

Germany

Berlin
Mainz



2009-2010

The School in Germany

C.V. Starr-Middlebury
Schools Abroad

C.V. Starr ~ Middlebury School in Germany

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Please note that information in this Handbook is subject to change.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

- 3 Approximate Program Costs
- 4 Expenses
- 4 Visas
- 4 Registering at the U.S. Embassy
- 5 Medical and Accident Insurance
- 5 Travel to Germany
- 6 Checklist of Important Things
- 6 General Packing Suggestions
- 7 Customs
- 8 International Students Going Abroad

ARRIVAL IN GERMANY

- 9 Upon Arrival
- 9 How to get to Mainz
- 10 How to get to Berlin
- 11 Getting Settled
- 11 Temporary Lodging
- 12 Orientation

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- 13 Academic Calendar
- 13 Credit
- 13 Courses at German Universities
- 14 Tutors
- 14 German Papers
- 14 Course Offerings
- 15 FAQs
- 16 Academic Expectations
- 18 Classroom Etiquette

- 19 Grade Equivalency
- 19 Learning Outside of Classroom

LIVING IN GERMANY

- 21 Housing
- 22 Finding Your Own Housing
- 22 Eating in Germany
- 22 Travel within Germany

ON-SITE MONEY MATTERS

- 24 Currency Exchange
- 24 Money and Banking
- 24 Credit and Debit Cards
- 24 Traveler's Cheques
- 25 Emergency Cash
- 25 Working in Germany

COMMUNICATION WITH HOME & FRIENDS

- 26 Communication and Immersion
- 26 Mail
- 26 E-mail
- 26 Telephone
- 27 Cell Phones
- 27 Voice-over-IP (VoIP)
- 27 Photocopy and Faxing

LOCAL INFORMATION

- 28 Mainz
- 30 Berlin

2009-2010 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Dear Students,

Congratulations on your decision to study with the C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in Germany. I would like to personally welcome you and invite you to make the most of your time abroad. Immersing oneself in a different culture is an exciting adventure that can be challenging at times. Try to maintain the inquisitive spirit of the explorer you've already demonstrated by signing up for study abroad. A new world awaits and welcomes you, but you should inform yourself about what to expect. This Handbook is designed to answer most of your important questions before departure. Please also consult the website of the School in Germany:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/>

Once you're here, the success of your stay depends mostly on your own initiative. Not knowing initially how everything works shouldn't hold you back. After all, going abroad is not about "knowing" but about "finding out"! If you're ready to make your stay an experience you'll cherish for the rest of your life, I'm more than willing to assist.

This Handbook is a companion piece meant to be read and used in conjunction with the C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad General Handbook:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/handbook/>

Welcome to Mainz and Berlin - I look forward to meeting you!

Heike Fahrenberg, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Director
C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in Germany

PRE~DEPARTURE INFORMATION

APPROXIMATE PROGRAM COSTS

The following is an estimate of program costs for full and half-year students as of March 2009. Please remember that Middlebury College only bills you for the tuition portion and housing (if pre-arranged through Middlebury) and the \$1,100 per semester study abroad fee (for Middlebury College students only); the remaining expenses will be out-of-pocket. Amounts that you will pay in the U.S. are given in dollars; expenses you will incur while in Germany are given in Euro. Figures may vary depending on individual lifestyles and situations. Please note that the “personal” figure covers only some basic necessities and is not intended to include students’ discretionary spending (e.g. travel throughout Europe). For financial aid budgeting purposes, the exchange rate is 1 € = \$1.40.

Berlin students who arrange dorm housing through Middlebury will be billed for the reservation fee only. This reservation fee will be applied to the rent once students sign their rental contract in Berlin. Most dorms ask students to pay the first month's rent plus a down payment (one month's rent + 10€) in cash when signing the rental contract. These students should be aware that the remaining rent will have to be paid by them via bank account transfer.

Mainz students who arrange dorm housing through Middlebury will be billed for rent each semester (in 6-month increments).

N.B. Fluctuating exchange rates make advanced planning of costs challenging. We advise that you overestimate your costs to accommodate these fluctuations.

<u>Full Year</u>	<u>Mainz</u>	<u>Berlin</u>
Tuition	\$20,500	\$20,500
Room/Board	€4,500	€4,500
Books/Supplies	€700	€700
Personal	€4,000	€4,000
Travel from NY	\$1,300	\$1,300
Study Abroad Fee (Middlebury students only)	\$2,200	\$2,200
TOTAL	~\$36,880	~\$36,880

<u>Semester</u>	<u>Mainz</u>	<u>Berlin</u>
Tuition	\$10,250	\$10,250
Room/Board	€2,000	€2,000
Books/Supplies	€350	€350
Personal	€2,000	€2,000
Travel from NY	\$1,300	\$1,300
Study Abroad Fee (Middlebury students only)	\$1,110	\$1,110
TOTAL	~\$18,740	~\$18,740

EXPENSES

Keep in mind that the amount of money you spend ultimately depends on the lifestyle you choose. The figures above do not account for nights out or restaurant meals taken everyday.

Remember to budget extra if you are planning to travel before or after your program. Plane tickets are often more expensive than in the U.S., but train travel has remained relatively inexpensive. If you are a big spender in the U.S., bringing more money would be a good idea. Students who plan on regularly sampling the nightlife of their cities should remember that this adds to their expenses, and they should also budget extra money for taxis.

VISAS

Citizens of the U.S., Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, as well as EU citizens do not need to apply for a student visa to enter Germany. They may automatically apply for their residence permit (*Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*) upon arrival in Germany without a visa. However, students with other passports will be required apply for a student visa at the German Consulate General in Boston prior to departure. While entry into Germany may be possible on a tourist visa, it cannot be changed from a tourist to a student visa within Germany. Without a student visa, all non-EU, non-U.S., etc. (see above) students cannot apply for a residence permit and therefore cannot be enrolled at a German university. Please note that German authorities will require students to leave and return to their home countries for proper documentation before readmission.

Mainz

At orientation, the director of the School in Germany will help students complete the paperwork for a residence permit (*Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*).

Berlin

Once you know when you'll be arriving in Berlin, please contact the director and the assistants on-site to arrange for assistance with the bureaucratic steps you'll have to take even before the first orientation meeting. You should visit the *Akademische Auslandsamt* at *Freie Universitat* to complete the necessary paperwork for a residence permit (*Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*). Please ask to speak with Ms. Gleisenstein or Mr. Schepker who will provide you with the appropriate documentation and directions on how to register with the police (part of the residence permit application).

Akademische Auslandsamt at Freie Universitat
Brümmmerstr. 52
14195 Berlin
Tel: (030) 838-7390
Fax: (030) 838-73901
mailto: bruemmer@zedat.fu-berlin.de
Office Hours: Mondays & Tuesdays 9:30-12:30, Thursdays 3:00-6:00

Directions to their office at FU can be found on the website of the School in Germany:
http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/student_life/berlin

REGISTERING WITH THE U.S. EMBASSY

All U.S. citizens are required to register themselves with the U.S. Embassy in Germany before departure from the U.S. In the event of an international, political, or family emergency, or in the event that a passport is lost or stolen, the U.S. Embassy will be much better able to assist registered citizens. Please visit the Department of State's website and follow the links to register: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>

Registration is fast and costs nothing. Please print the confirmation page after you have registered; leave one copy at home and take one with you. Students of other nationalities should check to see if it is possible to register with their own embassy in Germany.

MEDICAL AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Students studying at the Middlebury School in Germany are automatically enrolled in a study abroad health insurance plan for the duration of the program through HTH Worldwide. This coverage is mandatory and cannot be waived. You will receive an insurance card and proof of insurance letter (required for university registration in Germany) from HTH. The HTH insurance plan provides up to \$100,000 medical coverage (accident/sickness) with zero deductible. There is also medical evacuation and repatriation coverage. Coverage begins on the first day of your program abroad and ends on the last, with the option to purchase additional months of coverage by contacting the insurance provider directly.

NOTE: All students must show written proof of insurance coverage in order to be registered at the *Johannes Gutenberg-Universität* and *Freie Universität*.

TRAVEL TO GERMANY

TSA Regulations

The Transportation Security Administration regulates what items may be carried aboard aircrafts and these regulations are subject to change. Therefore, you should consult their website closer to your date of departure: <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel>

N.B. Possessing certain items while going through security may result in fines of \$250 - \$1,500 or, in the case of firearms, may be considered a criminal offense.

Airline Luggage Regulations

Students should contact their airline to confirm exact luggage allowances. We strongly suggest you stick to these guidelines, or be prepared to pay excess baggage fees, which can be quite expensive. We also suggest that you consider insuring your luggage through a comprehensive travel insurance policy. Some travel insurance is included under the HTH Worldwide policy. Furthermore, it is possible that you may be covered under a policy held by your parents, so investigate this prior to departure. Travel insurance options can be researched at:

<http://www.insuremytrip.com>

Airline Reservations

Students are responsible for their own travel arrangements. We recommend using a student travel agency for flexibility and the best rates. Some agencies to investigate, among others, are:

STA Travel: <http://www.statravel.com>

StudentUniverse: <http://www.studentuniverse.com>

Travel CUTS: <http://www.travelcuts.com>

Arrival/Departure

Please consult the School in Germany online calendar before purchasing any tickets. Do not plan to arrive at night, on a weekend, or on any national holidays. You will find it impossible to find a place to stay or move into any pre-arranged accommodation if you do so.

If you have pre-arranged your housing, we still recommend that you arrive in your host city during the suggested check-in period listed on each site's calendar. If you have to arrange your own housing, you should plan to arrive at least one month prior to the first orientation meeting. Make good use of your time to become familiar with and adjust to your new surroundings, to arrange for cell phone and email service and shop for food and supplies. **PLAN TO ARRIVE**

EARLY IN THE MORNING. Nobody will be on duty on weekends or German holidays. Dormitory staff (holders of the room keys) will not be on duty around the clock and probably won't be in their offices on Friday afternoons either.

UNIVERSITY HOUSING OFFICES ARE ONLY OPEN IN THE MORNING ON WEEKDAYS. Once you have your travel itinerary, please e-mail it to the director.

Departure: Since you will need to hand in your research papers, clean your room, and make an appointment with the dormitory staff to get your room checked before your departure, it is especially important that you plan your return to the United States or travel to another destination **after the date of the last day of the semester**. (Exceptions apply to fall-only Middlebury College students, who are permitted to leave Germany on the Thursday before the start of the spring semester in Vermont).

CHECKLIST OF IMPORTANT THINGS TO BRING ABROAD

- Schools Abroad General Handbook:
<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/handbook/>
- School in Germany Handbook:
<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/handbook/>
- Airline ticket/electronic ticket information [+ 1 copy]
- Proof of Insurance from HTH Worldwide [insurance card + letter]
- Extra passport photos
- Debit/Credit cards
- Certified copy of original birth certificate [in case your passport is lost or stolen]
- Medications in original containers and copies of prescriptions
- International Student Identity Card (optional): <http://www.myisic.com/MyISIC/>

GENERAL PACKING SUGGESTIONS

Plan carefully what to bring, keeping in mind that you will have to carry all of your own luggage while traveling. This means TRAVEL LIGHTLY. We cannot emphasize this strongly enough! Choose each item carefully and avoid duplication.

Consider what you will use for luggage. As you pack for the flight over, also keep in mind that when you travel you will be carrying this same luggage by yourself, sometimes over great distances or on crowded trains. Take things that are easy to manage and avoid over-packing. One rule of thumb is to pack your bags and walk around the block with them three times; then re-pack.

Clothing

Winter in Germany is not severe, but it is damp and has a penetrating chill. Central heating may not be adequate, so you will need warm clothing, including a heavy winter coat or a down jacket. Remember that German clothes are often expensive and some require dry cleaning, so be sure to bring with you whatever you think you will need. The best idea is to bring clothing that you can layer, so, as the seasons progress, you can dress accordingly.

Toiletries

Although most U.S. products are sold in Germany, you may find them costly. If you cannot do without certain items or if you are not willing to experiment with European products, take along a sufficient supply.

Prescriptions

If you are taking any medication that is not available in Germany, **you should take a full supply of what you will need with you on the plane together with all the appropriate prescriptions.** Mailing medicines across international borders is extremely complex and often impossible. Prescription medicines should be left in the original containers. It is also suggested that you carry the original prescription or a note from your doctor to avoid questioning. Please also note that in the event that a prescription must be replaced in Germany, you should have the GENERIC NAME of your medication on the prescription, in addition to the U.S. 'brand' name.

If you are under a doctor's care for a specific condition, you may want to bring a copy of your medical history with you or sign a release form with your doctor in case your medical history needs to be sent to a doctor in Germany.

Electrical Appliances

The electrical current in Europe is 220 volts/50 cycles rather than the 110/60 found in the United States. You should make sure that any appliance you bring is 110/220 compatible (50/60 cycles). Transformers and adapter plugs are available in Germany, but it is best to buy them in the U.S. before you leave. U.S. transformers are lighter and cost less.

Occasionally, even though a transformer is used, an appliance may not work properly. Because of this difficulty and because of their weight and bulk, you may want to leave most electrical appliances at home and buy those that you find absolutely necessary after you arrive in Germany (i.e., hair dryer, curling iron, hair straightener).

Computers

Students are expected to type their papers and should be advised that **computer resources in Germany are more limited than in the U.S.** Therefore, bringing your own laptop is strongly recommended. Students in Mainz may use the computers and printers at the *Zentrale für Datenverarbeitung* and students in Berlin may use the computers in the *Zentraleinrichtung für Datenverarbeitung (ZEDAT)*. E-mail and Internet access is also available at these locations. In Mainz, you'll have wireless access all over campus. If you do bring your own laptop, you should be aware of the risk of theft. If you are considering bringing your laptop computer to Germany, look at your power cord to determine whether it has dual voltage capability (110/220).

Bed and Bath Linens

We do not recommend that you bring sheets, blankets, or pillows with you. They are heavy and take up too much space in your luggage (and you may find that sheets from home do not fit your bed properly). We recommend that you purchase these items after arrival in Germany. In Mainz, students can purchase these items at a variety of discount and department stores, while in Berlin, the dorm centers carry these items. You may want to consider bringing a lightweight travel towel with you, which should suffice until you are able to purchase more.

CUSTOMS

If you plan to bring any new, non-U.S.-made articles of value, such as cameras, MP3 players, computers, bicycles, or jewelry that are LESS THAN 6 MONTHS OLD, you should register them with U.S. Customs and Border Protection before departure (CBP Form 4457). Alternatively, you can carry your original sales receipts to prove that you purchased them in the U.S. This avoids your having to pay a duty upon your return. Customs regulations vary from country to country; there are usually limitations on liquor, cigarettes, and other goods.

To register your items, download and complete the form available online at http://forms.cbp.gov/pdf/CBP_Form_4457.pdf and present it with your items to a Customs and Border Patrol Officer at an international airport.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS GOING ABROAD

International students in the U.S. should meet with the international student advising staff at your home institution as early as possible to discuss how study abroad may affect your international student status in the United States and the ways it may impact your future plans.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) require re-entry documents for some foreign nationals. If you are living in the U.S. but are a citizen of another country, check with the USCIS to determine the regulations that apply to you and be sure to obtain all necessary re-entry documents before you leave the United States.

ARRIVAL IN GERMANY

When purchasing your airline ticket to Germany, remember that you cannot be picked up or move into your dorm on a weekend or a German holiday. Once you know your itinerary, please email it to the director. The director will share it with the orientation assistants who will in turn contact you about arranging a pick-up at the airport (Berlin) or train station (Mainz). While it is not required that you be met upon your arrival in Germany, it is strongly recommended. The sooner you know your itinerary, the easier it will be to arrange a pick-up.

UPON ARRIVAL

Once you arrive in Germany and pass through customs and immigration you should purchase a phone card (*Telefonkarte*) for €6 at any kiosk and call the director (06131) 22 10 40 to let her know that you arrived safely. Students are required to check in and/or inform the director of any delays in arrival.

HOW TO GET TO MAINZ FROM THE AIRPORT IN FRANKFURT (FRA)

Mainz is served by the Frankfurt airport. We suggest that you plan to arrive on a weekday morning (see calendar).

- Follow the crowd through passport control to the *Gepäckausgabe* (downstairs in all the terminals); get your bags and go through the customs exit with the green “Nothing-to-Declare” sign.
- If you arrive in Terminal 2, follow the signs to the Sky Line. Take the Sky Line to Terminal 1. Once you are in Terminal 1, find the sign for the regional train station (*Regionalbahnhof*, NOT the *Fernbahnhof*), located below Terminal 1, one flight down. On the concourse level, go through the sliding doors to the automatic ticket machines and get a ticket (*Einzelfahrschein*) for *Mainz Hbf*, by pushing 6 + 5, then the adult fare button (identified by icons). The machine then shows the price for the ticket; it shouldn’t be more than €4. If the machine asks you to choose between *über Frankfurt/Hbf* and *über Rüsselsheim*, choose *über Rüsselsheim*.
- If you don’t have any euros, there are a few ATM machines and banks in the arrival halls where you can exchange dollars or withdraw euros.
- Proceed to the platform level. All trains for Mainz leave on Track 3. You may want to confirm this track number before boarding. Make sure you only board the S8 to Wiesbaden VIA MAINZ HAUPTBAHNHOF. Do not board any train going via Mainz-Kastel or you will end up on the ‘wrong’ side of the Rhine River!

Under no circumstances should you board a train without a ticket! It could cost you €40. And do not get on an IC (Intercity) or EC (Eurocity) train: the tickets from the automats are not valid for them. Taking the S-8 is the safest way!

The trip to Mainz takes about 30 minutes. The train will cross the Rhine, make one stop and then go through two tunnels, one short, one longer. *Mainz Hbf (Hauptbahnhof)* is the first stop after the two tunnels. Be careful: do not get off at any other station that has “Mainz” as part of a longer name (e.g. “*Mainz-Gustavsburg*” or “*Mainz-Süd*”).

If the director of the School in Germany or one of the orientation assistants has agreed to meet you at the train station, please call them as soon as you arrive so they can come and get you from the *Mainzer Hauptbahnhof*. You will be picked up within 20 minutes of your call. If you have not made any arrangements with the director, you will need to pick up your key at the *Studentenhaus*. Put your bags in one of the coin-operated lockers (a *Schließfach*) at the train

station. You will need euro coins for each locker you use. You don't want to be carrying your baggage around the campus before you actually have your room key in hand.

When you leave the main entrance of the station, the buses to the university will be **to your right**. They leave from the platform that shows the following numbers: 54, 55, 58, 68. Take one of those buses and get off at a stop called *Friedrich-von-Pfeiffer-Weg*. The other stop, *Universität*, is not convenient for you. You can get a Kurzstrecken - Ticket from the automats on the *Bahnhofplatz*. If you do not have a ticket when the bus arrives, or you are not sure how to deal with the automats, tell the driver that you want a Kurzstrecken - Ticket. The driver will then tell you how much money you need to pay. (Don't push the money in the slots; the driver will do that). Get off at *Pfeiffer-Weg* and use the pedestrian bridge to cross the highway. Head toward the tall building to your right which is the *Wohnheim Inter I*.

The housing office is in the *Studentenhaus* ("Studihaus") at *Staudingerweg 21*, the first of two clusters of buildings on your right, across from Inter I. The office you need is the *Wohnraumverwaltung des Studentenwerks*, located on the upper floor of the complex. Enter through *Eingang C*, go to the door marked *Sekretariat der Wohnraumverwaltung*. Their office hours are: **Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** There you will receive further instructions for getting into your dorm room. You may ask for Frau Junga, but if she is not there, anyone else should be able to help you.

Plan your flight to arrive in Frankfurt between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. If you get to Mainz after hours, try to stay with another student or book yourself into a youth hostel or hotel. The most reasonable hotel near the train station is probably Hotel Terminus, one half block to the right (uphill) from the station. In any case, put your bags into a *Schießfach* before setting off to find the housing office. Keep this information handy for your arrival.

A taxi from the *Hauptbahnhof* to the dorms will cost about €10, depending on the amount of luggage you have.

Upon your arrival in Mainz, please call the Middlebury office at 22-10-40, where there is an answering machine if you don't reach the director. If you do not check in she will assume you have not yet arrived in Germany. Also make sure to notify your family at home. If you do not check in within 48 hours after your announced arrival, we are obliged to assume that you are missing and will have to call the police.

HOW TO GET TO BERLIN FROM THE BERLIN~TEGEL AIRPORT (TXL)

Berlin is currently served by three airports. Flights from the U.S. fly into Tegel.

The Tegel airport is quite small and in the shape of a ring, so you cannot get lost. When you get off the plane you'll immediately spot the baggage claim area (*Gepäckausgabe*). Collect your bags and go through the customs exit with the "Nothing-to-Declare" sign. If you made arrangements to be picked up by one of the assistants, she/he will be waiting outside. Make sure you have the complete address of your room or the place where you will have to pick up your key if you've arranged for a dorm room.

From the airport, you can take a bus or a cab into the city. Cabs leave from the inside of the ring. Take any of the exit doors across the hall from baggage claim and you'll spot the taxis. You should at least €30 in cash if you're planning to take a cab. You'll find ATM machines throughout the airport. Buses depart from the outside of the ring. To get to the bus stop follow the exit signs that say "bus/BVG". BVG is short for Berliner Verkehrsgesellschaft - the transportation company in Berlin.

Several buses leave for the city center every 5-10 minutes. Depending on where your dorm is you can take one the following buses: 109, 128, X9, TXL. Tickets can be purchased in the

waiting area or from the bus driver. A one-way ticket (Zone AB is sufficient) costs €2.10, and an all day pass costs €5.80.

To figure out the easiest route to your new home, we suggest you visit the bvg website (www.bvg.de) before your arrival in Berlin. This website has a transportation calculator, called "Fahrplanauskunft". Just enter "Tegel airport", your final destination, day + time and it will tell which bus/subway/S-Bahn to take. It's a very convenient website that will also help you throughout your stay in Berlin. Note: the bus X9 takes you to the nearest S-Bahn station ("Jungfernheide"). From there you can easily move around with the S-Bahn.

Upon your arrival in Berlin, please call the Middlebury office at 06131 22-10-40, where there is an answering machine if you don't reach the director. If you do not check in, the director will assume you have not yet arrived in Germany. Also make sure to notify your family at home. If you do not check in within 48 hours after your announced arrival, we are obliged to assume that you are missing and will have to call the police.

GETTING SETTLED

We recommend that you arrive in your host city at least **one week before your first orientation meeting**. It will take you some time to settle into your lodgings and adjust to the time difference and the new surroundings. If you can arrange it, we recommend you travel with a friend or two; the shared experience will make the trip and your arrival more enjoyable. Your different language abilities may complement each other, and you can take turns watching luggage. In any event, it's a good idea to let the other students on the program know when you will be arriving and where you will be staying so that you can arrange to get together and share a meal or do some exploring.

TEMPORARY LODGING

Unless you have confirmed that you can move into your permanent housing on the day you arrive in Germany, we strongly urge you to reserve temporary accommodation PRIOR to departure. To call Germany from the U.S., dial 011-49- plus the last digits of the number (drop the first zero when calling Mainz from outside of Germany). Don't forget the time difference, which is normally six hours between the East coast of the U.S. and Germany.

In Berlin:

Studentenhotel Hubertusallee
Delbrückstraße 24, 14193 Berlin (Grunewald)
Tel: 011 49 (30) 891 97 18
mailto: studentenhotel.hubertus@studentenwerk-berlin.de
<http://www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/wohnen/studentenhotel/index.html>

Jugendgästehaus am Zoo (Comfort Inn) Hardenbergstr. 9a
D-10623 Berlin
(U-Bhf. "Ernst-Reuter-Platz")
Tel: 011 49 (30) 312 94 10
mailto: info@jgh-zoo.de
<http://www.jgh-zoo.de/>

Meininger City Hostels
3 in Berlin
Tel: 011 49 (30) 666 36 100
mailto: welcome@meininger-hostels.de
<http://www.meininger-hostels.com/en/meininger-hostels/hostel-hotel/home/>

Jugendgästehaus Central
Nikolsburgerstr. 2-4
D-10717 Berlin
(U-Bhf. "Güntzelstr.")
Tel: 011 49 (30) 873 01 88
mailto: berlin@jugendgaestehaus-central.de
<http://www.jugendgaestehaus-central.de/index.shtml.de>

In Mainz:

Jugendgästehaus Mainz
Otto-Brunfelschneise 4
06131 85332
<http://www.jugendherberge.de/>

Please keep the director advised of your current address, no matter how temporary. We also must have a permanent address as soon as you are settled.

ORIENTATION

Orientation sessions are mandatory for all students. The orientation periods in Mainz and Berlin last for approximately two weeks before classes begin. During the orientation period, students apply for and are issued residency permits, enroll (*immatrikulieren*) at the university, and get accounts for e-mail and the Internet. Please note that registering for an email account at the local university is necessary in order to be able to use the online services of that specific university. You will also begin the process of selecting courses and signing up for them (individually in consultation with the director of the School in Germany and with the instructors of the courses). You also should start looking around for activities you might want to engage in, clubs to join, places that might have the potential to become your favorite spots. Once classes begin, you won't have the same amount of time available to make yourself at home in your host city – the earlier you start, the faster you'll feel settled.

Mainz

Students are introduced to the university campus and the city; they are shown the German methods of researching and writing papers and of doing oral reports for their courses.

Berlin

During the first two days of orientation run by the director, students are introduced to the university campus and the city; they are shown the German methods of researching and writing papers and of doing oral reports for their courses. The second part of the orientation is run by the *Akademische Auslandsamt* of FU. Their program gives students the opportunity to sign up for trips in and around Berlin, to register for tours of the main library, and to meet German students who study in the same departments they might be interested in. Participation in FU sponsored events is strongly recommended but not obligatory. In addition, individual departments have separate orientation events students may attend.

ACADEMIC & ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Students should consult the calendar of the School in Germany on our website, as the dates may change after the publication of this handbook:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/calendar/>

Please keep in mind that dates may change even after your arrival in Germany.

Important: All students must remain in Germany until they have taken their final exams/turned in their final papers within the university's official exam period. Students who choose to leave early may forfeit credit for the entire semester.

CREDIT

All Undergraduates

Every student's academic program must be approved by the director of the School in Germany. Four courses per term are required. For three of those courses, students must write papers of a minimum of 12 pages. Students may choose to take a written exam for the 4th course. *Students are not permitted to take lighter loads, nor will they receive additional credit for heavier loads.* Forms are available at the School in Germany office in Mainz to help students document all information relevant for course recognition and transfer to their home institutions.

Middlebury Undergraduates

Middlebury College students receive five units of credit for the *Wintersemester* (fall), four units of credit for the *Sommersemester* (spring), and nine units of credit for the academic year. Where J-term equivalency credit is awarded, reduced course loads result in the loss of this credit.

Non-Middlebury Students

Middlebury College considers a semester/academic year abroad equivalent to a semester/academic year in the U.S. Students who transfer their credits to other institutions typically receive 16-15 credit hours per semester or 20-25 quarter units per semester for 4 or 5 courses. Because an undergraduate student's home institution determines the number of credits awarded for work abroad, students are urged to consult with their advisers well ahead of time.

COURSES AT GERMAN UNIVERSITIES

The courses offered at JoGU and FU fall into the following categories:

A) Proseminar – Basic Level Seminar/Module (1st to 2nd year)

Especially designed for **undergraduate students**, the *Proseminar* and its new equivalents in the Bologna system serve as an introductory course into various fields and methods of scholarly work. Students will write a paper of 12 pages (minimum). If they are required to give an oral report (20 min) they may develop the topic of this report into their paper, subject to the approval of the professor. Students should make sure they ask their professor for guidelines applying to the *Fachbereich* in which they take the *Proseminar*.

B) Übung/Module, all levels

The *Übung* addresses specific interests and serves **graduates and undergraduates alike**. The level of in-class discussion mainly depends on the participants. German students tend to take this type of course less seriously, because they don't have to write a paper or take a written

exam to gain credit for it. A 12-page paper is required of School in Germany participants. Students should also be aware that class discussion and the preparation of the assignments are to be taken just as seriously as in their seminar courses, even if this course type normally asks for less preparatory work than the *Proseminar*.

C) Vorlesung

The *Vorlesung* also serves **graduates** and **undergraduates** within the same session. This course type is supposed to provide students with background knowledge but also may explore specific topics. While German students consider this to be the easiest course and do not earn credit for it since “all” that they have to do is “listen” and take notes, listening and taking notes continuously for 45 minutes is a respectable achievement if you are not a native speaker of the language in which the class is taught. Most “lectures” are taught in two one-hour sessions per week. Students taking this type of course should be prepared to have to check up on dates or facts in the library by themselves. To gain credit, School in Germany students take a written exam which covers content from class lectures and assigned readings.

N.B. Due to the fact that different departments at both universities are in the process of implementing the Bologna system, you may see old course types listed along with new course types. There is no need to worry about those sometimes confusing choices. Pick the courses you are most interested in and present your course list to the director for approval in any case.

TUTORS

The director will assign a tutor(s) to each student after she receives his/her class schedule. The student and tutor will have a regular weekly meeting starting in the 6th week of the semester. Tutors will assist students with their papers by answering questions concerning grammar or style. They are instructed to help students answer those questions that cannot easily be answered by consulting a dictionary or grammar book. Tutors will point out mistakes and problems but they won't proofread papers or fix mistakes. Tutors will be available approximately one to two hours per student per week. It is therefore advisable to start writing first drafts as soon as possible in order to have the chance to work with a tutor. Experience shows that consulting the tutor in the last week with three written papers due does not work.

GERMAN PAPERS

The level of analysis in German papers should be complex. The use of secondary works and primary sources is of utmost importance for building one's argument. Professors usually help with selecting secondary readings so that the students won't be in danger of “drowning” in the mass of material usually available to them. Rules concerning the form of the paper, the form of the bibliography etc., might differ among the various *Fachbereiche*.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Mainz

Each department publishes a list of courses for the following semester, complete with descriptions and reading lists, near the end of each preceding semester. The director of the School in Germany will make copies available for course selection. Please note that most of these course listings can be accessed via the Internet. Go to <http://www.uni-mainz.de/> and click on *Fachbereiche*. Choose the *Fachbereich* (department) you are interested in, and their homepage will guide you to their *Lehrveranstaltungen* or their *Lehrangebot*. German studies majors generally take courses in the German department, in theater and film studies, in *Deutsche Volkskunde*, political science, comparative literature, history, music, and art history. It is also possible to take courses in other fields with the approval of the School's director.

Students should consult their home school adviser(s) and the appropriate department chair if they wish to have such courses counted toward degree requirements. N.B. Each student's academic program must be pre-approved by the School's director.

For course listings see:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/program/mainz.htm>

Berlin

For course listings at FU, please use their online resources at:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/program/mainz.htm>

Depending on your language skills, you are free to choose courses from different "*Fächer*." German studies majors generally take courses in Theater and Film studies, in *Deutsche Volkskunde*, political science, comparative literature, history, music, art history, or economics. Students may take courses in other fields, with the approval of the School's director.

It is of utmost importance for you to talk to the instructor in the course you have selected after the first session of the class. This instructor must be willing to let you write a paper of 12 pages, no matter what type of course s/he is teaching. The director of the School in Germany will provide appropriate letters of introduction.

FAQs

Course Selection

Do I have to take 4 *Proseminare* per semester?

No. The actual combination of course types depends on the workload demanded in each class. This workload may vary depending on the topic the class deals with and especially on the reading assignments. Students will normally take one *Vorlesung* per semester and the remaining course load will be comprised of *Proseminar* and *Übungen*.

When do I have to make the final decision about which classes I am going to take?

You should attend each class twice. By the end of the fourth week of the semester your schedule should be set.

How does choosing classes work?

Each student meets individually with the director in the second week of their orientation period after having browsed through the catalogues and decided what classes might interest them.

In your first advising session, you get to ask all the questions you might have concerning the classes you've picked. The following week you have the chance to check out those (and other) classes to see whether this really is what you want. After you've seen everything you wanted, you will again have an opportunity to meet with the director and ask more questions, change, or finalize your decisions. At the end of the fourth week of classes, you will be required to make a final decision and then hand in a list of courses you plan to attend for registration purposes.

Class Work and Absences

How do I find a paper topic if the professor doesn't hand out any lists?

Just like German students, you should go and talk to the professor during office hours at the beginning of the semester. It is especially helpful to have some thoughts on what you would like to work on before you show up at your professor's door.

How many times do I have to meet with a professor?

At least three times. First, when you talk to him/her about taking you into his/her class and asking whether you should do the paper or the exam; second, when you approach them about a paper topic; and third, when you go back with your paper outline and suggestions about the secondary material you want to include.

Can I get help with writing my paper?

Yes, if this help extends to grammatical questions only. You will include a statement in your paper that states that you have received no assistance other than this person who helped you with the grammar of that paper — that's all you need to do. (See section on the Honor Code.)

Why do classes scheduled to start on the hour start 15 min. late and end 15 min. early?

This is common in German university classes. The fact is that these 15 minutes (called the *Akademische Viertelstunde*) are highly useful to get or keep in touch with fellow students. Universities are too big to run into each other accidentally. So, if you want to look for German friends taking the same class with you, here is your chance to start.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

What professors expect from students is self-reliance, responsibility, and a willingness to learn things even though they might not be on the test or relevant to the topic of their paper. They furthermore expect students to ask questions whenever they feel they do not understand something. Professors can't foresee which student might need which information at which point in time. Remember: they won't invite you to ask questions because they think it's a given that everybody who has a question will ask!

When a professor hands out a reading list in class students may ask how many of the listed works they should actually read. A typical response from a professor would be that it all depends on a variety of decisions that the professor will not make for you. You should ask yourself what you are interested in and how much you want to know about the material. Look at a couple of the sources. You may not find each of them equally helpful. Make an informed decision on what to include or exclude.

Learning how to make those decisions is an integral part of your educational experience because it is a skill you will need in order to work academically in nearly every field. Nobody expresses this expectation —it's a given in Germany. Likewise, nobody thinks it's necessary to let students know they should have prepared the material before it is discussed in class. It goes without saying. In a way, the professor, by sharing his/her expertise, only points out fields of possible interest or provides students with the basis from which they are expected to start exploring the field on their own.

In that sense, professors teach methods and support the students' efforts, but, in order to do so, they expect students to demonstrate effort. A professor might provide a course-binder and store it in one of the libraries. S/he might keep you informed on the binder's content and assume you know that it is relevant to the course, but s/he might not tell you how much you should have read by which time. It goes without saying that if you're interested enough in the course, you are going to check out the binder, copy it, and familiarize yourself with its contents as soon as possible in order to be a well-informed participant during in-class discussions or to benefit from a lecture.

Possibly the most ancient style of teaching, “lecture” was supposed to provide students with the opportunity to listen to the unquestionable “expert” who would share his (!) knowledge with those striving to become experts themselves. Many people think that it is due to this tradition that course syllabi or schedules are not seen as a necessity. Students are supposed to 'follow' their teacher, who will lead them but won't necessarily tell them exactly where they are going. The traditional belief that one who “knows can teach” goes back to times where pedagogy had not been invented. If you were an expert you were by definition capable of giving your knowledge to future experts who would “learn” by listening to you. While this teaching style may seem outdated and ineffective to students used to more interactive formats, you should realize that students today make a different use of those lectures than the students of the past. Students today look at lectures as a “service” provided by the professor who shares his or her expertise without necessarily implying that his or her perspective on the matter is the only

perspective acknowledged in the field. So students gather background information they can apply to their seminars or use as a point of departure for their own further exploration of their topics of interest. That is why lecture halls are stuffed, even though German students neither receive a grade nor a *Schein* for attending courses of this type. You can get an overview of German literature in the 18th century within 15 weeks—which helps you approach this immense body of literature from a more informed basis—what you make of the material freely delivered to you is your choice.

The seminars, whether at the graduate or undergraduate level, are designed to provide an opportunity for in-class discussion. The skill professors look for is your ability to reflect upon the provided materials, or the material your own research provided, and to bring your knowledge to the classroom. You cannot acquire this “knowledge,” however, by memorizing the points of the authors you've read. The professor will want to see that you have engaged the material and have gained a certain distance from it. They want critical reflection and analysis, not a simple repetition of the authors' points.

What is true for in-class discussion (integral part of *Übungen* and all seminar-types) also applies to the papers assigned in the seminars. The assignment or topic mostly consists of a question that your paper should answer. While you are not expected to reinvent the wheel, and while it is very likely that other people with greater expertise than you have written on the same subject, you are still supposed to develop your own thesis (i.e., your own response to the question your analysis strives to answer). The secondary sources (i.e., all those articles or books dealing with points related to your topic) should only serve one purpose, namely, to help you phrase your OWN thoughts more clearly. They should help you to find out what you think and why you do so. And the “what” and “why” should be clearly reflected in your paper. Spontaneous and unreflective responses are uncalled for. As soon as you can prove that your response is based on an intense involvement with the material by reflecting this material in your paper, you succeed. The paper then is graded according to the level on which it reflects your skill to perform the following tasks:

1. Adequate selection of material (focused, balanced, sufficient)
2. Presentation of a thesis you can prove by your argument, based on the primary sources and supported by or defended against secondary sources.
3. Structuring of your points and supporting material in a logical, coherent way. Professors do not care about what you think unless you can show them on what your thoughts are based—and they should be based on the material you used in order to write your paper.

Given the all-encompassing emphasis on “Selbstaendigkeit,” professors hardly encourage students to participate and rarely feel responsible for a student's failure to do so. You may choose to not participate at all. This will necessarily affect the quality of your learning experience and might also affect your final grade. But since professors expect you to know the consequences, they don't feel responsible for you making bad decisions. Nobody will point that out to you, but it's seen as a given that those bad decisions will affect your academic career in a very negative way. Students who make the wrong decisions might pass the course with the lowest grade possible, but they won't distinguish themselves within the educational system. They won't have the same level of knowledge as actively involved students. The decision to which group of students you want to belong is yours. You will not be treated as going to “school,” rather you will be treated as a young adult who is fully responsible for his or her own academic success and the knowledge s/he acquires.

While the responsibility for what you learn is yours, you are perfectly welcome to ask questions. Because you don't have as much time to prepare your papers as German students do, it's perfectly legitimate for you to explain your situation to your professors and ask them for support. Usually this is taken as a sign of your being interested in achieving a high grade because you show that you're willing to work for the course. Everybody knows that no one

(native speaker or non-native speaker) can understand everything. However, no one understands why the person experiencing a problem doesn't come forward and ask questions (maybe twice if necessary).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Punctuality

Being on time is a must. Even if you see other students come in late, be aware that your professor's impression of your overall performance will be seriously affected if s/he repeatedly notes your being late.

In general, being late in German culture might be interpreted as a sign of disrespect. The idea of "around nine" or "nine-ish" doesn't really exist. If you have an appointment with a professor at 9.30 a.m., s/he wants to start talking with you at that time.

Course Materials

If you receive handouts or other class-materials, you're expected to read them and bring them to the next session even if nobody explicitly states that you should. Teachers will assume that you've read and understood the material unless you ask questions, but they might not necessarily invite you to do so.

Likewise, nobody will tell you when to take notes; it is taken for granted that you can decide what's important for yourself. Most students take notes in every session in order to keep a course-journal. This is especially helpful when you take a course on which you'll be tested at the semester's end.

Conduct in Class

You won't see German students wearing baseball caps or hats of any kind in class. It is ok to bring a bottle of water to class, but snacking is not appropriate. Students who put their feet on tables or chairs are considered to be impolite.

In-Class Discussion

In Germany, in-class discussion may encourage students to criticize each other or challenge the opinion expressed by the professor. As long as this is done in a respectful way, there is no need to feel attacked. Your notion of what expresses "respect" might differ from the German notion, however. Don't be irritated if people tell you that they do not agree with you. They are not being rude--they are being honest. You might observe how people "fight" over issues for an hour and then see them have lunch together as if nothing has happened. For them nothing has happened, because they only fought over the issue, not against each other.

Criticism and Praise

You will notice that German professors rarely, if ever, praise their students even when they are happy with their in-class comments. Though this partly depends on individual teaching styles, German teachers tend to concentrate on "mistakes" while they seem to take correct responses for granted. They want to focus on helping students improve—that is why they sometimes focus only on the areas that need improvement.

Attendance--Missing class due to sickness

In general, a professor can deny you credit for a class if you miss it more than twice without a serious reason. You may be asked to show a doctor's confirmation in case you claim you missed your class due to sickness. This is the standard procedure and is not meant to question your integrity. If you do get seriously sick, go see a doctor and ask them for a *Bescheinigung* -- they'll know what to do. The unspoken rule here says that if you are sick enough to miss class, you are sick enough to see a doctor. If you're not sick enough to see a doctor, you might as well go to class.

GRADE EQUIVALENCY

Grades received at German universities will be evaluated by the director of the School in Germany and converted to U.S. grades. The following is an **approximate** conversion table for undergraduate students. This may be modified according to the course taken and the work required. The conversion takes into account the difficulties inherent in studying within a different university system. Due to the late reporting of grades by the individual universities, students should understand that they will not receive their grades until a few months after the end of the semester.

German Grades

as they may appear on your *Schein*

1,0	sehr gut	1
1,3	noch sehr gut	1-
1,7	voll gut	2+
2,0	gut	2
2,3	noch gut	2-
2,7	voll befriedigend	3+
3,0	befriedigend	3
3,3	noch befriedigend	3-
3,7	voll ausreichend	4+
4,0	ausreichend	4
4,3	noch ausreichend	4-
lower: no <i>schein</i>	ungenügend	no credit no credit

Middlebury Grades

as they may appear on your transcript:

A
A
A-
A-
B+
B
B
B-
C+
C
C-
F
F

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The School in Germany encourages all undergraduate students to take full advantage of their experience abroad by participating in learning experiences outside the classroom. Internships, volunteer work, and cultural activities provide students with opportunities to deepen their social immersion in German culture, enhance their language skills, and gain a better understanding of present-day Germany. Immersion is not passive, but an active process you should strive to engage in beginning your first day. In order to immerse yourself, you should check what your host city has to offer; pick an activity that you would like to engage in, and get involved! Start right away to get in touch with native speakers who are interested in the same things you are. Time spent alone in your room, chatting with English speakers on the web or surfing English webpages is time wasted with regard to your successful immersion in the language and culture you came to study. Don't hesitate: if plunge in right away and disregard shyness, hesitancy, and self-consciousness about your language skills, you will reap the benefits faster than you expected!

Internships

Second-semester undergraduates have the opportunity to gain practical experience as part of their education in Germany. Through an 18 hour per week internship in a host organization, students will gain in-depth experience and exposure to the host culture and work environment while enhancing and strengthening their language skills. This experience will also provide students with new knowledge and skills that can lead to greater opportunities in the future. Students may earn one unit of credit for the internship. Students who seek a graded credit must arrange supervision by a Middlebury College professor in advance and submit a substantial academic project at the conclusion of the internship for a final grade. Students interested in internships should speak to the director after arrival in Germany.

Highly motivated and well-organized single-semester students may also be accommodated, but they need to make arrangements in advance through International Programs and Off-Campus

Study the semester prior to studying abroad. Internships are not guaranteed for any participant. They are granted on a competitive basis and subject to the agreement of the school abroad and the prospective employer. Placements are dependent on availability, previous experience, qualifications, and the language ability of each student.

Students who agree to pursue internships are expected to follow through with their commitment until the end of the semester. Students who withdraw from a credit-bearing internship after the drop/add period will earn an "F" and will be ineligible to enroll in another course.

Volunteer Work

Students wishing to contribute their time and service to the community may choose to work as volunteers with organizations in the non-profit sector. The director can assist students in finding volunteer opportunities.

Cultural Activities

Other options that facilitate student immersion include sports, cultural, and outdoor activities. The director is available to advise students on the wide range of possibilities Germany has to offer.

There is a cultural reimbursement each semester for students who undertake German cultural activities. Students will be asked to produce original receipts to receive a reimbursement. This normally does not cover transportation or hotel costs but will include things like museum entrance fees, etc. Please ask the director in Germany for details.

LIVING IN GERMANY

HOUSING

Most School in Germany students are placed in dormitories run by *Studentenwerk Mainz* or *Studentenwerk Berlin* and are billed prior to departure by Middlebury College (who in turn pays the rent) in 6-month increments. Students should understand that dorms are not operated by the university. Students from other institutions of higher education and non-students may also live there.

Applications for the dormitories are handled on a first-come, first-served basis. Typical dorm accommodations are single rooms with communal cooking facilities much like suites in American colleges.

Rent is set by the *Studentenwerk*. A number of factors, including size and age, determine the cost; hence rent varies from room to room. There are no refunds for missed or unused time.

Students are reminded to exercise normal caution with respect to their personal safety and personal property while living abroad.

Mainz

The following is a brief description of the dormitories in which School in Germany students are often placed:

INTER I: Located at the far end of campus away from town, this high-rise dormitory provides modern living accommodations, usually singles, with laundry facilities, a student pub, and great views of the surrounding countryside.

INTER II: Next to Inter I, rooms are either in a communal setting with a large common area or on a hall with seven other students and a common kitchen.

VALENCIAHAUS: Located downtown in Mainz, this dormitory is a 25 minute bus ride from campus. The advantages are: Large rooms, friendly atmosphere, and close proximity to everything downtown Mainz has to offer.

Dorm rooms are equipped with a bed, desk, nightstand, refrigerator, and shelves. Most of them provide Internet access as well. Students need to furnish their own bed linens (pillow, blanket, sheets). Former students recommend that you bring or acquire slippers, towels, and small pots for cooking.

Lunch is the only meal available in the *mensa* (dining halls), and cooking facilities are available in all dorms.

The dormitory phones receive incoming calls but do not permit outgoing calls.

Berlin

If you apply for a room in a dorm run by the *Studentenwerk Berlin*, you will be placed in accordance with room availability. At the moment, there is no way of choosing where you will be placed. You can see the different dorms run by the *Studentenwerk Berlin*: by visiting their website at: <http://www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/>

Bed Linens:

(1) If you live in a dormitory run by the **Studentenwerk Berlin** (all over the city), you can purchase a reasonable “Einsteigerpaket” in every dorm-center:

Einsteigerpaket "Gut schlafen": €47.90

1 Steppbett 135 x 200 cm, Füllung 1.000 g Polyesterbausch
1 Kopfkissen 80 x 80 cm, Füllung 800 g Polyesterbausch (jeweils bis 60° C waschbar)
1 Spannbettuch 200 x 100 cm 1 Bettbezug 140 x 210 cm 1 Kissenbezug 80 x 80 cm (kochfest)

Einsteigerpaket "Gut kochen und essen": €34.90

1 Gedeck (Teller, Untertasse, und Tasse)
1 Besteckgarnitur (Menümesser, Menügabel, Menüöffel, und Kaffeelöffel)
1 Fleischtopf mit Deckel
1 Bratpfanne

Einsteigerpaket ". . .wieder mal putzen": €7.90

Eimer, Besen, Lappen, Reinigungsmittel und mehr für den großen und kleinen Hausputz

(2) If you live in **Alt-Mariendorf** (Kruckenbergstraße 40-62) a blanket and pillow might be available, though you would have to buy your own sheets and pillowcases.

FINDING YOUR OWN HOUSING IN GERMANY

More and more students in Berlin are choosing to find their own accommodation in single rooms or *Wohngemeinschaft*. We strongly discourage single semester students from living alone and no one is permitted to live with other English speakers.

The School in Germany is not in a position to respond to individual requests for help in obtaining housing outside of the dorms. Students must use avenues employed by German students, e.g., ads in local papers in Berlin and Mainz and the *Wohnungsvermittlung* of the *Studentenwerk* in Mainz, which provides information on private rooms. We have compiled a list of resources for students wishing to find their own housing:

http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/housing/housing_berlin.htm

If you choose to find your own housing, you should arrive in Germany early and be prepared to stay in temporary quarters until your search is successful.

Once again: Students are not permitted to live with other English speakers.

EATING IN GERMANY

Students in Germany must provide themselves with money for meals and personal expenses. Please note that the tuition for the study abroad program does not include such expenses. The *Studentenwerk Mainz* and *Studentenwerk Berlin* provide subsidized cafeteria-style meals at lunch time for students at the university. Meals range from €2-4. For students who choose to have Middlebury arrange their housing, kitchens will be located in each dormitory and usually there is a refrigerator in each room. Supermarkets are usually within walking distance.

TRAVEL WITHIN GERMANY

The books *Let's Go Germany* or *The Lonely Planet Guide to Germany* are very useful for information on low budget lodging and meals, sights and places of interest, transportation, and helpful addresses, such as post offices, consulates, etc. Both are updated yearly and sold in the U.S. For suggestions for travel within Germany see:

www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/student_life/

Almost all full-year students on Middlebury's program buy the *Bahncard* (current cost for one year for students is €100). This *Bahncard* issued by the *Deutsche Bahn*, makes it possible to buy all subsequent train tickets at half price (plus an extra fee for fast trains). There are also special

daily tickets for weekend travel only on all local trains throughout the country. For students in Mainz, the *Studiticket* (which is issued at *Immatrikulation*) is good for free train travel in many parts of Hessen and some parts of the Rhineland-Palatinate. For students in Berlin, the *Studiticket* covers all three zones within the city of Berlin and Brandenburg.

When leaving Mainz or Berlin overnight or longer, students must leave an itinerary and/or addresses and phone numbers where they can be reached with the office in Mainz. This information will be kept confidential and used only in cases of emergency or urgent messages from parents. Once you return, please send an email to the director, so everybody knows you're ok.

ON~SITE MONEY MATTERS

CURRENCY EXCHANGE

Fluctuating exchange rates make advanced planning of costs challenging. We advise that you overestimate your costs to accommodate these fluctuations. Please be sure to confirm the exchange rate shortly before your departure so that you budget accordingly. The easiest way to know the current exchange rate is to check on this website: <http://www.xe.com/>

MONEY AND BANKING

Students should arrive in Germany with some cash, a supply of traveler's checks, or debit/credit cards in order to cover initial costs (phone card, train ticket, etc). The currency exchange office/bureaus in the airport arrivals building are generally open from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. All banks will change U.S. dollars or travelers' checks into euros at the current official rate, but bank fees will be charged. We advise you to change at least \$200 to euros before leaving the U.S. or immediately withdraw it from an ATM upon arrival at the airport. Withdrawing euros from an ATM is usually the most economical way to get euros.

Personal checks drawn on U.S. bank accounts are not accepted in Mainz or Berlin, and even cashier's checks or money orders may take up to two months to clear. Consequently you should bring enough money or travelers' checks with you to tide you over for the first weeks (or withdraw it from an ATM). **If you choose to find your own housing, you should be prepared to pay at least three months' rent up front.**

It is not necessary in most circumstances for a student to have an account at a German bank. However, if you want to get a phone, subscribe to a newspaper, or any other service that requires monthly payments (rent), you can easily open a student bank account at one of the local banks.

A bank account can be opened at any major bank in Mainz or Berlin. Accounts are normally free of charges for students, and you will receive an ATM card, which works virtually all over Europe (with withdrawal fees at other banks). You can deposit travelers' checks (and clearly marked cashier's checks) to your account. In Mainz, students report that the Mainz-Raiffeisen-Volksbank on Ludwigstraße has served them best.

If you do plan to open a German bank account, please inquire with your U.S. bank prior to departure on the feasibility of wiring money into a German account. It's easiest to transfer money bank to bank but you need to know the procedures and costs ahead of time.

CREDIT AND DEBIT CARDS

Throughout Germany and Europe it is possible to use credit and debit cards to get cash from a bank during business hours or from ATMs. Students should make sure their cards are valid for international cash advances (call all of your banks prior to leaving for Germany). **Students should be certain to ask their bank if they will need an internationally valid PIN.** Also check what the daily (and in some cases weekly) limit is for withdrawing funds, as well as the bank fee charged per withdrawal.

TRAVELLER'S CHEQUES

If you or your parents/guardian belong to the American Automobile Association (AAA) you can obtain VISA travellers' cheques or a rechargeable VISA TravelMoney card. AAA offers varying denominations and plans. Please contact your local office for the most up to date information or visit: <http://www.aaa.com>

EMERGENCY CASH

BEFORE you leave the U.S., you should discuss with family and friends a plan for getting more money during the program. Check Western Union details and service fees, credit cards, and ATM daily limits and availability.

WORKING IN GERMANY

It is not always easy for visiting students to find a job in Germany, whether professional, clerical, skilled, unskilled, full-time, or part-time, primarily because there are more job seekers than there are jobs. Furthermore, a foreigner may not work in Germany **without a work permit**, and ordinarily a work permit is not issued by the German government in any instance when a foreigner is seeking to fill a position for which **German citizens are qualified and available**. Nevertheless, students who want to work often find part-time or temporary jobs. The *Arbeitsamt* on campus posts such jobs.

COMMUNICATION WITH HOME & FRIENDS

COMMUNICATION AND IMMERSION

Students who seek maximum immersion in Germany should note that regular communication with home, in English, can significantly hinder their language progress and their adjustment to the new culture. If your goal is maximum immersion, you should prepare family and friends for the reality that you may be difficult to contact and that, even when possible, regular calling or e-mailing may interfere with your language acquisition. If something has gone wrong, your family will learn about it immediately. Otherwise, you can remind them that no news is good news.

MAIL

Before students leave for Germany, they will receive their room assignments with the address of their dormitory and room number (if they have requested a dorm room from the director). This address becomes a student's mailing address for letters and packages upon arrival in Mainz or Berlin. *Please note the School office is not equipped either to accept or store students' letters or packages.* **THE OFFICE WILL NOT ACCEPT LETTERS OR PACKAGES ADDRESSED TO STUDENTS EXCEPT IN EMERGENCIES.**

Mainz

The main post office is in the *Bahnhofstraße*. Mail (including packages) can be sent to you there if for some reason you do not have an address prior to your departure. Letters/packages should be addressed with your name, *Hauptpostlagernd*, D-55100 Mainz, Germany. The post office will charge for storage after three business days and some parcel post may have to be cleared through customs. Bring an official I.D. to claim your mail.

The main post office also houses international telephone facilities. The U.S. can be dialed directly from most Mainz telephones: 001+Area Code+7 digits. This will also work from many pay phones, but you will need their special, pre-paid phone cards (available at post offices) or a generous supply of change, at least €10 in coins. Most pay phones **only** take the pre-paid phone cards, so it is a good idea to invest in one upon arrival. American phone cards, however, can only be used in conjunction with push button phones.

Berlin

You will find post offices at Bahnhof Friedrichstraße (Monday-Sunday 6am-10pm), at Budapester Straße 42 (Monday-Saturday 8am-12am; Sundays and holidays 10am-12am) and at Flughafen Tegel, (daily, 6:30am-9pm).

E-MAIL

The universities in Germany are equipped with e-mail access for all students. You will be assigned an account upon arrival. In **Berlin**, your account will be ready to use as soon as you have registered with Distributed Campus and enroll at the Akademische Auslandsamt. Once these steps are complete, you will also be able to access your home school account.

Other Internet services are available on campus. Many of the dorm rooms provide Internet access as well.

TELEPHONE

The telephone at the Middlebury School in Germany is for the use of the director only. Students may not receive telephone calls through this office, except in cases of emergency.

CELL PHONES

The use of cell phones in Germany is common, and they are easily obtainable. You will want to consider carefully which one best meets your needs before you commit to a plan.

VOICE-OVER-IP (VOIP)

Students are now frequently using the Internet to speak to people around the world at low or no cost. Former study abroad students have recommended using Skype, a free Internet phone software service. Visit: <http://www.skype.com/>

PHOTOCOPYING AND FAXING

The fax and photocopier in Mainz are also for office use only. Please note that any photocopying required for coursework is considered the responsibility of the student. The School photocopier cannot be used for such purposes. Coin and card-operated Xerox machines can be found on both campuses.

In Mainz, there is a phone/fax booth close to the *Hauptbahnhof*, from which you can make worldwide calls and send faxes if you need to. In Berlin, students can send faxes from the post office.

Local Information

Mainz

Emergency Services

During the on-site orientation, students will receive an Emergency Card listing emergency numbers, which they should carry on their person at all times.

110	Police
115	Fire Department
118	Medical Emergency

Hospitals and Medical Services

Mainz has a university teaching hospital. There is a doctor's office on campus open during the week only. Otherwise use the emergency medical tel. 118.

Drugstores and All-Night Pharmacies

There are many in Mainz. The days and hours of opening vary, but there is a list available in the local newspaper.

Public Transportation

Most students will live on or near the campus of the *Johannes Gutenberg-Universität*. For those who live elsewhere, commuting tickets are available for both the *Bundesbahn* and the lines operated by *Stadtwerke Mainz*. Your *Studentenausweis* (which you will receive upon enrollment) allows you free travel on all public transport in Mainz. It also includes direct lines to Wiesbaden and the connections to the airport and to downtown Frankfurt and much of Hessen. Time-limited tourist cards for Mainz and applications for commuter tickets (if you reside outside the city) are available from the information booth on the *Bahnhofplatz*.

Public transportation (buses, streetcars, and trains) is on an honor system, but there are frequent controls by non-uniformed personnel. Passengers without tickets face embarrassment and a stiff fine. Taxis are relatively expensive. The main stand is in front of the *Hauptbahnhof*. The radio-dispatched fleet will also make pickups in most parts of town, but allow up to ten minutes for them to respond. The telephone numbers are posted near all pay phones.

Information for long distance *Bundesbahn* trains is available inside the *Hauptbahnhof* or by calling 15 33 97. You may also call the general number for the *Deutsche Bahn Reiseservice*. This is actually faster and more efficient, but there is a higher cost per minute. The number is: 0180-5-99-66-33.

Travel/Ticket Agents

There is a travel agent on campus at *Johannes Gutenberg-Universität* and many in Mainz that offer special student-rates.

Eating Establishments

Be sure to try some of the many restaurants scattered throughout the city. Besides restaurants serving "traditional" German food, there are dozens of good ethnic restaurants, including those serving Chinese, Greek, Indian, Italian, Mexican, Portuguese, Syrian, Turkish, and Thai cuisine.

Mainz has a large variety of pubs. On campus, the student-run *Kneipen* in Mainzer Kolleg and Inter I offer cheap drinks and, occasionally, live bands. Downtown, you might try *Dr. Flotte* in the *Altstadt*, with its Victorian decor, *Kneipodrom* on Schillerstraße, with its young crowd, or

Taverna Madrid on Große Langgasse for its quiet atmosphere and inexpensive drinks. Ask German students about their favorites.

For dancing, there are weekly parties in the *Studihaus* on campus. There are also many discos in the area. The *Kulturzentrum* (KUZ) in downtown Mainz offers a wide range of activities from dance parties to scientific exhibitions. Other diversions include trips to Wiesbaden and Frankfurt, a short ride on public transportation. Frankfurt offers all the amenities of a major city, including concerts (both classical and popular), museums, and nightlife. The opera, though expensive, is especially well known. Wiesbaden, located right across the Rhine from Mainz, offers a change of pace nearby. The city offers some good theaters better suited to a student budget, as well as many good shops.

As any student returning from Mainz will tell you, Mainz is what you make of it. Get out, enjoy the sights and diversions, meet people, and explore all the city and the area have to offer.

Libraries

Johannes Gutenberg–Universitätsbibliothek
Seminarbibliotheken

Bookstores

Gutenberg-Buchhandlung on campus; Buch-Habel at the ‘Brand’; and a large *Gutenberg-Buchhandlung* at Neubrunnenplatz.

Movie Theaters

The major theater is located on Holzhofstraße close to the Südbahnhof. For inexpensive movies there is a student-run theater on campus specializing in cinema classics.

Department Stores

Kaufhof
Karstadt
Sinn & Leffers

Markets and Supermarkets

Aldi
Plus
Penny-Markt
HL-Market
Real at Gutenberg Center (5 min bus ride from Campus)
Open-air market near the cathedral that is open every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday

Local Information

Berlin

Emergency Services

During the on-site orientation, students will receive an Emergency Card listing emergency numbers, which they should carry on their person at all times.

110	Police
112	Fire Department
112	Medical Emergency

- Legal Assistance (emergency number around the clock): 324 22 82
- Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst (Wednesdays/Weekends): 310031
- Dentist emergency: 89 00 43 33
- Drugstores open after hours: 11880
- Poison Center: 192 37

Public Transportation

Since the FU doesn't have a traditional campus, most students will live all over the city of Berlin. Until you receive your Studiticket, you should inquire about the most reasonable tickets (day-tickets may not be the cheapest choice) at the major train stations (Bahnhof Zoologischer Garten oder Alexanderplatz). With those tickets, you are able to ride Bus or U-Bahn, as well as the S-Bahn. You have to get your ticket stamped before you first use it, either in the bus or at the gate from which your train leaves. There are frequent controls by non-uniformed personnel. Passengers without tickets face embarrassment and a stiff fine. Taxis are relatively expensive. Their number: 0800 222 22 55. If it is rather late, it might be smart to take a cab after all!

Information for long distance *Bundesbahn*-trains is available online: www.bahn.de or inside the "Reisezentrum" in the main train stations. There is a special "Bahncard" available for students. If you purchase this card, you'll pay only half of the normal price on long-distance train tickets.

Eating Establishments

Be sure to try some of the many restaurants scattered throughout the city. Besides restaurants serving "traditional" German food there are dozens of good ethnic restaurants, including those serving Chinese, Greek, Indian, Italian, Mexican, Portuguese, Syrian, Turkish, and Thai cuisine.

Libraries

FU-Universitätsbibliothek
Seminarbibliotheken

Bookstores

Hugendubel at Kudamm, across from *Kaiser-Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche*

Movie Theaters

A number of theaters are located near the Kurfürstendamm

Department Stores

Kaufhaus des Westens
Karstadt

2009~2010 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Berlin

Berlin start date	October 8
Suggested Check-in Dates	October 5 – October 7
Academic Advising	October 8 – October 17
Fall Semester courses start	October 19
All Saints' Day (no classes, everything closed)	November 1
Holiday Break	December 19 – January 3
Last day of fall semester	February 12 [ALL PAPERS DUE]
Spring term begins	Mid-April 2010 (exact date: TBA)
Last day of spring semester:	Late-July 2010 (exact date: TBA)

Mainz

Mainz start date	October 12
Suggested Check-in Dates	October 6 – October 9
Academic Advising	October 12 – October 23
Fall semester courses start	October 26
All Saints' Day (no classes, everything closed)	November 1
Holiday Break	December 19 – January 3
Last day of fall semester	February 12 [ALL PAPERS DUE]
Spring term begins	Late-April 2010 (exact date: TBA)
Last day of spring semester	Late-July 2010 (exact date: TBA)

N.B. Attendance is **mandatory** at all meetings. Students should not forget to plan to arrive in Germany on a WEEKDAY to facilitate the move-in process and registration. All dates mentioned above are subject to change. Please consult the website of the School in Germany periodically for official dates:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/germany/calendar>