

## The Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg

**T**he Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg is one of the oldest and at the same time one of the youngest of Bavaria's universities: this paradox is the result of a chequered history. The University was initially founded in 1647 in the form of a Jesuit College, was closed in 1803 except for theological and philosophical studies, and was inaugurated again in 1972. Today's name goes back to its founder in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the Bamberg Prince-Bishop Melchior Otto Voit of Salzburg, and its great benefactor in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Prince-Bishop Friedrich Karl von Schönborn.

### **Organisational structure and university profile in transition**

**T**he University of Bamberg focuses on the social sciences and a wide range of economic subjects as well as on the traditional areas of arts and civilisation. The

existing field of Informatics for Business is currently being expanded through the introduction of applied informatics to form a new faculty of "Business and Applied Informatics". In future, the University would like to integrate applied informatics in as many arts and civilisation, social sciences and economic studies programmes as possible in order to open up new research, teaching and career fields and thus continue to develop its own distinctive university profile.

In recent years a concerted effort has been made to create interdisciplinary facilities that break through the confines of classical faculty-thinking and serve the interests of both research and teaching: the Centre for Mediaeval Studies, the recently founded

**The Linguistics and Literature Library**



Centre for British Studies, the Institutes of Archaeology, Construction Research, Heritage Protection and Restoration, and Pre- and Early History. Two largely independent institutes, the State Institute for Family Research (ifb) and the "European forum for migration studies (efms)" are closely linked to the University, not least through their managerial staff.

### A modern range of study programmes with an eye for global practice

The range of programmes provided by its current tally of five university faculties and one university of applied sciences department focus on the arts and civilisation, the social sciences and management sciences: 15 Diploma programmes, a *Magister* programme with 25 different courses, teacher-training programmes for all types of school, a practically oriented Social Work programme and a new Bachelor's and Master's programme in *European Economic Studies*. In addition, there are four post-graduate programmes in Adult Education, Journalism, Heritage Protection and Catholic Theology.

Internationalisation, informatics and interdisciplinary thinking plus numerous unique programmes taking present-day practices and needs into account have enriched our study programmes and improve the career opportunities of our graduates. For example, in both the Diploma and *Magister* programmes, **German Studies** can be taken in Bamberg with Journalism, the Teaching of Literature, and German as a Foreign Language as elective specialisms. The **Oriental Studies** programme focuses on the present-day and offers four elective study special-

isms: Turkish Language, History and Culture; Arab Studies; Iranian Studies; and Islamic Art and Archaeology. **Psychology** degree programmes include all the many facets of this area of study. The **Archaeology of the Middle Ages and the Modern Age** is a subject unique to Bamberg University and involves students in practical excavation work. The **Business Informatics** Diploma programme combines various management fields of application. In the winter semester of 2000/2001 a new specialism in Media Informatics was introduced in the Business Informatics Diploma programme. Since 1999, **Teacher Training in Economics** has been available with two fields of study. In some subjects it is possible for students of the Franconian Universities of Bamberg, Bayreuth and Erlangen-Nuremberg to register at a second of these universities at the same time and thus have the benefit of the courses of a neighbouring university in addition to the programmes provided by their own university.

### An international outlook

The Sociology Diploma programme has an empirical bias and offers eight different specialisms including **European Integration and the Globalisation of Society**. In the field of **European Economics** there is a Diploma programme requiring a one-year stay at a foreign university and the acquisition of business competence in two foreign languages: the programme develops the key skills that are essential for the executives of business enterprises and other organisations and associations functioning at an international level. Since the winter semester of 2000/2001 there has, for the first time at a German university,

been a **Bachelor's degree programme** in European Economic Studies in which students study the interdependence of European economies and spend one year at a foreign university. The corresponding Master's programme will be available from the winter semester of 2001/2002. Graduates of all first-degree programmes in economic sciences can enrol in the postgraduate European Master of Business Sciences (EMBS) programme, which is held in collaboration with twenty European universities. The university maintains an international **student exchange scheme** with over 100 foreign universities worldwide, 27 of them official partner universities. Almost 25% of each year's student intake makes use of this opportunity to expand their horizons, skills and knowledge, while some 6% of Bavaria's student population come from abroad - from all the continents of the world.

#### **Additional opportunities provided by Bavaria's Virtual University ([www.vhb.org](http://www.vhb.org))**

**S**ince May 2000, it has been possible for students at Bamberg University to supplement their courses by using Bavaria's Virtual University, in which all of Bavaria's universities are involved. As the original concept was developed by one of Bamberg's business information scientists, the University of Bamberg has assumed responsibility for coordinating the contributions made by the various Bavarian universities.

#### **Assistance in starting a career**

**T**owards the end of their studies, students of the University interested in **founding their own company** can prepare themselves by taking part in a team project

carried out in the form of a flexible course system (the so-called Company Founders' College) held in conjunction with the Coburg University of Applied Sciences. During the main period of their studies after the Preliminary Diploma examination, students of the arts and social sciences can acquire an additional qualification parallel to their studies in order to improve their chances of starting a career in the business world. Furthermore, they are regularly informed about developments on the job market and in the career world through joint events staged with the local employment office.

#### **Diversity of research and knowledge transfer**

**I**n addition to the faculty-based research carried out by the individual chairs of the University, research takes place above all at the various 'Centres' and 'Institutes' and in interdisciplinary research projects, for example at the Centre for Mediaeval Studies, the Competence Centre for Business Informatics, and the Centre for Business Studies, among many others. In addition, there are two postgraduate colleges at which students preparing for their doctorate or post-doctoral habilitation can develop and carry out their research work: one of them for 'Art History, Heritage Protection and Construction Research' (run in conjunction with the Technical University of Berlin) and the other for 'The Anthropological Foundations of Christianity and Islam'.

Knowledge transfer takes place both in the form of cooperative projects run by the University's professors in conjunction with private enterprise and State bodies, and through public events. Lectures held by the



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In front of  
Maras House

individual Chairs and Faculties, such as "Literature at the University", "Music at the University", lectures on philosophy and one-off events focusing on specialist topics regularly make their mark on the City and the region as a whole.

### **A town rich in culture, and a pleasant place to live**

The particular flair that is an exterior feature of the University of Bamberg is the result of its "town and gown" building concept. In contrast to many young universities, the University of Bamberg was not built on virgin land on the outskirts, but was established to a large extent in historic, heritage-protected buildings in the middle of the Old Town. Thus the University has contributed to the preservation of a large number of the town's buildings of historic interest. The 7,200 students have the advantage of short distances between the various faculties and departments, most of which can be covered on foot or by bicycle. The faculty with the largest number of students, the Social Sciences and Management Sciences Faculty, is, however, located in Bamberg-East. Almost one in five students in Bamberg live in a student hostel – one of

the highest ratios in Bavaria. The others have no trouble in finding a suitable flat of their own or a room in a shared flat.

The rich cultural programme and attractive surrounding countryside of the town, situated as it is near "Franconian Switzerland", provide a wide range of opportunities for leisure, relaxation and amusement. Bamberg is, with some 70,000 inhabitants, Upper Franconia's industrial centre. It is the seat of an archbishop and the centre of a diocese that is rich in tradition. The Old Town as an entity in itself is considered to be an architectural masterpiece and a monument to town-planning of European calibre and was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1993.

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