

Mission Statement of the Universität Leipzig

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

Mission Statement of the Universität Leipzig



Mission Statement of the Universität Leipzig

The Universität Leipzig was founded in 1409. In the course of its diverse history, it grew to encompass a wide selection of disciplines comprising almost all areas of knowledge, with a special emphasis on the humanities and the natural sciences. World-renowned scientists and scholars have taught or studied in Leipzig, and important impulses for the development of thought originated here. As the Landesuniversität (the State University of Saxony), it has contributed significantly to the development of this region. Its aim is to continue these great traditions. Its mission is:

A TRADITION OF CROSSING BOUNDARIES

This mission, elaborated in the following principles, is both a definition and a challenge and serves as the basis of the University's decisions and further development.

1 The Universität Leipzig covers a very wide spectrum of disciplines in the humanities and the social, natural, and medical sciences, which develop and interact with each other. The University is proud of this tradition and committed to fostering interdisciplinarity.



In responding to contemporary changes in society's priorities as well as new scientific and technological possibilities and economic necessities, the University continues to adhere to the idea of the traditional university with as wide a spectrum of disciplines as possible. Diversity is the only way to meet the complex challenges of the present. Although always grounded in individual disciplines, research is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, requiring the cooperation of divergent lines of thought, from the humanities to the natural, medical, and social sciences. A diverse but specialised knowledge is the fundamental basis for interdisciplinarity.

2 The University supports achievement, qualification, and competition in research and teaching. Research at the highest level is both the aim of the University and the standard by which its members are measured. The University will intensify the concentration of its forces in research centres.

The quest for knowledge through qualification and achievement has always informed the self-definition of the academic community. The University actively participates in the competition for resources, students, and exceptional scientists and scholars, and sees in this competition an important instrument for its future development. It will support this by allocating positions depending on achievement from an internal innovation pool.



3 The University as a place of free inquiry and culture is dedicated to pure research as well as to a responsible application of its results.

Unrestricted basic research is an indispensable element of the University. The freedom to question and to experiment is the prerequisite that allows science to break new ground. In order for the University to fulfil the legitimate expectations of the public, the state and society must place their trust in its scholars. Thus, the Universität Leipzig insists on the independence of inquiry and debate, which in turn depends on a sufficient personal and material infrastructure. Only then will researchers be able to achieve those scientific break-throughs expected from them, and only then will a new generation be

able to successfully take on the challenges of the future.

Independent basic research is the source of all practical applications of knowledge. Conversely, the practical application of results always presents new questions for pure research. The foundation of a Centre for Biotechnology and Biomedicine and the necessary reallocation of resources to an area of research with an especially high potential for practical development and application indicate the direction of a carefully calibrated course for the future development of the University. Its significance far exceeds the considerable importance of the Centre itself.

4 The University is a place of international cooperation in research and teaching. Concentrations with an international orientation receive particular support.

Research and teaching that remains within national boundaries has no future. The international orientation of the Universität Leipzig is reflected in many ways. Almost one in every ten students comes from abroad. A lively exchange of students and scientists is facilitated through various bilateral and SOCRATES-agreements with foreign universities. Many students from Leipzig spend one or several semesters abroad; visiting scholars enrich teaching in Leipzig with their experience. International doctoral programmes as well as courses taught in English bring together different cultural and scholarly approaches.

Interdisciplinary centres and research cooperation with a re-

gional orientation combine research about different cultures, countries, and regions.

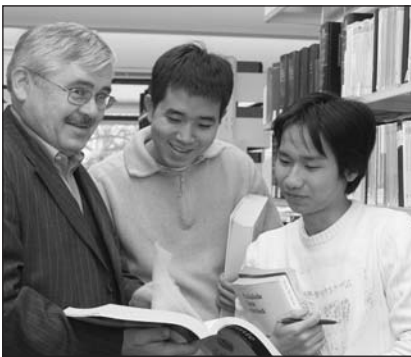
The further strengthening of its international orientation and co-operation is a professed aim of the University.



5 Teaching at the University is characterized by a high scholarly and didactic level and by an individual approach. The University will be measured as much by its adherence to this goal as by the motivation of students to attain high academic achievement and social engagement.

Universities all over the world follow the ideal shaped by Wilhelm von Humboldt of the unity of research and teaching, the transfer of knowledge out of the spirit of research, and the idea of teaching undertaken by researchers and scholars. Students and teachers are brought together in the critical discussion

of existing knowledge and in the active participation in the broadening of this knowledge. The positive results of recent evaluations of teaching and the fact that demographic developments will lead to increasing competition among universities results in a rapidly increasing need to ensure high quality teaching. To support this effort, streamlined, modularised curricula and courses of study offering B.A., B.Sc., M.A., and M.Sc. degrees in the appropriate disciplines are being introduced. Other measures are an improved organisation of the exam process, better advising of students, and a better information and coordination structure within the different departments.



6 The University meets the challenge of lifelong learning by offering continuing education and training on a high scientific and scholarly level. With its manifold offerings for individuals, institutions, and companies, the University strives to be an intellectual and cultural centre with an influence beyond the region.

In the face of fast technological and social change, education can no longer be seen as something finite. The University offers continuing education and training based on the most recent findings in research; an especially efficient form of knowledge and technology transfer between university and practical applications. Its scholarly level differentiates it from other forms of continuing education.

The influence of the University, however, does not end with teaching and research. The University is seen as an intellectual centre by the public to the same degree to which members of the academic community make their voice heard in public debates about the shaping of our society.

Everyone connected to the University continues to take part in this ever-evolving process.



7 The University fosters the development of its students into critical and tolerant individuals with a sense of initiative and responsibility. The University trains leaders for its own needs as well as for the needs of others. It supports the *de facto* equality of women and men.



One of the University's aims is to train elites, including both scholars and future leaders in public and private enterprises. Thus, the University teaches more than just the skills directly related to the discipline alone. It teaches social, communicative, and (inter)cultural skills as well as leadership qualities. The University is committed to the achievement of equality of women and men in all areas.

The participation of students in University and student self-government, in student-run training programmes, and their early contact with scholarly research, for example through participation in research projects, is explicitly supported.

8 In the course of their common history, the city of Leipzig as a centuries-old place of trade, and its University, have been shaped by internationality, openness, and the cultivation of cultural traditions and tolerance. This character determines life and work at the University. All members of the academic community are dedicated to the development of the University itself and the welfare of humanity in general. Autonomy and self-administration are guiding principles for the conduct of all individuals and groups forming the University.

The Universität Leipzig is a community of scholars and students committed to a living tradition. Particularly in the face of today's mass universities, it adheres to the idea of a *Körperschaft*, a community of whose historical basis has found its way into the laws governing the University.



1st imprint 08/2005

Public Relations

Ritterstraße 26, 04109 Leipzig, Germany
Telefon 0341 97-35031
www.uni-leipzig.de/dezernat5
pubrel@uni-leipzig.de

Translation: Dr. Änne Troester

More information about our University

www.uni-leipzig.de
www.uni-leipzig.de/english



About the frontpage photograph

A roof of glass stretches across the main reading room of the Bibliotheca Albertina. The main building of the University Library was devastated during bomb strikes between 1943 and 1945. After eight years of reconstruction it was reopened in 2002 – restored, extended and equipped with the most modern technology.