very satisfied. So, I think that this university is excellent. Everyone is very kind around the university, and I have already made some other close friends. In the German educational system, the German educational system is very interesting. The Erasmus Programme is a great opportunity to improve your German and English language skills. So, I am very happy that I stayed in Bielefeld. The answer is yes. I think that you will greatly benefit my life here. So, I would like to explore the Bielefeld University. Natalia from Russia, MA Sociology, Graduate Student

Language of Instruction

Exchange students are free to select any of the Faculty’s courses taught in English and German.

The majority of courses at the Faculty of Sociology are taught in German and there is a great number of courses in English language. International students can take intensive German language courses at the Language Centre, either before the start of their courses or during the semester.

In the Winter Semester of 2010/11 the MA Sociology started an extensive course programme, with an International Track consisting mainly of international courses that are taught in English. Students can also choose from a range of elective courses in various fields on the BA level that are taught in English.

These are only a few of the courses we have offered in English in the past: Transnational Studies (BA), The Age of Migration (BA), Organizational Theory (BA), Comparative Analyses of the Life Course (MA), Theories of Nationalism (MA); Theories of Social Inequality and Social Structure (MA).

A list of courses currently taught in English is available at: www.uni-bielefeld.de/en/soz/studium.

Why Study at the Faculty of Sociology?

Teaching Philosophy

The Faculty offers a well-rounded education in the theory and methods as well as the opportunities of specialization in general sociology and its various subfields. At the Faculty of Sociology, students can conduct empirical research through research training projects and gain practical work experience through internships and a variety of opportunities to improve their foreign language skills to prepare themselves for the various demands of the job market.

International Network

As part of a broad international network, the faculty of Sociology has more than 50 Erasmus Exchange Agreements and bilateral agreements with various distinguished universities in Europe. In addition, the Faculty regularly invites international guest lecturers for courses and seminars.

Awards

Since 2007: The Graduate School of History and Sociology (BiHi) has been receiving funding from the Excellence Initiative: 2009: The University was one of the winners of the Excellent Teaching Competition organized by the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft and the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs.

Evaluation:

2011: The Faculty of Sociology was one of the highest-ranking universities in the area of student satisfaction (Universität Ranking of the Centre for Higher Education Development, CHE). The CHE Ranking also shows that Political Science is one of the major recipients of research grants and that Sociology has an excellent research reputation.

So You’ve Decided to Come to Bielefeld?

Applications for degree programmes have to be made through the online application system of Bielefeld University. For application closing dates see www.uni-bielefeld.de/aktis/aktisapplication

Applications for the Erasmus Programme and other bilateral exchange programmes must be made through your home university.

Academic Calendar

Winter Semester Courses: Mid-October to early February
Summer Semester Courses: Early April to mid-July

Useful Links and Contacts

Faculty of Sociology: www.uni-bielefeld.de/soz
Praktische Informationen: www.uni-bielefeld.de/en/soz/studium
MA Sociology International Track: www.uni-bielefeld.de/en/soz/studium/international-track
Information for prospective international students (admission, enrolment, German courses, accommodation, etc.): www.uni-bielefeld.de/en/soz/international-track
Bielefeld: www.uni-bielefeld.de
You can also contact the Faculty of Sociology via e-mail at: erasmus.so@uni-bielefeld.de
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