



SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
NEOFIT RILSKI



Education and Culture
Lifelong Learning Programme
ERASMUS

INFORMATION FOR INCOMING STUDENTS



Brief History of the University



Prof. Dr. Ivan Mirchev, Rector

The South-West University "Neofit Rilski" is the major institution of higher education in the South-West Bulgaria committed to both research and teaching. It is a prominent center of rich educational, scientific and cultural activities not only in Bulgaria but on the Balkans, as well. Highly qualified academic staff is devoted to attract, select, and nurture outstanding students irrespective of educational, social, racial, political or religious background. All these make the University an attractive place for young people not only from Bulgaria but from many countries of the world.

The South-West University "Neofit Rilski" is a higher education institution of modern Bulgaria. It is a state-owned university, established and functioning by virtue of property and an annual state subsidy secured by the government. The University operates in compliance with all the state regulations. It started in 1975 as an affiliate faculty of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with only two departments: Pre-School Education and Primary School Education. In 1983 it was officially decreed as an autonomous higher education institution under the name Higher Institute of Education. Two years later, in 1985, a Scientific Council started to function. In 1995 with an Act of the Bulgarian Parliament it was given a status of a university under the name South-West University "Neofit Rilski".

It was named after one of the famous Bulgarian enlighteners, scientists and educators, Neofit Rilski, who lived and worked in 19th century at the famous Rila School. Currently, the University has 8 faculties and a college encompassing social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, technics and technologies. The degree courses honour several levels of achievement. The range of degrees includes specialist, bachelor, master and doctor (PhD). The University provides also continuing education opportunities and is the largest provider of noncredit professional upgrade training all over the South-West Bulgaria.



General description of the University

The South-West University "Neofit Rilski" is located in Blagoevgrad, a modern town of about 80 000 citizens. It is situated 100 km South from the capital, Sofia, and near the borders of Greece and Macedonia.

The University is housed in several campuses around town consisting of amphitheater lecture halls, teaching and seminar rooms, computer and other specialised laboratories, administrative offices and others.

More than 12 000 undergraduates and post-graduates pursue their studies currently at the South-West University (more than 500 of them are foreign students).

The University provides training in 26 accredited Professional fields of science offering 60 majors, 86 Master Degree Programmes and 38 Ph.D. Programmes in different fields of science: Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Technical Sciences and Arts.

The sports facilities create favorable conditions for the implementation of a regular teaching and learning process in particular professional fields and meeting the quality



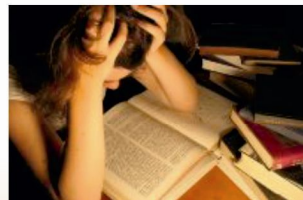
requirements for maintaining sporting and rehabilitation events.

The University Sports Complex for indoor activities adjacent to the existing outdoor student sports complex comprises tens of playgrounds and racing tracks including changing-rooms, offices, a handball, a basketball and a volleyball hall with a total of 400 seats.

The University library as an inherent part of the university structure has significantly expanded its role in the process of the students' training with more than 170 225 volumes in all areas of scientific knowledge. Inside the library there is specially built electronic reading room where 2200 full text articles from international magazines are available to the readers through EBSCO hosting. Teachers and students have access to ProQuest Central with 22 pieces database in various branches of scientific knowledge with a total of 11 000 titles of periodicals, 8000 of which are in full text. ProQuest is becoming a major research resource at all levels in scientific libraries. The Library has also been

provided with free access to the databases of Scopus and Science Direct.

Almost all kinds of arts find their place within the structure of the university. Students are provided with the opportunity to exchange ideas and demonstrate their talents while pursuing their degree. The demonstration of the best lecturers' and students' achievements in the fields of music, drama and theater, dancing, short and documentary films, fashion shows, dance performances, etc. were made possible thanks to the implementation of various projects, the favourable facilities and equipment alongside with the active cooperation between South-West University and various local, national and European cultural institutions.



FACULTIES:

1. Faculty of Law and History

admin@law.swu.bg

2. Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

pmf@swu.bg

3. Faculty of Economics

stopfak@swu.bg

4. Faculty of Arts

art@swu.bg

5. Faculty of Pedagogy

pedagogika@swu.bg

6. Faculty of Philology

filologia@swu.bg

7. Faculty of Philosophy

filosofski@swu.bg

8. Faculty of Public Health and Sport

fops@swu.bg

9. Technical College

tkolej@swu.bg



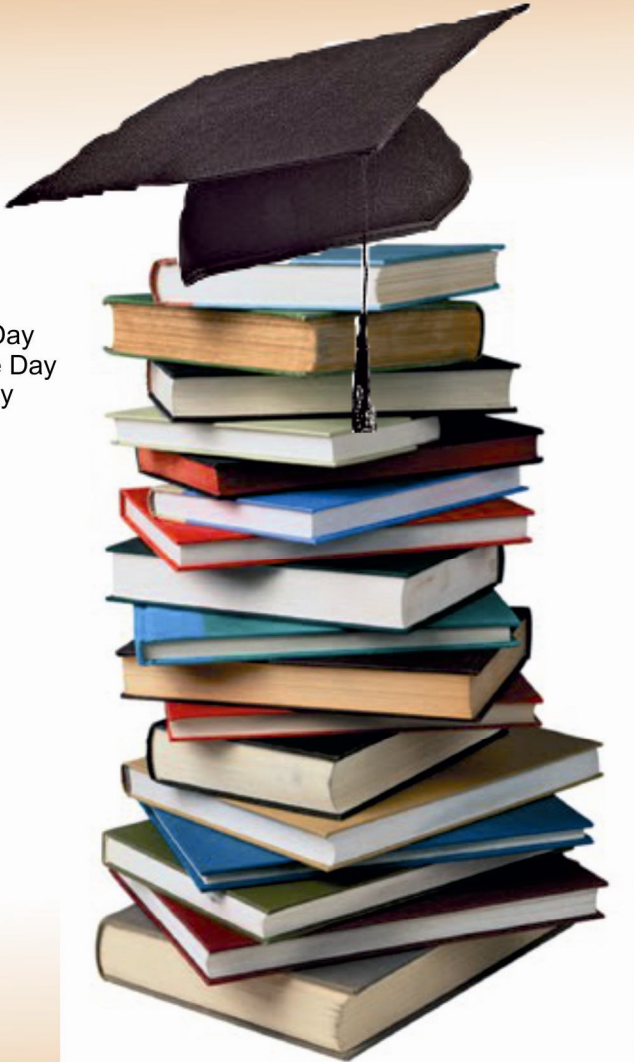
Academic Calendar

The academic year usually starts in the beginning of September and lasts around 9 months. It is divided in two semesters (Fall and Spring). The two semestrial system requires 15 weeks of classes for each semester. The semesters are followed by four weeks examination periods. Unsuccessful students can take their make-up exam in the second examination sessions organized in February and September. The main form of assessing knowledge is written examination. The two-weeks winter vacation is between the semesters. The summer vacation usually starts at the beginning of July and extends until the mid of September. There is a break for Christmas and the New Year holidays as well as for Easter holidays. The University respects all official and national holidays. Special ceremonies are held for the 1st day of the academic year and also for the Student’s Day on the 8th of December. During the semesters the students attend lectures, participate in seminars and workshops and do practical or clinical work. Then they pass examinations during the sessions to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired.

Grading System

National Holidays

- January 1 - New Year Day
- March 3 - Liberation Day
- May 1 - Labour’s Day
- May 6 - Bulgarian Army Day
- May 24 - Bulgarian Literacy Day
- September 6 - Bulgarian Consolidation Day
- September 22 - Bulgarian Independence Day
- November 1 - Bulgarian Enlighteners Day
- December 24 - Christmas Eve



The Grading System at all schools of Bulgaria has been decreed by the Higher Education Act and the long educational tradition. The knowledge and skills of the students are assessed on a six mark rating scale. These are: Excellent (6.00), Very Good (5.00), Good (4.00), Satisfactory (3.00) and Poor (2.00). An examination is considered successfully passed if the mark is at least Satisfactory (3.00). The SWU grading system is transferrable to the ECTS graiding system in the following way:

ECTS GRADE	ECTS DEFINITION	S-W UNIVERSITY GRADE	
A	EXCELLENT Outstanding performance with only minor errors	6	EXCELLENT
B	VERY GOOD Above the average standard but with some errors	5	VERY GOOD
C	GOOD Generally sound work with a number of notable errors	4	GOOD
D	SATISFACTORY Fair but with significant shortcomings	3	SATISFACTORY
E	SUFFICIENT Performance meets the minimum criteria	3	SATISFACTORY
FX/F	FAIL Some more work required before the credit can be awarded	2	POOR
F	FAIL Considerable further work is required	2	POOR

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE

At present the University maintains active relations in the field of academic cooperation with more than 30 universities and research institutions based on concluded institutional agreements.

The University actively cooperates with many institutions without having a signed agreement within the frameworks of various international and national research and educational projects. As far as the exchange of students and teaching staff under the "Erasmus" Programme, funded by the European Commission is concerned, it can be pointed out that the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" has actively participated in the two basic activities, namely, students mobility and teaching staff mobility. For the academic 2009/2010 South-West University "Neofit Rilski" has been ranked among the five top Bulgarian universities who were granted the highest funding under the Erasmus programme.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Prof. Dobrinka Georgieva, Ph.D.
Head of the International Relations
Office
tel: 00359 73 885 004
e-mail: vr_ir@swu.bg

Mrs. Victoria Lazarova
Institutional Erasmus Coordinator
tel: 00359 73 588 578
e-mail: erasmus@swu.bg

Mr. Peter Markov
Protocol and Institutional Relations
tel: 00359 73 588 574
e-mail: pmarkov@swu.bg



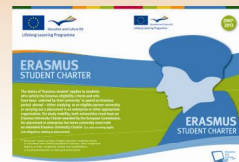
South-West University "Neofit Rilski"
66 Ivan Mihaylov Str.
2700 Blagoevgrad, BULGARIA
<http://www.swu.bg>
e-mail: info@swu.bg
Tel.: 00359 73 885501
Fax: 00359 73 885516



ERASMUS BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

- / Free Brussels University, Brussels, Belgium
- / Lunds University, Lund, Sweden
- / University Nord, Tallinn, Estonia
- / University of Western Macedonia, Kozani, Greece
- / Democritus University of Thrace, Komotini, Greece
- / University of Piraeus, Piraeus, Greece
- / Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- / University of East London, London, United Kingdom
- / University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom
- / University of Sevilla, Sevilla, Spain
- / Free University of Madrid, Madrid, Spain
- / University of Poitiers, Poitiers, France
- / University "Robert Schuman", Strasbourg, France
- / University of Nancy 2, Nancy, France,
- / University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne, Paris, France
- / University Paris 12-Val De Marne, Paris, France
- / University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- / Mykolo Romerio University, Vilnius, Lithuania
- / University of Vilnius, Vilnius, Lithuania
- / International University Audentes, Tallinn, Estonia
- / Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey
- / University of Muenster, Muenster, Germany
- / University of Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria
- / KATHO College, Kortrijk, Belgium
- / University of Pisa, Pisa, Italy
- / University Maria-Curie Sklodowska, Lublin, Poland
- / University of Szczecin, Szczecin, Poland
- / Charles University of Prague, Prague, Czech republic
- / University of Stockholm, Stockholm, Sweden
- / University of Ghent, Ghent, Belgium
- / Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- / De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom
- / Ruhr-University Bochum, Bochum, Germany
- / Uludag University, Bursa, Turkey
- / University of Firenze, Florence, Italy
- / International University of Perugia, Perugia, Italy
- / University of Applied Sciences, Zittau, Germany
- / HUMAK University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland
- / Goeteborg University, Goeteborg, Sweden
- / University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary
- / University of West Bohemia, Pilsen, Czech Republic
- / Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland
- / University of Education, Freiburg, Germany
- / University of Rennes, France
- / National Technical University of Athens, Greece
- / Czech Technical University in Prague, Czech Republic
- / University of Siegen, Germany
- / University of Madeira, Spain
- / University of Applied Sciences, Graz, Austria
- / Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany
- / University of Applied Sciences in Bern, Switzerland
- / Kodolany Janos University of Applied Sciences, Szekesfehervar, Hungary
- / University of Pavia, Italy
- / Technical University of Ostrava, Czech Republic
- / Izmir University of Economics, Turkey
- / Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey
- / "Lucian Blaga" University in Sibiu, Romania
- / University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovak Republic
- / Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic
- / "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje, Macedonia
- / Anadolu University, Turkey
- / University of Macedonia, Economic and Social Sciences, Thessaloniki, Greece
- / University of Tartu, Estonia
- / University of Huelva, Spain

PRACTICAL INFORMATION



ERASMUS STUDENTS CHARTER AS AN ERASMUS STUDENT YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

To sign Learning Agreement with the university that sends you and the university that accepts you.
When you finish your education you have to receive Transcript of Records.
Academic recognizing of the ECTS you have received during your education.
No academic fees, fees of registrations, fees for exams or usage of laboratories and libraries should be paid during the Erasmus period.
The student's scholarship is kept during the Erasmus period.

AS AN ERASMUS STUDENT WE EXPECT YOU TO:

Perform the circumstances and obligations of the Individual Erasmus Contract.
Assure that all the changes connected with the period of education are included in the signed Learning Agreement.
Realize the full period of education, take the exams, observe the rules and regulations of the sending and receiving institution.
Prepare written report for the period of your education after your return.



Insurance regarding accidents, sickness or loss of personal property is responsibility of the students. You are advised to make necessary arrangements for the short-term health and accident insurance before leaving your country.

In case of emergency:



HOW TO GET TO BLAGOEVGRAD

Arriving by plane

From the Sofia Airport to the Central bus station (railway station) you have to change two buses:

1. From the airport to hotel "Pliska":
From Terminal 1 - bus 84;
From Terminal 2 - bus 284;
2. From hotel "Pliska" to the Central bus station (railway station) - one of the following buses: 213, 214, 305, 313.

From Sofia by Bus

Buses depart from Sofia Central Bus Station on every hour. It is near to the Central Railway Station. It takes about 1 hour and 40 minutes to get to Blagoevgrad. The cost of the one way ticket is about 5 Euros.
www.centralnaavtogara.bg

Public transport runs to the city center. Taxis are available at the station, as well. The cost to the city center and to all the campuses is approximately 1.5 Euro.

From Sofia by Rail

Blagoevgrad is 2 hours and a half by train from Sofia Central Station. The price is about 3-4 Euros.
<http://www.bdz.bg>

From Sofia by Car

If you have decided to travel to Blagoevgrad by car, just take the E-79 International Road from Sofia to Greece. The trip lasts approximately one and a half hour.





OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

The official language in Bulgaria is Bulgarian. The Bulgarian alphabet consists of Cyrillic characters.

A l p h a b e t T r a n s c r i p t i o n s	
А	A
Б	B
В	V
Г	G
Д	D
Е	E
Ж	Z h
З	Z
И	I
Й	J
К	K
Л	L
М	M
Н	N
О	O
П	P
Р	R
С	S
Т	T
У	U
Ф	F
Х	H
Ц	T s
Ч	C h
Ш	S h
Щ	S h t
Ъ	
Ь	-
Ю	I u
Я	I a

COMMON BULGARIAN EXPRESSIONS

Hello/Hi - Здравей (zdravei)
Good morning - Добро утро (Dobro utro)
Good afternoon - Добър ден (Dobar den)
Good evening - Добър вечер (Dobar vecher)
Good night - Лека нощ (Leka nosht)
Good bye/bye - Довиждане (Dovizhdane)
How are you - Как си/Как сте (Kak si/Kak ste)
I am fine - Добре съм (Dobre sam)
Yes/No - Да/Не (Da/Ne)
Maybe - Може би (mozhe bi)
What are you doing? - Какво правиш? (Kakvo pravish)
All the best - Всичко най-хубаво (Vsichko nai-hubavo)
Regards - Поздрави (Pozdravi)
Thank you - Благодаря (Blagodaria)
You are welcome - Моля (Molia)
Please - Моля (Molia)
Excuse me - Извинете (Izvinete)
Sorry - Извинявай (Izvinia vai)
What's the time - Колко е часът (Kolko e chasat)
Do you speak ... - Говорите ли ... (Govorite li ...)
... English - английски (Angliiski)
... Bulgarian - български (Balgarski)
... French - френски (Frenski)
... German - немски (Nemski)
... Greek - гръцки (Gratski)
... Italian - италиански (Italianski)
... Spanish - испански (Ispanski)
See you soon - Ще се видим скоро (Shte se vidim skoro)

BLAGOEVGRAD



BLAGOEVGRAD - AN UNIVERSITY TOWN

Blagoevgrad is an unique place to study and live in. It is a modern town that combines the advantages of a big city with its cinemas, theaters, operas, public libraries, banks, bars and restaurants and the cozy atmosphere of a small town with its friendly environment, comfortable, secure and inexpensive life. The green parks and streets as well as the wonderful surroundings make the town a very pleasant place to stay. Its modern buildings and facilities and the comfortable infrastructure make it easy to live and work. The cost of living is inexpensive and there is a plenty of cafes and restaurants all over town. Its strategic position makes it fast and easy to reach so many places of interest as everything is so close - the famous ski resort Bansko, the ancient Rila Monastery, Sofia - the Bulgarian capital or Thessaloniki in Greece as well as many others. The mild climate, fresh air and the healthy mineral waters attract many people to come here on holidays. Due to its merits Blagoevgrad is a preferred place to many scientists, artists, actors, musicians and painters who organize numerous conferences, meetings, seminars and culture events like festivals, concerts, presentations and performances during all year. The town is famous with its folklore ensemble and singing and dances schools that preserve the precious traditions of the region.

Blagoevgrad is an university town. Students land a spirit of vitality and exuberance to the community. Every year lots of young people are getting together to pursue they studies here. The academic atmosphere and the comfortable conditions of the town give all the opportunities for students to concentrate on their studies aiming at best performances and achievements. They enjoy all the hospitality and support of the local people. That's why studying at the South-West University is a choice of thousands of youngsters.

The Region in Brief

Location: Southwestern part of Bulgaria; borders with Macedonia and Greece. **Size:** 5,500 sq. km. **Administrative structure:** Blagoevgrad District, covering 14 municipalities, 12 towns and 259 villages. **Administrative center:** Blagoevgrad.

Mountains. Nine mountains: Pirin, Rila, Western Rhodopes, Slavyanka, Stargach, Ograzhden, Belasitsa, Vlahina, Maleshevska.



Rila Mountain: 2,629 sq.km. Highest peak - Musala (2925 m.); 219 High mountain lakes; over 2000 plant varieties and a rich animal world.

Pirin Mountain: 2,585 sq.km. 60 peaks over 2,500 m (Mt. Vihren - 2,914 m). Alpine landscape. 176 cirque lakes; the biggest 100 decares in size. 1,700 vascular plant species; 24 fish species; 11 amphibian species; 27 reptile species; 217 bird species; 75 mammal species.

Protected areas. Two national parks - Pirin and Rila. Ten reserves: Yulen, Bayuvi Dupki - Dzhindzhiritsa and Orelak in Pirin; Parangalitsa in Rila; Alibotoush in Slavyanka; Konski Dol and Temnata Gora in the Rhodopes; Kongoura in Belasitsa; Tisata and Sokolata in Maleshevska Mountain.

Mineral waters. Balneology developed in Sandanski, Ognyanovo Spa Resort, Dobrinishte. Public mineral-water swimming pools: Blagoevgrad, Simitli, Sandanski, Petrich, Gotse Delchev, Ognyanovo, Yakorouda,



Traditions and Culture

