

# ***ERASMUS Policy Statement*** ***of Friedensau Adventist University***

## **1. University Structure and Profile**

Friedensau Adventist University (FAU), founded in 1899, is a private church-run university of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The self-governance of FAU is carried out by the usual university committees (rector's office, senate, faculty executive committees, student council) under supervision and responsibility of the Board of Trustees.

FAU has over one hundred years of tradition as an educational institution, at which women and men have been trained for church-pastoral, social-diaconal, and health-related services. From Friedensau, development and educational work was carried out in Germany and numerous other countries around the world. Since 1990, FAU is a state-accredited university, its degrees are equal to university degrees. In its profile, FAU focuses on those disciplines concerned with service towards society. FAU currently offers Bachelor's and Master's programs in the School of Theology and the School of Social Sciences (B.A.: Theology, Social Work, Social and Health Management; M.A.: Theology, Theological Studies, Counseling, Music Therapy, Social and Health Management, International Social Sciences).

FAU sees it as its mission to make a contribution to the Church and society through research and teaching. As an institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, FAU is traditionally related to the Protestant Reformation and innovative thinking. Research and teaching are based on scientific methods, openness to unforeseen results as a general rule, and responsibility before God and men. FAU is embedded in the German higher education landscape and has international cooperation and partnerships with public and private universities in other countries. The teaching staff is integrated into scientific networks through their own research activities.

FAU is a campus university committed to interculturalism and equal opportunities, upholding a history of long-lasting relationships with countries on all continents. The two programs offered in English contribute significantly to the multicultural character of the campus. The orientation towards Christian values and faith traditions, the emphasis on a holistic view of man, and the orientation towards service to man and community are characteristics of the University and its campus. In addition to dealing with sciences, dealing with arts, international culture, and personal spirituality therefore is an integral part of

the self-image of FAU. FAU welcomes all students regardless of their religious or denominational background and sees it as its task to positively shape the environment on campus, on which people of different cultures and denominations live and work together.

In its strategically important University Development Plan (UDP 2017 – 2021), FAU is preparing for future developments and conditions in order to ensure the preservation of existing, well-functioning structures on the one hand and to carry out necessary future-oriented restructuring on the other hand. The priority objective of the internationalization of FAU is to increase the attractiveness of research and teaching opportunities for international target groups. For this purpose, FAU intends to cooperate with other educational institutions in the partner and cooperation countries.

In detail, this is to be achieved through the following operational objectives:

- the increase of credit mobility for students and mobility for staff
- the establishment and expansion of international research networks
- the professionalization of service processes
- the expansion of the internal and external communication culture

The Rector's Office and the Board of Trustees regularly control the implementation of the University Development Plan in order to strategically structure the internationalization and align it with the objectives stated therein. Thus, the compliance with the quality criteria are guaranteed. The Bologna Process has been fully implemented at FAU, all programs are Bachelor's and Master's programs.

## ***2. Internationality and Equal Opportunities***

Currently, FAU has 190 students, 72 of which are foreign students from a total of 35 different countries. Nearly 75% of these students are in programs of the School of Social Sciences. And then, there are other 15 students in the program "German as a foreign language".

Internationality has been an established tradition at FAU. Today this applies to relationships with international organizations (e.g. ADRA) and cooperation with international universities as well as to international study opportunities. Therefore, there are programs in English, such as the "Master of Theological Studies" (MTS) and the "Master of International Social Science" (ISS).

The course "German as a foreign language" targets international students who aim to pursue a degree in German. Increasingly, foreign students from Adventist schools, colleges, and universities are taking

part.

The fact that there is a wide range of religious orientation among students ensures that it is possible to deal with different attitudes regardless of one's own position. Another characteristic is the bilingualism on campus, with students from more than 30 countries and 5 continents. This requires the students to deal with their own cultural patterns, but also offers many opportunities for insight into the real life of students from other countries.

FAU therefore sees itself as an international university committed to interculturalism and equal opportunities.

In the interest of equal opportunities at the level of the programs, the offers with which FAU meets the specific situation of so-called "non-traditional students" in a special way are particularly relevant. The fact that there is a kindergarten on campus makes it easier for students with children to reconcile study and parenting. In the case of students who wish to interrupt their studies due to maternity leave, individual solutions are jointly developed to make sure that the students can continue their studies according to their wishes. The admission to higher education via an assessment test offers, in particular to those who have advanced in education, another opportunity to enter higher education later in life. Thanks to the bilingualism on campus, foreign students are not a minority, but an equal part of the student body. University events are always in two languages. Several counseling and support instruments (see below) have been established for foreign students to help them find their way in the new cultural environment. Students with dyslexia can claim compensation for the disadvantages of written examinations. FAU makes strong effort to make it easier for students in extra-occupational Master's programs to reconcile work and study. The manageable group sizes allow individual solutions, if required.

In addition, the staff and students of FAU have a male and female contact person at their disposal who can be consulted in cases of conflict. Moreover, a female Equal Opportunities Officer can be consulted for committee work and relevant issues according to the Equal Opportunities Concept of FAU. With regard to the objective of a non-discriminatory university, the Equal Opportunities Officer critically examines the processes and may intervene, if required.

People with different religious and denominational background study and work on campus. The denomination of a student is not decisive for the admission to studies in the School of Social Sciences.

The campus of FAU allows a holistic study approach which, in addition to specialist study contents, offers various opportunities for personal growth and welcomes and supports social engagement in the

local environment of FAU. In addition, FAU actively promotes offers of artistic-musical activities. Since FAU is based on Christian values, the University also invites students to engage with the topics of religion, ethics, and spirituality.

Gender equality is a central point in the Mission Statement of FAU: “Gender equality as well as respect for other religions, world views, and cultures are basic conditions. As a family-friendly university, FAU aims to create conditions which make it easier to reconcile study, work and family life.”