Where Knowledge Grows
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Since its founding in 1991, the University of Potsdam has excelled in research and teaching. We have enhanced our academic and research profiles, promoted young academics, and expanded our strategic partnerships abroad. With two collaborative research centers in mathematics and cognitive sciences in 2017 and four new graduate colleges in 2016, we have been able to increase our visibility as an international research university. We now have to use the momentum of this success to excel in research at the interface of geology, biology, and climate. The proven collaboration with our extramural research partners and the universities in Berlin plays an important role in these efforts.

We are committed to expanding the University of Potsdam as an intellectual and cultural center and as a driving force in Brandenburg’s economic development. Interest in studying at our University has shown no signs of slowing. With Jewish theology, inclusion pedagogics, and programs of the recently founded Digital Engineering Faculty, the spectrum has grown even wider and more diverse. The Center for Teacher Training and Education Research supports the University in reinforcing its high profile as the only teacher training institution in the state of Brandenburg.

We are convinced that investing in teaching and research will pay off for Brandenburg in the near future. This is why we are actively training urgently needed specialists and ensuring that the latest scientific findings are rapidly put into practice. The University of Potsdam is already among the best academic institutions in the startup field in Germany. Honored as an “Innovative University”, we are developing the rapidly growing science location of Golm into an “Innovation Campus” in the coming years – a rewarding place to work, learn, and live.

We are particularly interested in fostering strong partnerships in politics, business, and society. When we report on our work and goals, we want to inform but also to pique interest and highlight points of contact in order to increase the density and stability of our network for education, science, and knowledge transfer – to the benefit of Brandenburg.

Prof. Oliver Günther, Ph.D.
President of the University of Potsdam
Human language is an outstanding focal point of our research. In linguistic communication, one hardly notices how much the brain performs, how it recognizes individual words, filters out background noise, and fills in missing syllables. Cognitive sciences try to uncover these highly complex processes. Mathematical models of human thinking have garnered international recognition for the Interdisciplinary Center for Cognitive Studies at the University of Potsdam. The research focus Cognitive Sciences, in cooperation with the linguistic Collaborative Research Center “Information Structure”, has become a unique selling point of the University of Potsdam and is one of four at the University. Scientists of various faculties are collaborating to better understand the processes of the brain, perception, memory, thinking, feeling, body signals, and motor skills in relation to cognition and language. Interdisciplinary teams bring together researchers from psychology, linguistics, philosophy, and sports and health sciences. There are opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with mathematics, physics, and information technology.

Two prominent examples of this intensive collaboration are the recently funded collaborative research centers “Limits of Variability in Language: Cognitive, Grammatical, and Social Aspects” and “Data Assimilation – The Seamless Integration of Data and Models”. Germanists, linguists, and psychologists from the CRC “Limits of Variability in Language” work on identifying how much flexibility individuals or language communities have in (unconscious) linguistic choices. Researchers from the CRC “Data Assimilation” integrate large datasets into complex computational models at the interface of mathematics, physics, information technology, and psychology to better understand underlying processes in biology, geosciences, medicine, and cognitive and neurosciences.

Other projects research eye movement while reading or perceiving images, multilingual language communities, speech disorders, and infants’ cognitive and linguistic development. Cognitive sciences also include studies of complex motion sequences and the connection between exercise and mental health. Not least of all, the research focus Cognitive Sciences is concerned with the dialogue between human and machine and the challenge of giving machines our language.
How will we generate energy in the future? Which materials will be available for technological developments? When will the next destructive earthquake or flood strike? How dangerous is the disappearance of glaciers in high mountain ranges, and what are the risks of increasing urbanization of vulnerable areas? These are some of the most significant questions that the research focus Earth Sciences is seeking to answer together with biologists, physicists, engineers, and political and social scientists.

In light of climate change, dwindling geo-resources and the major challenges of global environmental management, an interdisciplinary, internationally networked collaboration between earth and environmental scientists is becoming ever more important. Only such collaboration makes it possible to react to environmental changes, predict developments caused by global changes, and assess them with reference to various observation data.

It is necessary to formulate reliable strategies for our ecosystems. This requires a thorough analysis of the earth-human system and its compartments of varying scales of time and length – from fractions of a second to millions of years and from microscopic deformations in crystals to mountain building processes and plate movements of the lithosphere, from the Earth’s deep interior to observations of our globe from space.

Building on Potsdam’s 150-year tradition of cutting-edge research in geosciences and earth sciences, the research focus Earth Sciences has been collaborating closely with internationally renowned institutions of the region and has become a hub for earth and environmental research in Europe. The proximity to strong extramural partners like the German Research Center for Geosciences, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research, the Center for Agricultural Landscape Research, and the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies have made Potsdam an excellent location with unique fields of study, innovative research topics, and outstanding opportunities for young scholars.

Within this context, scientists in this research focus engage in international and innovative research and teaching projects. Two research training groups funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and international exchange programs for Bachelor and Master students (e.g. USA, Argentina, Ecuador, and Colombia) provide excellent opportunities for modern studies and a practical application of knowledge.
How does global change impact the world’s ecosystem? How do global warming and the depletion of natural resources affect biodiversity? What does this mean for humans? All these are pressing concerns for the 21st century. To find answers to these questions, scholars at the University of Potsdam are looking deeply into the past to make predictions for the future. They explore connections between biosphere and climate. The research focus Functional Ecology and Evolution strives to better understand the Earth’s past developments through empirical findings in the field and in the lab, new theories, and computer-based models. Only in this way they can predict changes in the biosphere under alternative climate and usage scenarios.

Biologists and geologists collaborate combining modern ecological and evolutionary approaches. Methods from molecular genetics allow scientists to analyze, for example, Kenyan sea sediments in order to reconstruct the former biodiversity of the region and to correlate it with past volcanic eruptions, extreme droughts, and natural climate variability.

Another joint project investigates how plants, small mammals, and planktonic organisms are adapting to climate change.

The DFG Research Training Group BioMove integrates biodiversity research with movement ecology to understand the interaction between biological diversity and spatial distribution of organisms in agricultural landscapes. Researchers of Functional Ecology and Evolution engage in the DFG Priority Programs “Dynatrait” and “Rapid Evolution”, which deal with the adaptation to changing environmental conditions from an ecological and evolutionary perspective. They are spokespersons, members of the steering group and also participate with their own projects.
Cultivated plants are crucial for our diet and energy supply. They also provide renewable resources for various technical applications. Since they are bound to a location, plants are particularly sensitive to environmental influences. Various parameters like temperature, light, UV radiation, aridity and many more influence their growth and yield. Only by understanding plant metabolism at the molecular and biochemical level responsible for plant growth under various environmental conditions it is possible to make growth and technical processes more efficient as well as to produce new crops with novel properties.

Researchers of the research focus Plant Genomics and Systems Biology focus their work on projects along the complex value chain of modern genomics. They want to determine which genes are responsible for certain functions in an organism and how various genes interact to have an effect.

Analyzing big data generated with the help of highly developed genomic research technologies requires interdisciplinary collaboration. The results are screened using bioinformatic procedures and mathematically analyzed to simulate cellular and physiological processes. The aim is to generate models that can predict plant growth.

Such a systemic view also provides profound insight into how cells and organisms react to the administration of growth stimulants and drugs. This will, for example, provide new strategies to improve the stress tolerance of plants and better therapies for diseases like cancer.

The research focus Plant Genomics and Systems Biology is driven by professors and young researchers of the Faculty of Science at the University of Potsdam. The research focus distinguishes itself through a networked collaboration of its departments, joint research projects and lectures as well as long-term relationships with extramural research institutes and local and national companies.
The human brain, the cells of living beings, and the Earth have one thing in common: they are all complex systems whose components are constantly interacting. They can organize themselves and develop rich structures and dynamics. The research area Complex Systems seeks to describe the internal order of such complicated phenomena and focuses all activities to this end.

Scholars of this research area study the relationship of individual components within a system as well as to their environment. Analyses and simulations are expected to illustrate how to predict or even influence their behavior, for example to better calculate the risks of climate change or of an earthquake.

Since complex systems exist everywhere – in nature, technology, and society – the range of research in the focus area is broad: from cosmic structures and cognitive processes to molecular systems, complex software, and metabolic networks. A thoughtful interplay of mathematics, physics, and computer science makes it possible to uncover their complicated structure and dynamics.

The research of complex systems is methodologically oriented, but its goals are specific applications, for example in the analysis of massive stars in astrophysics or modeling climate changes in the earth sciences. In biology, a systems analysis is useful for studying photosynthesis in hydrogen-producing green algae and, in cognitive sciences for studying eye movement while reading.

A key research topic is data assimilation, in which mathematical techniques are developed to obtain complex models from measured data and observations and to evaluate their validity.

Many interdisciplinary projects profit from the analytical methods of the research area Complex Systems – not only at the University, but also at Potsdam’s many cooperating institutions and the universities in Berlin.
Knowledge, coordination, and strategic action are prerequisites for modern governance in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society. At the same time, political control and management are being implemented less in accordance with centralized parameters determined by the state but increasingly through cooperation of various political and social stakeholders. Managing these processes requires scientific analyses, support, and consulting, both for specific political contents and policies as well as for corresponding forms of organization. Internationally, established and renowned centers for research and teaching exist in this field. Germany, however, needs to catch up. The research area Public Policy and Management at the University of Potsdam is working on compensating this deficit.

The research area draws its strength from the well-established interdisciplinary collaboration and the connection of external policy orientation with an internal perspective of organization. Political and administrative scientists work together with sociologists, legal scholars, and economists to investigate changes in governmental and administrative organization, both nationally and internationally.

They analyze modernization processes in public administration and their consequences at various levels of the political and administrative system. Current research projects include comparing public sector reforms in Europe and the configuration of governmental structures and organizations.

The Research Training Group “Wicked Problems, Contested Administrations: Knowledge, Coordination, Strategy” (WIPCAD) investigates how political and administrative organizations react to complex topics like climate change.

There is worldwide demand for the scholarly authority of Potsdam’s scientists. As consultants, they are active on all levels: in municipalities, in federal and state governments, at the EU, OECD, or World Bank. The international and interdisciplinary perspective is also increasingly being integrated into training and continuing education. The English-language Master’s program “National and International Administration and Policy” (MANIA), unique in Germany, offers students the exceptional opportunity to study Public Administration and Policy with an international focus. The Center for Higher Education Development considers the Master’s and PhD programs to be among the very best in Europe. The joint degree programs with the Ecole Nationale d’Administration in Paris/Strasbourg and the Berlin universities enjoy an excellent international reputation.
How do exercise and nutrition affect metabolic diseases? Can targeted exercises relieve chronic back pain? How does exercise influence mental health? These are only a few of the questions currently being investigated by researchers in the area of Health Sciences at the University of Potsdam. Nutrition, sports, lifestyle – the issues behind the projects are complex and involve various departments. It therefore seems reasonable to intensifying interdisciplinary collaboration for future research. The research initiative Health Sciences provides this collaborative framework. It focuses particularly on the so-called metabolic syndrome – a clinical image triggered by an adverse lifestyle and accompanied by metabolic and cardiovascular diseases.

The goal of this initiative is to establish health sciences as an independent field at the University of Potsdam and to bundle, extend, and consolidate the existing expertise. Other partners include the German Institute of Human Nutrition Potsdam-Rehbrücke (DIfE), the Brandenburg rehabilitation and acute-care clinics. The health science projects are also part of Brandenburg’s healthcare and health promotion in medium-sized companies.

Participants in this research initiative also come together in the “Network Health Education” and will be utilizing their expertise in university education. The quality of existing courses of study will be improved after experts from the field of nutritional sciences at the Faculty of Science hold nutritional seminars in the health sciences programs at the Faculty of Human Sciences and vice versa. Furthermore, students, PhD students, and postdocs will be able to rotate more easily not only between University institutes but also between the University and extramural collaboration partners. Results and the content of health science research are expected to increasingly find their way into medical practice.
Founded in July 2015, Research Center Sanssouci (RECS) is committed to researching Brandenburg-Prussian cultural heritage and the history of the European Enlightenment and to sharing this research with the academic community and general public. The Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG) and the University of Potsdam have been collaborating at the research center since December 2015. RECS is a contact point that publicizes their combined competencies: the professional expertise and practical knowledge of SPSG scholars and the methods of the University’s researchers.

RECS generates an innovative and interdisciplinary discourse about Brandenburg-Prussian cultural heritage and the history of the Enlightenment. In the increasingly important research field of digital humanities, RECS and the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam are working on publishing an annotated online edition of pamphlets written by Fredrick II during the Seven Years War. Romanists from the University of Potsdam and the Max Weber Foundation are working on another online edition project that will elucidate the world of Margravine Wilhelmine von Bayreuth. RECS also engages in discourses on highly topical issues, such as the new Humboldt Forum in the heart of Berlin.

In the natural and cultural sciences, RECS collaborates with the Institute for Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Potsdam. In this joint project, drones survey the terrain of Sanssouci Palace and Park as well as the New Palace. The measurement data will be presented in a 3D model and will provide new and useful information, for example, for the SPSG garden and architectural curators.

RECS Voltaire fellowships enable national and international visiting scientists to research at the SPSG’s archives and participate in the center’s research projects. RECS has also established its own online publication series (available at www.recs.academy), allowing researchers to publish conveniently and promptly and to engage with academia and the public. The partners of RECS include the electronic publication platform of the Max Weber Foundation – perspectivia.net, the science portal of the Gerda Henkel Foundation – L.I.S.A., the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, and the Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation.
Astrophysics is one of the most exciting research areas in the natural sciences. Questions about the origin and evolution of the universe and its fundamental components as well as the emergence and spread of life in the universe are interesting not only to experts. They are fundamental questions of human existence and life, and public interest worldwide in astrophysical research is extremely high. Astrophysical research in the Berlin-Brandenburg region is concentrated in Potsdam, one of the few locations in Germany where astrophysical research is conducted at a university and non-university research institutes at an international level.

The aim of the research initiative Astrophysics is to strengthen astrophysical research at the University of Potsdam through suitable structural measures. In cooperation with extramural institutes – Leibniz Institute for Astrophysics (AIP), Deutsches Elektronen Synchrotron (DESY in Zeuthen), and Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute, AEI) – Potsdam will improve on its historical position as a site of cutting-edge astrophysical research nationally and internationally.

The measures outlined in the research initiative include coordinated staff management, which connects leading academics from non-university institutes to the University of Potsdam through joint appointments. The second key aspect is coordinated teaching and doctoral studies. The new international Master’s program in Astrophysics – jointly organized by UP, AIP, DESY, and AEI – is an important step in attracting students from all over the world to study astrophysics at the University of Potsdam and, thus, boost its international profile in astrophysical education. Other important aspects of the research initiative relate to future large-scale joint research projects and the promotion of female researchers.

The Astrophysics Research Network – founded by the University of Potsdam and the non-university partners – presents its joint research and teaching activities as well as the research priorities of individual institutes online at www.astrophysik-potsdam.de.
The Earth’s constantly changing surface is the nexus of geodynamics, organisms, and climate and influences our planet’s physical, chemical, and biological processes. It is our habitat and plays a key role in maintaining the wellbeing of humanity. Many aspects of this system as a whole, however, are not yet understood. The research initiative NEXUS: Earth Surface Dynamics investigates numerous processes in the Earth’s surface system to better understand them on various spatiotemporal scales and to predict how our living environment will develop.

The researchers focus on the complex interaction between the spheres that may trigger transitions from a self-regulating equilibrium to transient periods. Using an interdisciplinary approach, NEXUS analyzes the coupling of these spheres and related processes, helping to reveal hidden connections. The researchers concentrate on coupled processes in the spheres that may trigger transient conditions caused, for example, by earthquakes, floods, wildfires, invasive species, and the melting of glaciers.

Because the spatiotemporal scales of these processes exceed what instruments can capture, NEXUS uses geological and biological archives, such as geochemical information, fossils, and paleo DNA. The existing field observatories worldwide will be expanded and integrated into an unprecedented environmental network of researchers collecting series of measurements from instruments and archives, which will enable thorough analyses. The University of Potsdam, therefore, improves the infrastructure to enable state-of-the-art DNA sequencing, better facilities for age determination, geochemical analysis, and IT, and the integration of data science for complex system analysis.

NEXUS will expand the existing research structures between the earth, environmental, life and data sciences, creating the prerequisites for sustainable interdisciplinary collaboration. The research initiative pools expertise from extramural institutions and universities that concentrate on earth sciences. Not least, NEXUS includes continuing education for teachers, adapts curricula for schools and universities, and exhibitions in renowned museums.
One University –
Three Locations

With 20,000 students and six faculties, the University of Potsdam – founded in 1991 – is the biggest university in the Federal State of Brandenburg. It has three campuses.

The central campus is located vis-à-vis the Neues Palais in the Park of Sanssouci. The Communs, the representative buildings adjacent to the palace are home to the institutes of the Faculty of Arts, which comprises the Departments of History, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Languages and Literature, and Arts and Media. The Baroque buildings also house the University’s Executive Board and administration. The new library is a floating, ring-shaped structure that sets an architectonic contrast to the historic backdrop. The Auditorium Maximum in the former imperial stables is unique as well. An identical building nearby houses the Sports Sciences and the University’s own outpatient clinic, which is a licensed research center of the German Olympic Sports Association.

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The largest campus of the University of Potsdam is situated in the middle of meadows and pastures, not far from the tranquil district of Golm. New research buildings feature ultra-modern laboratories furnished with the latest equipment. About 9,000 students daily make their way to the Faculty of Science as well as the Faculty of Human Sciences. One of the main places of study is the Information, Communication, and Media Center, which holds over 900,000 books and other media. Golm has become one of the largest science parks in the Berlin-Brandenburg research region: Three Max Planck Institutes and two Fraunhofer Institutes as well as the GO:IN start-up center are situated within the immediate vicinity of the University.

University of Potsdam
Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse 24-25
14476 Potsdam-Golm

On the Griebnitzsee campus – at the border of Berlin and Potsdam – are the Law Faculty and the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences. The campus is also home to the Institute for Computer Sciences, adjacent to the Digital Engineering Faculty, which was founded in 2017. It is the first privately funded faculty at a German university and emerged from the Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Technology. A student dormitory is located right next to the campus, not far from the Babelsberg film studios. With its new lecture hall building, a large library, and well-equipped multimedia and language laboratories, Griebnitzsee is an ideal environment for studying and working.

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Culture –
The Quintessence of all Ways of Life

Faculty of Arts
The Faculty of Arts on the campus Am Neuen Palais unites the Departments of Philosophy, History, German Studies, English and American Studies, Romance Studies, Slavonic Studies, Jewish Studies and Religious Studies, the School of Jewish Theology, and the Department of Planning of Lifestyle – Ethics – Religion as well as Arts and Media. Since 2014, the Theodor Fontane Archive has been an academic institute under the umbrella of the Faculty of Arts.

An extensive canon of academic disciplines that include philosophy, philology, history, aesthetics, and religious studies distinguishes the Faculty. These are offered both as mono-disciplinary studies and in various combinations of subjects. The diversity of teacher training focusing on subject-related didactics forms the foundation of its different degree programs, from Bachelor’s programs to PhD research groups.

The Faculty of Arts’ conception of culture encompasses all ways of life. It researches empirically how individual phenomena work and what is their historical, semantic, logical, and aesthetic context.

Cultures evolve in persistent communication, in dialogue and encounters with the ‘Other’. The Faculty of Arts, therefore, sees enabling its students to adopt other perspectives and critically reflect on cultural differences as one of its primary educational objectives. Depending on the discipline, this can be achieved through immersion in other languages and literatures, geographical or conceptual spaces, epochs, religions, ...

The wide range of disciplines and themes coalesces around a few focal research areas, notably: the Early Modern Period, Jewish Studies/Jewish Theology, Language Variation, Cultural Studies/Postcolonial Studies, and Media Studies. These areas unite specific research strengths within the Faculty and are currently being developed into research centers. The Faculty’s emphasis on research is also reflected in its research-based approach to teaching, for example in inter-disciplinary and highly popular MA programs such as “Jewish Studies”, “Unsettled Cultures in the Early Modern Period”, “Linguistics: Communication, Variation, Multilingualism”, “European Media Studies”, “Anglophone Modernities in Literature and Culture”, and “Eastern European Cultural Studies”.

The Faculty of Arts strongly emphasizes the promotion of young scholars. Its numerous third-party funded research projects and research collaborations with German and international partners offer young academics excellent opportunities for further qualification both domestically and internationally. Young researchers of the DFG-funded Research Training Group 2130 “Minor Cosmopolitanisms”, for example, investigate the variations of cosmopolitanism worldwide.
The Faculty of Science at the University of Potsdam comprises the Institutes of Biochemistry and Biology, Chemistry, Nutritional Science, Geography, Earth and Environmental Science, Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, and Astronomy as well as the Potsdam Botanical Garden. The courses of studies in biology and toxicology as well as the degree programs in geosciences are in high demand. The Faculty has secured third-party funding and established future-oriented and productive core areas in research and teaching. Three of the university’s four research focuses are at the Faculty of Science: Earth Sciences, Functional Ecology and Evolution, and Plant Genomics and Systems Biology. Since 2017, the DFG-funded collaborative research center “Data Assimilation” has been managed and coordinated by researchers from the Institute of Mathematics. These research areas have the potential to obtain comprehensive funding for projects and graduate programs from the federal government and the German Research Association (DFG).

The close collaboration between the natural sciences and extramural research institutions in the Berlin-Brandenburg region – a founding tenet of the University of Potsdam – was commended as exemplary by the German Council of Science and Humanities. The collaboration with several institutes of the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer Society, the Helmholtz Association and the Leibniz Association illustrates this extensive networking. There are currently about 70 joint professorships with these institutions.
The Faculty of Human Sciences is divided into the structural units of Cognitive Sciences and Educational Sciences. Over 58 professors and assistant professors are currently researching and teaching at the Faculty. In addition to the chairs established by the federal state of Brandenburg, the Faculty has an endowed chair for rehabilitation sciences.

The research priorities action and behavior, language, health, recreational and high-performance sports, school and classroom, and lifelong learning form the core of its scientific orientation. The Faculty’s main objectives are to establish large competitive joint research projects, network across disciplines, and evaluably develop the Faculty’s research structure.

Clear evidence of the Faculty’s research strengths are the collaborative research centers “Limits of Variability in Language: Cognitive, Grammatical, and Social Aspects”; the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Innovative Training Network “Understanding and predicting developmental language abilities and disorders in multilingual Europe”; the Potsdam Research Institute for Multilingualism, the research unit “Crossing the borders: The interplay of language, cognition, and the brain in early human development”; the “National Research Network for Medicine in Spine Exercise” (MiSpEx); and the research project: “Strength Training in Youth Athletes”.

Teaching at the Faculty is divided into the Departments of Psychology, Linguistics, Sports and Health Sciences, Educational Sciences, and Teacher Training. Over 3,000 students are enrolled in its nearly 30 degree programs. The new Master’s program “Early Childhood Education Research” was established in collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam.

The Faculty of Human Sciences has established national and international Master’s and graduate programs: In these programs, students prepare for executive and academic positions in speech therapy, sports medicine, prevention, and rehabilitation.

The Faculty of Human Sciences mediates theory and practice in many ways and is a service provider for the city of Potsdam and the state of Brandenburg. It has various consultation centers for psychotherapy and speech therapy as well as a university outpatient clinic, which is a licensed research center of the German Olympic Sports Association.
The Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences consists of Business Administration, Political and Administrative Sciences, Sociology, and Economics.

About 4,300 students are enrolled at the Faculty, which has recently complemented its broad and well-established range of degree programs with attractive offers like the two Bachelor’s programs Politics, Administration, and Organization and Politics and Economy and the Master’s programs National and International Administration and Policy and Business Informatics and Electronic Government.

Researchers at the Faculty are investigating the interactive relationship between society, politics, and economy both nationally and internationally to be able to get a complex and differentiated picture of socioeconomic, political, and cultural processes in modern societies. Over the past years, collaboration with extramural research institutions has been extended and consolidated through joint professorial appointments. The Faculty’s key partners include the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change (MCC), the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), and the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB).

In addition to the established work of the Potsdam Center for Politics and Management (PCPM) – which coordinates the Focus Area “Public Policy and Management” and the research and transfer services of the Department of Local Government Studies (KWI), the Faculty participates in a number of new, interdisciplinary research fields, including the Berlin Potsdam Research Group “International Law – Rise or Decline?”, the Centre for Citizenship, Social Pluralism and Religious Diversity, the Potsdam Center for Quantitative Research, and the German Internet Institute.
With more than 2,500 students and about 300 graduates every year, the Law Faculty of the University of Potsdam plays a significant role both nationally and in the federal state of Brandenburg. The Faculty trains legal experts for the judiciary, ministries, national and municipal administration, law firms and notary’s offices, associations and enterprises. Its high level of expertise in international law and human rights makes the University of Potsdam particularly suitable for the training of legal professionals for European and international organizations.

The Faculty’s core activity is to qualify students and prepare them for the first state examination in law. The latest research results are immediately integrated into the conception of courses and lectures. Renowned textbooks from prestigious publishers have been written at Potsdam’s Law Faculty. Assistance during all stages of studies and complementary formats (law clinic, moot courts, study groups with online courses, revision courses, and mock examinations) provide excellent opportunities at the attractive Griebnitzsee campus. The specialized fields of study focus on business, European, and international law. This choice of contents emphasizes the practical relevance of studies without neglecting the basics of jurisprudence. The Law Faculty offers a Bachelor of Law degree (LL.B.) that is integrated into the state examination course and enables the graduates either to begin their professional career earlier or to continue their studies to become a fully qualified lawyer or complete a Master of Laws.

A hallmark of the University of Potsdam is the German-French law program in cooperation with the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre. German and French students get a degree from both countries. The offers in continuing education at the Law Faculty tie in with the focus on commercial law in the key fields of study. The Master’s program Company and Tax Law with about 240 students is the only one of its kind in the region. The certificate program “Mediation” also enjoys increasing popularity. Since the winter semester 2017/18, the Law Faculty offers the dual Master’s program Digital Media Law and Management in cooperation with the Film University Babelsberg.
The joint Digital Engineering Faculty of the Hasso Plattner Institute gGmbH (HPI) and the University of Potsdam offers a Bachelor’s and Master’s program in IT Systems Engineering, the only one of its kind in Germany. About 500 students are currently enrolled in the practically oriented program. Excellent IT research is being done at the Faculty and at the HPI Research School for graduates, which has branches in South Africa, Israel, and China. Teaching and research focus on the basics and applications of large, highly complex and networked IT systems. It also develops and researches user-oriented innovations for all areas of life.

Already in the 5th semester, bachelor students spend two semesters learning in small teams how to develop innovative solutions for industry and society. Their mentors are professors and young academics. The projects are commissioned by renowned companies and organizations from Germany and abroad.

Since 2005, students have been presenting their results at the annual Bachelor Podium after the summer semester. In addition to software engineering, there are lectures on soft skills, design thinking, and entrepreneurship. Students can also participate in numerous student clubs as well as faculty-arranged internships and studies abroad.

The Digital Engineering Faculty was founded on April 1, 2017 by the University of Potsdam and the Hasso Plattner Institute gGmbH. Funded by the Hasso Plattner Foundation, it is the first privately funded faculty at a German public university. At the request of its founder Hasso Plattner, the Faculty will nearly double in the next few years. Four new Master’s programs (in digital health, smart energy, cybersecurity, and data engineering), 12 professorships, and another HPI Research School are going to be introduced.
Young, modern, oriented towards the future: With just 26 years the University of Potsdam has already achieved an outstanding position among the universities and scientific institutions of Berlin and Brandenburg. It convinces with its great variety of programs and courses as well as with its distinct interdisciplinary research profile.

Students develop their individual aptitudes and inclinations in numerous single-major programs or combination courses, some of which are exclusive to the University of Potsdam. Among them are Jewish Studies, Patholinguistics and IT Systems Engineering at the newly founded Digital Engineering Faculty. Furthermore, the University of Potsdam is the only teacher-training institute in the federal state of Brandenburg.

Teaching at the University of Potsdam is always closely linked to up-to-date research and driven by the latest scientific findings within and outside academia. Students benefit from the many extramural research institutions in Potsdam that enrich their studies, promote dialogue between theory and practice, and open up job opportunities for graduates.

In addition to education in their subjects, students acquire important skills that help them start their career. The Career Service of the Center for Teaching Quality Development, some individual institutes, and Potsdam Transfer – short for the “Center for Start-Up, Innovation, Knowledge and Technology Transfer” – offer professional expertise to students seeking a job or starting a business.

The University is committed to more “Excellence in Teaching”. Its concept was awarded a first prize in the competition of the same name given by the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (Donors’ Association for the Promotion of Humanities and Sciences in Germany) and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany. The university is committed to maintaining and expanding these high standards.

The University of Potsdam has established a comprehensive quality management system. The Center for Teaching Quality Development is a driving force in this process that facilitates the ongoing development of teaching – providing instructors with information, consultation, and assistance – and of media-based teaching formats. The University supports prospective and first-semester students when they start their studies. It also offers career guidance for students and alumni and helps them start their careers. Key areas are the ongoing development of quality awareness and consolidation of a dialogue-driven quality culture. The University relies especially on student feedback and a dialogue with all university members.

As one of the first German universities, the University of Potsdam received the seal of system accreditation – a seal that reflects the quality assurance of its study programs.
The University of Potsdam is the largest and only teacher training university in the federal state of Brandenburg. Over 3,700 students are enrolled in programs for a Bachelor and Master of Education, all of whom come into contact with the Center for Teacher Training and Education Research (ZeLB). Together with the faculties involved in teacher training, the ZeLB is responsible for teacher training and education research at the University of Potsdam. Its most important responsibilities include developing the Potsdam model of teacher training, issuing regulations for in-school practical studies, funding research, participating in professorial appointment procedures, managing teacher training resources, and quality assurance.

The ZeLB organizes and supervises in-school practical studies and speech training, which are based on the “Potsdam Model of Teacher Training”. The model, developed in 1992, involves many in-school practical studies and a pedagogical and psychological orientation. A key component of the practical Master’s studies is the school internship (practical semester) introduced in 2008. For about 14 weeks, students do an internship at a school in Brandenburg, in another federal state, or at a German school abroad. Speech training is an essential integrated curricular component because occupational requirements: Teaching is a very communicative profession, and both voice and language are indispensable tools.

Since the ZLB’s founding in December 2014, its subject-related studies and didactics have become more closely connected with educational sciences. Using empirical methods, it examines from various perspectives how to good teaching at schools and implements the results directly into the education of future teachers. “Education research” is perceived as research on education, schools, and teaching. It focuses particularly on challenges facing the educational system, like heterogeneity and inclusion, language education, German as a foreign or second language, and the internationalization of teacher training.

In March 2015, the ZeLB got off to a great start, receiving funding for its project “Professionalization: In-School Practical Studies – Inclusion: The Potsdam Model of Teacher Education” (PSI Potsdam) within the German “Quality Campaign Teacher Training”. PSI Potsdam seeks to improve the professional knowledge of teaching trainees by integrating subject-related and didactic educational content, to enhance their skills through in-school practical studies, and to prepare them for inclusive teaching.
Open to the World

International Campus – Research and Studying across Borders

The University of Potsdam is an international community with many faces and stories. Its international atmosphere is created by its students from all parts of the world who enroll at Potsdam for a semester abroad or an entire Master’s, Bachelor’s or postgraduate program as well as by experienced professors and lecturers. The University’s strategic aim is to expand its welcoming culture. A special project is the Refugee Teachers Program, which has the aim to open up employment opportunities in the Brandenburg educational sector for teachers who had to flee from their countries.

The International Relations Office is the point of contact for all international students and supports them both in their studies at the University as well as in mastering the challenges that are sometimes involved when living abroad.

Potsdam presents itself as a city of science – open to the world and tolerant – with international conferences, global networks, and research across borders. This also creates a good climate for visiting professors and PhD students, who all appreciate working in a region with one of the highest densities of research institutions in Germany. The Welcome Center Potsdam is their first point of contact and a beacon of internationalization. They receive help with practical questions of everyday life like finding an apartment or dealing with authorities as well as with personal concerns.

To facilitate a quick integration, the University offers German language courses to its foreign guests and English courses to its administrative staff, organizes intercultural training, and coordinates a buddy program for students who want to learn each other’s languages. To ensure a good start, the Center for Languages and Key Competencies offers a special program for students from abroad.

Many students use the opportunity to spend a semester or a full year at one of the partner universities - and the University of Potsdam supports them. There is a wide range of programs at over 300 partner institutions: from psychology in Tel Aviv, sports management in Australia, or a study trip to Montana to visit the geographical center of the Earth. From a regular course of study or an internship to a double degree or PhD studies – anything is possible. In addition, the University promotes virtual mobility, such as blended learning scenarios, to complement physical mobility as part of the concept Internationalization at Home.

A stay abroad helps students to immerse themselves in a foreign culture and to gain knowledge that goes far beyond that of their field of studies. The University has a special commitment to piquing students’ curiosity for the unfamiliar and to pave the way for successful studies abroad.
Potsdam Graduate School & Academy for Postdoctoral Career Development

Central Scientific Institution for PhD Students, Postdocs, and Junior Professors

Doing your PhD, researching, leading a junior research team, or being offered your first professorship – those who make these career moves at the University of Potsdam receive wide-ranging support from the Potsdam Graduate School & Academy for Postdoctoral Career Development (PoGS). Individual PhD students and members of over 20 structured PhD programs in various disciplines as well as postdocs and junior professors come together under one roof at this central academic institution. PoGS establishes important contacts to extramural research institutions as a liaison body within the research network “pearls”.

Central to the culture of PoGs are an attractive research environment, quality assurance, and individual support. Members benefit from interdisciplinary exchange within the Network of Talents.

For any career move, PoGS offers multidisciplinary workshops and certificate programs for careers in academia, industry, and society. The qualification and advanced training programs are geared to the specific needs of PhD students, postdocs, and junior professors. The “Teaching Professionals” program provides specific further qualifications for academic teaching and management. The programs “Science meets Market”, “Scientific Management”, and “Science Communication and Policy Consulting” prepare young scholars for a career in science-related professions. “Mentoring Plus” for researchers, “PhD coaching” for individual PhD students, the basic module “Management Skills for Research and University”, and “Potential Check” round out the offerings.

The Potsdam Graduate School on the “Exhibition Floor on Science” in Potsdam’s Education Forum attracts PhD students and postdoc, because it provides communication opportunities across disciplines, e.g. in the Science Club, during “Career Talks”, and on PhD Day. A key aspect of its funding structure is to wield difference and diversity and to efficiently support the career paths of qualified young researchers from all over the world.
Equal Opportunities for Women and Men at a Family-Friendly University

Diversity, Family, and Career

The University of Potsdam stands for equal opportunities, family equality, internationality, tolerance, and sustainability – an employer without barriers and with equal chances for women and men. It was one of the first universities to win the TOTAL E-QUALITY award in 2002 and has successfully defended it six times, also earning it the Sustainability Award for Equal Opportunities.

The Equal Opportunity Coordination Office – the office of the Equal Opportunity Commissioner – works to gender mainstream all working areas of the University of Potsdam. It coordinates all issues related to increasing equal opportunity and diversity through the Office of the Central Equal Opportunity Commissioner.

The office coordinates, prepares, and implements various offerings to help promote gender equality. Targeted programs support young female researchers and help introduce STEM subjects to school children.

The University of Potsdam also supports balancing family, studies, and work. While parents are attending or giving a lecture, studying, or researching, their children are taken care of in the daycare centers “klEinstein” or “Springfrosch”. Daycare facilities near the University provide additional flexible childcare for parents who have gone back to school or bridge gaps in childcare, sometimes even in emergency situations. Unicamp provides childcare during summer vacation and offers a wide variety of leisure activities. Childcare can be provided and toys and furniture borrowed during on-site conferences. The University Athletic Department offers a sports program for families (FamFit).

Students and employees with family responsibilities receive special assistance from the Family Service, including information to help them organize their day-to-day studies and work in a family-friendly way, arrange for financing, deal with bureaucracy as well as support to ensure care for their families. The University of Potsdam sees its commitment to being a family-friendly and tolerant university striving for equal opportunity as fundamental to modern education and research.
The Career Service of the University of Potsdam – a department at the Center for Teaching Quality Development – provides comprehensive support for students to actively shape their careers. Workshops, seminars and counselling services support students and graduates in developing their skills and help them to orient themselves professionally as well as to elaborate the best application strategies for their professions.

Each semester, the center offers seminars and events that train interdisciplinary skills and abilities as well as inform students about the various occupational fields and employment opportunities. Individual career counseling and occupation-related test procedures support professional orientation and help discover alternatives to well-worn career paths. Checklists for applications and preparation for job interviews impart a professional and confident demeanor during the application process.

The Career Service also offers opportunities to gain practical experience and establish connections with employers at an early stage. The special program “Exchange for a Day” gives students a taste of typical workdays of University of Potsdam alumni and allows them to learn more about new working areas.

For ambitious female students, the Career Service offers its Mentoring Program. Experienced specialists and executives coach them individually before these students start their professional career. They work on their career aims, be it an academic career, self-employment, or entering the regional industry and administration.

Not least of all, the Career Service informs students on a daily basis of available internships, jobs, and positions in Germany and abroad via the University’s online platform. Useful advice and information about jobs and internships worldwide complete its services.
Fuel for Ideas, Future Markets, Practice Laboratories

Potsdam Transfer – Central Scientific Institution for Start-ups, Innovation, Knowledge, and Technology Transfer

The University of Potsdam is an entrepreneurial university that actively promotes the application and translation of its scientific ideas. Potsdam Transfer is the central institution for science and technology transfer. Its three divisions – Startup, Education, Transfer Services, and Research – embrace a holistic approach.

Several awards for being one of the leading German Gründerhochschulen (universities that are business incubators) underline the quality and efficiency of the University’s start-up and transfer services. The start-up service consultants have developed an accelerator program to optimally fulfill the varied demands of the five faculties and affiliated institutes.

The transfer services team connects science with industry by looking for applicable research, examining inventions and finding project partners in the business world. It offers professional support for presentation of research findings at trade fairs and conferences.

Potsdam Transfer is the helpdesk for transfer components in research applications. The center itself carries out application-oriented research. Its studies have already provided some interesting insight into HR strategies in small and medium-sized enterprises and the workings of lifelong learning.

The University of Potsdam imparts knowledge to various social stakeholders. Potsdam Transfer advises on developing new courses of further training and coordinates existing offers. Specialists and executives have the opportunity to qualify in MBA courses while they work. The Negotiation Academy Potsdam (NAP) also offers further education at the highest level.
UP Transfer GmbH at the University of Potsdam was founded in 1998 and is a non-profit subsidiary of the University. Its task is to effectively transfer the results of teaching and research excellence to the market. UP Transfer GmbH thus bridges academia with business and administration.

The services offered by UP Transfer GmbH consist of three pillars: 1. executive education, 2. applied research and development, and 3. supporting services for science and business (UPT services).

The training offers particularly include practical courses of study (MBA and Master’s degree programs) and further in-service training (individual and certificate courses) for the private and public sector. Research and development teams work on solutions in various fields of application like chemistry, physics, life sciences, and geosciences as well as information and communication technologies.

UP Transfer GmbH also provides the University of Potsdam with comprehensive conference services, patent application assistance, technology consultation, merchandise retailing in the UNIshop, and mentoring the “Economic and Industrial Partnerships.”

Partners and customers of UP Transfer GmbH include private individuals, business enterprises, and public administration as well as organizations and research institutions from Germany and abroad.
Economic and Industrial Partnerships of the University of Potsdam

The University of Potsdam is Brandenburg’s largest university and trains highly qualified specialists. The University has made a name for itself in Germany as an excellent entrepreneurial university. It regards the active transfer of knowledge and technology as a matter of course and imbues regional industry with its culture of innovation in teaching and research.

The University of Potsdam established “Economic and Industrial Partnerships” to consolidate relations between regional companies and the University and to leverage beneficial synergies.

Its express goal is to support the placement of the University’s graduates in regional companies. The University is also committed to its alumni, who are often not very familiar with Brandenburg’s corporate landscape. “Economic and Industrial Partnerships” hopes to close this information gap and show students the region’s professional opportunities. The University not only supports its alumni but also helps companies overcome skills shortage and prevents emigration from the region, which is urgent considering Brandenburg’s demographic development.

Interested companies receive access to an extensive range of services for a differentiated annual fee. These services bundle the existing structures and expertise of the University of Potsdam and tailor them to each company’s needs. The modular service packages include placing highly skilled employees, training and qualification courses as well as networking opportunities. The companies can also utilize the capability and infrastructure of the knowledge and technology transfers as well as various marketing opportunities. Nearly 40 companies have become partners so far. The Potsdam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the savings bank Mittelbrandenburgische Sparkasse are lead partners. UP Transfer GmbH of the University of Potsdam endeavors to expand the group of industrial partners.
The Universitätsgesellschaft e. V. (University Society) is a non-profit association that has been supporting the University of Potsdam intellectually and materially since 1992. Friends, sponsors, and alumni of the University enable scientific and cultural projects, research, and conferences whenever the University’s financial resources do not suffice. The aim is to ensure and maintain the University’s high standards of education, research, and academic pursuit.

The University Society promotes dialogue between business and society through public events. Alumni increasingly appreciate being involved in the development of the University of Potsdam as well as cooperating with the companies in “Economic and Industrial Partnerships”. New and interesting projects are being initiated through this network and interaction. University Society members enjoy various perks like continuing education programs and certification courses. Funding priorities include support for refugees as well as inclusion, start-up, and transfer services.

This support strengthens teaching and research as well as academic projects at the University. Many young researchers are awarded important grants to cover the costs for participating in research assignments and research stays. The University Society also promotes young researchers by awarding not only a prize for the best dissertation of the year at the University’s central graduation ceremony but also a graduation and inclusion award. University Society members are, of course, invited to the graduation ceremony and many other events, including the New Year’s reception of the President of the University of Potsdam, the “Academic Salon” held several times a year, the Day of Science, and the University Ball. The University Society’s contribution to maintaining and promoting teaching and research at the University of Potsdam is indispensable.

In addition to a membership or donation, you can also support the University Society online. Go to www.bildungsspender.de/unigesellschaft to visit one of the listed online shops. After placing an order, your donation will be credited to our association. We are already the most successful donation portal of all registered associations.

http://www.uni-potsdam.de/unigesellschaft
Staying in Touch
The University of Potsdam Maintains Contact with its Alumni

Many graduates leave the University of Potsdam after completing their studies or doctorate, though the University wants to stay in touch with them. Since 2001, the alumni team has maintained contact with former students on behalf of the University of Potsdam to facilitate and establish long-term support and a collaborative network.

The University’s alumni network has about 8,000 members. New members can sign up for free on the central communication platform https://alumniportal.uni-potsdam.de and will benefit from information, invitations, and offers.

The alumni program includes a wide range of activities such as regular newsletters, the print magazine “Portal Alumni”, and invitations to the University. The idea is to keep alumni informed about the latest developments at their alma mater and to stay in touch with its employees. The program also offers various services, including a free university e-mail address, reduced-price university sports courses, and a yearbook in which they can present their academic profiles. Together with partners like the Career Service, the alumni team also supports career advancement through seminars and coaching.

The University of Potsdam wants to encourage former students to participate in the University’s academic life, for example in the mentoring program, where they can advise students on transitioning from studying to a professional life and help them to secure job offers. Alumni can also engage University Society activities, support academic programs and festivities, and sponsor a scholarship within the framework of the Germany Scholarship campaign.

Alumni should benefit from their alma mater’s long-term development while also shaping its image. All graduates are, therefore, invited to remain an active part of the University’s family.
Science in Potsdam

Potsdam is a city of science. Over 10,000 of Potsdam’s 160,000 citizens work in academic institutions of the capital of Brandenburg. No other German city rivals Potsdam’s per capita number of scientists.

Nearly 25,000 young people are studying at the University of Potsdam, Potsdam University of Applied Sciences, Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Fachhochschule für Sport und Management, and the Fachhochschule Clara Hoffbauer Potsdam. In addition, more than 40 scientific institutions are based in our region: Max Planck Institutes, Fraunhofer Institutes, institutions of the Leibnitz Association and two institutions of the Helmholtz Association. In 2017, the first, and currently the only, completely privately financed faculty at a public German university emerged from the Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Technology founded in 1998. Since the end of 2009, also the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Sciences (IASS) has been based in Potsdam.

WIS – the Exhibition Floor on Science in the Education Forum accommodates this work. Together with the scientific network “pearls”, PoGS, and UP Transfer, WIS is developing a testbed for dialogue between academia and other social stakeholders. Its aim is to consolidate communication and interdisciplinary networking of science, industry, and society in Potsdam and Brandenburg.
Campuses of the University of Potsdam

1. Universität Potsdam, Am Neuen Palais Campus
   Am Neuen Palais 10, 14469 Potsdam

2. Universität Potsdam, Golm Campus
   Karl-Liebknecht-Straße 24–25, 14476 Potsdam

3. Universität Potsdam, Griebnitzsee Campus
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