

STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK  
*GERMANY*



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**Section 1: General Study Abroad  
Info**

**Section 2: Country-Specific Info**

**Section 3: Program-Specific Info**

# **Section 1**

## **General Study Abroad Information**

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# **OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Office of Global Education and Partnerships promotes the internationalization of the university community so that Millersville may realize its mission to:

- Prepare its students to live in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society
- Offer a curriculum that is rich and multifaceted
- Serve as a model of a pluralistic community and by providing leadership in this regard to the greater community.

Global Education fulfills this mandate by:

- Championing borderless learning and exchange of ideas by promoting institutional development to achieve these ends;
- Encouraging MU students, faculty, administrators and staff to communally embrace a vision of a globally connected campus through dissemination of information, coordination and support.
- Welcoming international students and scholars and ensuring an enriching and successful stay at Millersville by providing consistently professional logistical support and counseling where appropriate.
- Developing, operating and maintaining a comprehensive, cost-effective education abroad program (study, interning and service-learning) that meets the highest levels of professional and academic integrity and adheres to recognized “best practices” in the field;
- Organizing globally focused programming of benefit to the MU campus as well as the public and private sectors in the wider community.

## **NOTES ABOUT THE OFFICE**

The Office of Global Education has been administering study abroad programs since 1989. It is a full time office dedicated to international mobility of students and faculty, including study abroad and is staffed by individuals with several decades of combined international education experience.

### ***ROLE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION***

- Support students through pre-departure, study abroad and re-entry stages in partnership with partner institution and MU offices related to:
  - MU paperwork processing
  - Partner institution paperwork processing
  - Legal matters (passports, visas)
  - Insurance issues
  - Travel information related to study abroad experience
  - Housing and board arrangements (program dependent)

- Academic course selection and equivalencies process
- Medical, counseling and academic support where needed
- Cost information related to Financial Aid
- Program billing (program dependent)
- Issues at study abroad destination that cannot be solved “locally”
- Dormitory housing upon return
- Transcript processing after return
- Resolution of other outstanding study abroad issues upon return (academically, financially, etc.)

### **LIMITS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

- Address academic issues between study abroad participants and their advisors
  - TAP #s
  - Course changes/course equivalents
- Directly make flight arrangements
- Advise on housing, travel or other arrangements outside of formal study abroad program
- Address questions related to specific financial aid issues
- Assist students with program issues when Global Ed is not “kept in the loop” through regular communication with student
- Provide instant responses on non-emergency questions or routine matters

## **GETTING READY TO GO – DOCUMENTS/PAPERWORK**

### **PASSPORT**



The passport is your official identification as a citizen of the United States. It will be checked upon entering or leaving the United States or any foreign country as well as upon various other occasions that require official identification. All students going abroad need to have a passport. After you obtain your passport, be sure to sign on the signature line, make a photocopy of the record page (with your picture on it) and put it somewhere safe. It is suggested to take a copy of it with you abroad and keep it in a safe place. You may also want to keep a photocopy of your birth certificate and social security card with each photocopy of your passport. This is very helpful should your passport get stolen or become lost as it is a hassle to get your passport replaced. Take good care of this document.

**For more information and to download forms please see**  
[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

### **IF YOU LOSE YOUR PASSPORT**

Loss or theft of a valid passport should be reported immediately. You must contact your nearest US Embassy or Consulate. For locations and further instructions reference <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. This will provide country specific instructions on how to proceed.

## **SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)**

The U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, or STEP, is an invaluable resource for American citizens abroad. The State Department developed this program to better aid American citizens in emergency situations. By registering with the STEP program, you will receive updates, information, and travel warnings via email from the U.S. Embassy regarding your host country while you are abroad. The contact information you provide through this registration process allows the State Department to better assist you should an emergency arise. All students going abroad for academic credit are required to enroll in this program as part of the pre-departure paperwork process.

## **DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD TAKE**

### **GENERAL DOCUMENTS**

- Passport\*
- Visa (if applicable)\*
- Flight Itinerary/Confirmation\*
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)\*
- Insurance Card(s) - detailed company and insurer information\*
- Photocopies of credit cards\*

### **MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS**

- Copy of your Study Abroad Resident Credits Form (course selection with MU equivalencies)
- Updated DARS (Degree Audit Report)
- General Ed/major/minor curriculum sheets for reference
- Academic advisor and department chair's names, addresses, emails, and phone numbers in case you need to contact them while abroad.
- This handbook\*



### **HOST INSTITUTION DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

- Acceptance letter\*
- Visa materials (if applicable)\*
- Relevant accommodation information and directions\*
- Host university's international student guides/handbooks (if available)\*

\* *Items to be taken in **carry-on** or on your person during travel, not in checked luggage.*

## **POWER OF ATTORNEY**



We suggest that you make arrangements with someone to give them power of attorney (POA) while you are gone. This enables the designated person



to have access to your accounts – deposit and withdrawal - and they are able to sign on your behalf. For MU, Power of Attorney may be necessary for the Financial Aid appeal process. Declaring a POA comes in handy as often applications, appeals and checks for financial aid must be signed and returned by a certain date which could be while you are abroad and your POA could sign on your behalf. (See “While Abroad – Financial Aid” for more information.)

The student seeking power of attorney can write up their own statement stating who is assuming the duties of power of attorney and have it notarized. This can be arranged through any lawyer or public notary. (Notary services are conveniently available at 2 locations on Millersville’s campus; the Purchasing Office and the Student Programs Office. Feel free to contact these offices for more information.)

The requirements to prove a person has power of attorney can vary by the organization or agency that is requesting the proof. It is best that you or your POA inquire directly with the agency as to what their policies are regarding this matter. It may be in your best interest to obtain several **original** copies of the notarized statement because your POA might be required to send originals with each POA signature.

Below is an example of the format for a power of attorney statement:

*I, (name of student), hereby grant power of attorney to my (state relationship), (name of person), for the following time span: (list dates of study abroad).*

*(Student signature)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of person assuming power of attorney)* \_\_\_\_\_

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS**

Information for travelers on health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues can be obtained from local health departments, private doctors, travel clinics or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. More information on the CDC can found at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

For local services in Lancaster, you may contact Passport Health. Passport Health is a national network of independently owned and operated Travel Health and Immunization Clinics. They provide information, immunizations and consultation for international travel.

<http://www.passporthealthusa.com/locations/pa/monroeville/154/>

Phone: 1-888-474-8907

In Lancaster:

150 Farmington Lane  
Suite 201  
Lancaster, PA 17601

Another web site that may be helpful is [www.travelersvaccines.com](http://www.travelersvaccines.com).

Consider all travel plans when researching health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues so you can be fully prepared for your time abroad whether in or outside of your host city and country.

## MEDICATIONS

### **BEFORE YOU GO**

- Students should consider getting check-ups pre-departure for general wellness, vision, and dental.
- Prescription Considerations
  - Be aware that some commonly prescribed medications in the U.S., such as prescriptions for ADHD, may be considered illegal controlled substances in other countries. Check with the customs authority or local embassy of your host country, if this applies to you, to determine local laws.
  - Obtain a clearly written prescription as well as a letter from your physician fully explaining the use of your medication, including the generic name of the drug. Customs officials may want to see this, and should you require any additional prescriptions while abroad, the pharmacy there will require this information.
  - Plan how you will supply yourself the amount of your prescription(s) needed while abroad. You may want to pack enough for the entire period of time, especially if you have medication that has been specifically made for you, such as allergy serum; however getting prescriptions and carrying them in large amounts can be an issue with certain insurance companies and/or customs' officials.
  - If you wear glasses and/or contacts, take along your lens prescription and, if possible, an extra pair of glasses and/or an ample supply of contacts.

### **WHILE ABROAD**

- We do not recommend buying medications "over the counter", unless you are familiar with the product. Keep in mind, "over the counter" drugs abroad are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- All medications should be carried in their original containers and clearly labeled, throughout your travels.

## INSURANCE



Health insurance coverage abroad is mandatory for MU study abroad participants and for Non-MU students participating in MU programs.

### **Important Notes About International Health Insurance:**

- Should medical attention be required while abroad, understand that you will often pay out of pocket for medical services and submit a claim to your insurance company to be reimbursed.
- It is important to have access to funds to pay for out of pocket medical costs as most insurance companies do not pay international medical providers. The cost

is on you to pay upfront. The Office of Global Education recommends having a credit card available to pay for an emergency medical situation.

- Before departing for your experience abroad, you should contact your primary insurance provider to determine if your insurance covers you internationally. If so, you want to know the details of your coverage while abroad and the claims process. It is much more helpful to have this information before a medical issue occurs.
- Your ISIC insurance through April Travel Protection is supplemental insurance to your primary provider in the U.S. If you do not have insurance here in the U.S., or your primary provider does not cover you while abroad, your ISIC insurance is your primary coverage when studying abroad.

### ***INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)***

(This information is taken from STA Travel, the issuing agency of the ISIC and is therefore subject to change.)

Millersville University policy requires that you purchase a Basic International Student Identity Card (ISIC) valid for the duration of your program abroad. The card is required due to the coverage it provides in certain emergency situations and for the many benefits provided to ISIC/ITIC cardholders such as:

- Medical/Health Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Discounts

Additionally, ISICs may also be recognized as an official form of student identification.

### ***ISIC INSURANCE***

The ISIC Basic provides the minimum health and travel insurance coverage recommended for traveling abroad. ISIC also offers Premium & Explorer options which provide a higher level of health and travel insurance coverage as well as other benefits. Health insurance for both the ISIC Basic and the ISIC Premium is administered by April Travel Protection. [www.AprilTravelProtection.com](http://www.AprilTravelProtection.com)

Should you decide that you require additional health insurance coverage beyond the ISIC Basic and do not wish to purchase the ISIC Premium or ISIC Explorer, other independent international health insurance providers are available to you. You will need to research these options on your own. Please note, however, that you will still be required to purchase the ISIC Basic for its other benefits.

***NOTE for NON-MU programs:*** Some Non-MU programs require or include health and travel insurance. If this is the case, this insurance must be approved by your program coordinator at the Office of Global Education to determine if it is or is not necessary for you to purchase the ISIC Basic plan. Non-MU program participants must provide your program coordinator with the details of your NON-MU insurance coverage, (meaning Global Education needs to see what the insurance covers you for and up to how much). Your program coordinator will review your program's coverage and make sure it is at least comparable to the ISIC Basic.

- If your coverage is not adequate, MU requires you to purchase at least the ISIC Basic plan by completing the registration form and submitting it with payment to the Office of Global Education.
- If your coverage is approved, you must submit proof of having the insurance coverage through your Non-MU program provider, such as a letter from the insurance company or a copy of your insurance card. Additionally, if you choose your Non-MU program's insurance provider, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the specifics of their coverage, emergency hotline numbers and the procedure to make a claim.

### **SEEKING IN-NETWORK PROVIDERS**

Before you depart, *it is **strongly recommended** that you contact April Travel Protection and/or your independent health insurance provider to determine a list of network providers within your study abroad destination area.* If you do any traveling for an extended amount of time, you may also want to consider obtaining a list of providers within your travel destinations. It is always best to contact April Travel Protection **prior** to seeking medical attention, if possible, to determine the closest in-network medical facility and so that they can arrange an appointment with the physician's office on your behalf.

### **COVERAGE DETAILS**

April Travel Protection provides a letter showing proof of ISIC-related health insurance coverage. This proof of coverage will be emailed to you from The Office of Global Education to keep for your records and/or for use with your student visa application.

**Review the chart below for a breakdown of ISIC coverage benefits:**

<b>Coverage</b>	<b>BASIC</b> (min. required)	<b>PREMIUM</b>	<b>EXPLORER</b>
ISIC Card Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Multi-Trip Insurance Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Trip Cancellation	NA	NA	\$3000
Trip Interruption	NA	\$1500	\$3000
Trip Delay/ Per Day	\$250/\$100	\$500/\$200	\$500/\$200
Emergency Medical Evacuation & Repatriation (included emergency reunion assistance)	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Repatriation of Remains	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Emergency Dental/ Deductible	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip Common Carrier Air Only	\$5,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Baggage and Personal Effects (If lost or stolen)	NA	\$2,000	\$2,500
Baggage Delay (Minimum of 12 Hours)	\$100	\$200	\$200
Adventure Sports	NA	NA	Included
Mental Health	NA	Included	Included
24/7 Travel/Medical Assistance Services	Included	Included	Included
Non-Medical Emergency Evacuation due to Catastrophe	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
Security and Political Evacuation	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
<b>Price:</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$95</b>	<b>\$200</b>

## **Additional Information about Coverage: 24-Hour Emergency Assistance Services**

- Emergency travel assistance services are provided by April Travel Protection. If you need assistance, you can call toll free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at one of these telephone numbers:
- Within the USA Toll Free: (855) 743-6739
- Outside the USA Collect: (305) 455-1571
- Assistance Email: [assistus@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:assistus@apriltravelprotection.com)

### **Assistant Services:**

#### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION & REPATRIATION**

- Medical Transport
- Dispatch of a Physician or Specialist
- Transportation of a Family Member
- Escort Services
- Repatriation of Remains

#### **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

- Medical & Dental Referrals
- Medical Case Management & Monitoring
- Coordinate Hospital Admission & Discharge
- Vaccination Recommendations & Precautions
- Prescriptions Replacement

#### **TRAVEL ASSISTANCE**

- Telephone Interpretation Service
- General Travel Assistance & Information
- Pre-Trip & Cultural Information
- Emergency Cash & Bail Assistance
- International Claims Assistance
- Lost Luggage Assistance
- Lost Document Assistance
- Urgent Message Relay
- Legal Referrals

*There may be times when circumstances beyond April Travel Protection control hinder its endeavors to provide services. April Travel Protection will, however, make all reasonable efforts to provide such services and help you resolve the emergency situation.*

*April Travel Protection will not provide any services when the U.S. or other applicable trade or economic sanctions, laws or regulations prohibit April Travel Protection from providing such services, including, but not limited to, the payment of any claims. Accordingly, no services will be provided in connection with travel to Cuba and such services may be limited and/or delayed, or prohibited, in other countries.*

## ***PURCHASED A BASIC OR PREMIUM ISIC AND WANT TO UPGRADE TO A PREMIUM OR EXPLORER?***

You can upgrade to an ISIC Premium or Explorer by contacting The Office of Global Education via email or by coming into the office. In order to upgrade, you need to submit payment for the cost difference of what plan you purchased versus which plan you would like to upgrade to. This can be done in the form of cash, check, or money order payable to Millersville University.

**If you are considering upgrading your ISIC card, note that you may only upgrade PRIOR to departing the US.**

## ***SUBMITTING A CLAIM***

Follow the directions below to submit a claim to April Travel Protection (ISIC). If you have other primary insurance that covers you abroad, such as your parent's health insurance or insurance through your employer, April Travel Protection will require you to make a claim with your primary insurance first and then submit the remaining costs to April Travel Protection. Note that April Travel Protection must receive written communication within 90 days after a covered loss occurs:

### **1. Request an Insurance Claim Form**

Call or email using the contact information below to request an Insurance Claim Form & inquire about the required documentation given your coverage (Basic, Premium, and Explorer).

### **2. Provide the Required Documentation**

After you complete your claim form, provide the supporting documentation needed to complete the claim process.

-Trip Delay: Obtain specific dated documents which provide proof of the reason for delay (airline or cruise line forms, medical statements, etc. Submit this documentation along with your trip itinerary and all receipts for expenses incurred.)

-Medical Expenses: Obtain receipts from the providers of services, etc., stating the amount paid and listing the diagnosis and treatment; submit these first to other medical plans. Provide a copy of *their* final disposition of your claim.

-Baggage: Obtain statement from the common carrier that your baggage was delayed or a police report showing your baggage was stolen along with copies of the receipts for your purchases.

Report your claim to April Travel Protection at one of these telephone numbers:

Within the USA: Toll Free: (855)-743-6739

Outside the USA: Collect: (305) 455-1571

Email for claims: [Claims@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:Claims@apriltravelprotection.com)

Claims Address:  
**April Travel Protection**  
**11900 Biscayne Blvd**  
**Miami FL 33181, USA**

All benefits will be paid in United States Dollars.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR CARD**

You are still covered under the insurance benefits for the validity period of the card; however if you wish to use the card to receive discounts and/or as a form of international ID, you will need to locate an ISIC issuing office close to you to purchase a replacement card. Contact ISIC to assist you with locating an ISIC issuing office.

The insurance benefits that come with an ISIC are only offered on cards issued in the US; therefore, you will not have double insurance coverage by purchasing a replacement card.

Keep your receipt should you get a new card and you can submit a claim to get reimbursed for the lost/stolen card.

## **LUGGAGE/U.S. CUSTOMS**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Airlines or travel agencies should be able to inform you of the latest policies affecting luggage limitations. Each airline has its own restrictions/requirements regarding checked luggage and carry on items. Excess luggage can be very expensive. Remember that luggage should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. You may wish to use a backpack as your second piece of luggage for ease and flexibility while traveling. You should label your luggage on the outside, and it is recommended that you also include a name and address label inside your locked luggage as well.

### **TSA ACCEPTED AND RECOGNIZED LOCKS**



Company logos for *Travel Sentry* and *Safe Skies*

The vendors above, Travel Sentry and Safe Skies, have an arrangement with TSA to supply TSA “accepted and recognized” locks. TSA screeners have tools for opening

and re-locking luggage locks with either of these logos, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

Please check the web sites below for more information on TSA Accepted and Recognized Locks.

Travel Sentry: <http://www.travelsentry.org/>

Safe Skies: [www.safeskieslocks.com](http://www.safeskieslocks.com)

## CARRY-ON RESTRICTIONS

***Due to increased security at airports worldwide, the following restrictions have taken effect. Please read carefully.***

**3-1-1** for carry-ons = **3** ounce bottle or less; **1** quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; **1** bag per passenger placed in screening bin. A one-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3 oz. container size restriction is a security measure.



Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening. Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. **If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.**

Declare larger liquids. Prescription medications, baby formula and milk are allowed in quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Be aware, heavy travel volumes and the enhanced security process may mean longer lines at security checkpoints.

**Note:** These requirements are being strictly enforced. You must bring your own plastic bag as none are available in the airport. You will already have checked your other luggage so **anything that does not meet the requirements will be thrown away/confiscated.**

## U.S. CUSTOMS UPON RE-ENTRY



As you pass through the United States, or any other country, you will have to go through a customs inspection. United States residents are permitted to bring into the U.S. \$800 worth of foreign souvenirs and gifts provided that:

- The goods are for personal use or will be given as gifts
- They are in your possession (goods shipped are excluded from the \$800 exemption)



- They have been declared to U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- You have been abroad for at least 48 hours
- You have not utilized the \$800 exemption within a 30-day period preceding re-entry
- The articles are not prohibited by law

Examples of articles specifically prohibited by law are:

- Narcotics, dangerous drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Obscene articles and publications
- Seditious and treasonable materials
- Hazardous materials- fireworks, toxic or poisonous substances
- Absinthe (a common European Wormwood and a green liqueur flavored with wormwood)
- Switchblade knives
- Endangered species and products made from them may not be brought into the United States. The penalty is confiscation and a possible fine.

You will be assessed an import duty based on 3% of the value for anything in the \$800 to \$1,800 range. Import duty varies according to the nature of the articles when you go over \$1,800.

### **Some Helpful Small Print about Customs**

Articles acquired abroad and in your possession at the time of your return to the United States must be declared to Customs officials in writing. Declaration forms will be distributed to you by the flight attendants on your flight and should be completed immediately to avoid the last-minute hassle at Immigration and Customs. Your declaration must include, in addition to the gifts and souvenirs you purchased while you were abroad, any items that you are bringing back to another person on their request, alterations or repair of articles taken abroad, and gifts given to you while you were abroad. Wearing or using an article acquired abroad does not exempt it from duties, and it must be declared at the price you paid for it, although Customs agents may make a reduction in value due to the use or wear of the article. To avoid misunderstandings, it would be wise for you to retain receipts for any purchases that you make while abroad. You must declare the price actually paid for an article. If you do not know the price, say so. If an article was not purchased (i.e. a gift), state its fair market price. Personal belongings of U.S. origin taken abroad may be sent back by mail duty-free if, on the outside packaging, it is stated that the articles were taken out of the U.S. as personal effects and are being returned without having been repaired or altered while abroad ("American Goods Returned").

If you expect to carry a foreign-made item (i.e., an expensive camera, a watch, etc.) with you out of the United States, you may be subject to duty on those items when you return to the U.S., unless you have acceptable proof of prior possession. Documents that fully describe the article, such as a bill of sale or an insurance policy, may be considered "as acceptable proof". Items, which may be readily identified by serial

number or permanently affixed markings, may be registered with the Customs officials prior to departure.

## **LAW AND SECURITY ISSUES ABROAD**

This section was obtained from the US State Department website at:  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

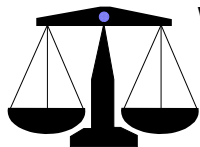
When you travel abroad, the odds are you will have a safe and incident-free trip. Travelers can, however, become victims of crime and violence, or experience unexpected difficulties. No one is better able to tell you this than the U.S. consular officers who work in more than 250 U.S. embassies and consulates around the globe. Every day of the year, U.S. embassies and consulates receive calls from American citizens in distress.

Happily, most problems can be solved over the phone or with a visit to the Consular Section of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. There are other occasions, however, when U.S. consular officers are called upon to help U.S. citizens who are in foreign hospitals or prisons, or to assist the families of U.S. citizens who have passed away overseas.

We have prepared the following travel tips to help you avoid serious difficulties during your time abroad.

### **THE LAW ABROAD**

#### **LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS**



When you leave the United States, you are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. Therefore, before you go, learn as much as you can about the local laws and customs of the places you plan to visit. Good resources are your library, your travel agent, and the embassies, consulates or tourist bureaus of the countries you will visit. In addition, keep track of what is being reported in the media about recent developments in those countries.

Familiarize yourself with legal expectations in the countries you will visit. The [Country Specific Information](#) (This link guides you to another portion of the US State Department Webpage) pages include information on unusual patterns of arrests in particular countries, as appropriate. Again, keep in mind that while you are visiting a foreign country, you are subject to the laws of that country. Legal protection and personal rights that we take for granted in the United States are left behind when you depart. American Embassies and Consulates are limited in the assistance they can provide. They cannot provide you with any financial assistance in paying for legal or medical services, nor can they intervene on your behalf in the administration of justice as seen from the point of view of the host country.

Bail provisions, as we know them in the U.S., are rare in foreign countries. Pretrial detention, without bail, is quite common. Prison conditions are often deplorable in comparison with conditions in the U.S. The principle “innocent until proven guilty” is not necessarily a tenet of the legal system abroad. It should also be stressed that students are subject to the statutes, ordinances and regulations of the host institution.

### ***DRUG VIOLATIONS***

More than one-third of U.S. citizens incarcerated abroad are held on drug charges. Some countries do not distinguish between possession and trafficking, and many have mandatory sentences – even for possession of a small amount of marijuana or cocaine. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs, particularly tranquilizers and amphetamines that they purchased legally elsewhere. Other U.S. citizens have been arrested for purchasing prescription drugs abroad in quantities that local authorities suspected were for commercial use. If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

### ***POSSESSION OF FIREARMS***

The places where U.S. citizens most often experience difficulties for illegal possession of firearms are nearby – Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. Sentences for possession of firearms in Mexico can be up to 30 years. In general, firearms, even those legally registered in the U.S., cannot be brought into a country unless a permit is obtained in advance from the embassy or a consulate of that country and the firearm is registered with foreign authorities on arrival. (NOTE: There are also strict rules about bringing firearms or ammunition into the U.S; check with [U.S. Customs](#) before your trip.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

Be cautious when taking pictures. Local authorities in many countries consider all airports, police stations, military locations, oil installations, harbors, mines and bridges to be security-related. Photography of demonstrations or civil disturbances is also usually prohibited. Tourists have had their cameras confiscated and have been detained for trying to take these types of pictures. When in doubt about whether you can take a picture, ask first.

## **SECURITY ISSUES**

### ***PACKING***

Safety begins when you pack. To help avoid becoming a target, do not dress in a way that could mark you as an affluent tourist. Expensive-looking jewelry, for instance, can draw the wrong attention.

Always try to travel light. You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand. You will also be less tired and less likely to set your luggage down, leaving it unattended.

Generally, it is suggested to carry the minimum number of valuables, and plan places to conceal them. Your passport, cash and credit cards are most secure when locked in a hotel/hostel safe. When you have to carry them on your person, you may wish to put them each in a different place rather than all in one wallet or pouch. Avoid handbags, fanny packs and outside pockets that are easy targets for thieves. Inside pockets and a sturdy shoulder bag with the strap worn across your chest are somewhat safer. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or money belt worn under your clothing.

### ***SAFETY ON THE STREET***

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home. Be especially cautious in (or avoid) areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and crime-ridden neighborhoods.

- Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly lit streets.
- Try not to travel alone at night.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will:
  - jostle you
  - ask you for directions or the time
  - point to something spilled on your clothing
  - distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Beware of groups of vagrant children who could create a distraction to pick your pocket.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Try to ask for directions only from individuals in authority.
- Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand.
- Learn a few phrases in the local language or have them handy in written form so that you can signal your need for police or medical help.
- Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel/hostel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back -- give up your valuables.

### ***SAFETY IN YOUR HOTEL/HOSTEL***

- Keep your hotel/hostel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel/hostel room while you are out. Use the hotel/hostel safe.
- If you are out late at night, let someone know when you expect to return.

- If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
- Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel/hostel room. Know how to report a fire, and be sure you know where the nearest fire exits and alternate exits are located. (Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit; this could be a lifesaver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.)

### ***SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION***

If a country has a pattern of tourists being targeted by criminals on public transport, that information is mentioned in each country's [Country Specific Information](#) in the section about safety and security.

### ***TAXIS***

Only take taxis clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs.

### ***TRAINS***

Well-organized, systematic robbery of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a problem. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.

If you see your way being blocked by a stranger and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.

Do not accept food or drink from strangers. Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers. Criminals may also spray sleeping gas in train compartments. Where possible, lock your compartment. If it cannot be locked securely, take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake. If you must sleep unprotected, tie down your luggage and secure your valuables to the extent possible.

Do not be afraid to alert authorities if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.

### ***BUSES***

The same type of criminal activity found on trains can be found on public buses on popular tourist routes. For example, tourists have been drugged and robbed while sleeping on buses or in bus stations. In some countries, whole busloads of passengers have been held up and robbed by gangs of bandits.

### ***HOW TO HANDLE MONEY SAFELY***

- Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.

If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of what happened.

After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:

- Credit cards to the issuing company
- Airline tickets to the airline or travel agent
- Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate

## **JET LAG**



Management of the phenomenon known as "jet lag" or "travel fatigue" begins when you board the plane. You may wish to grab a pillow and blanket from the overhead storage space in order to relax and save your energy on your long flight.

You probably have heard of "jet lag," which is as much a physical phenomenon as much as a psychological one. Your body, through long years of habit, has become acclimated to functioning in accordance with its own physiological clock based on a particular daily cycle.

When you arrive at your study abroad destination, that clock is going to be automatically out of sync with the local cycle because of the time difference. It will take your body a few days to adjust (some bodies take longer than others), during which time you can expect to feel quite tired and run down. This fatigue, in conjunction with the unfamiliar surroundings, customs and language, may produce a temporary sense of depression and "homesickness." It is a perfectly normal reaction and it may not even affect you; however, if it should happen, remember that it will soon pass.

**Although it's difficult to avoid jet lag, a few precautions are worth taking:**

- "Reset" your sleep patterns by going to bed early a few nights before you leave.
- On the plane, sleep as much as you can, and walk and stretch when awake.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, and drink plenty of water in flight.
- On arrival in a new time zone, take a short nap, have a light meal at the appropriate local hour, and perhaps a brief stroll afterward.
- Eat lightly for two or three days.
- Keep the first day's itinerary relaxed.
- Allow at least 24 hours to adjust

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

### **HOW TO COPE WITH CULTURE SHOCK**



With Permission from the Council on International Educational Exchange, we are reprinting the following advice on preparing for successful cultural adaptation. Although you may not encounter difficulties with culture shock, you will certainly have some cultural adjustments to make which will require you to be prepared. Please read this material carefully.

## **PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL ADAPTATION**

The concept of culture shock may be very familiar to you, and any travel, which you have done abroad and perhaps even within your own country will have exposed you to it. However, if it has been quite a while since you have lived abroad, or if you have never lived abroad for a length of time, you will want to do some thinking about both what culture shock is and how you can develop personal strategies for overcoming it. Most people eventually develop their own ways of coping, but since the duration of your stay abroad will be relatively brief and the academic pressures considerable, preparing for adaptation ahead may save you a lot of time and anguish.

## **UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK**

Culture shock has been defined as "...the loss of emotional equilibrium that a person suffers when he moves from a familiar environment where he has learned to function easily and successfully, to one where he has not."<sup>1</sup> The effects of culture shock range from mild uneasiness, homesickness, and unhappiness to panic, severe irritability, and loss of perspective. The basic cause of this syndrome is believed to be the abrupt loss of the familiar, which produces feelings of isolation and diminished self-importance as you find yourself unable to fully interact with the rest of society. It is important that you understand that culture shock is a personal experience, affecting each individual differently.

Since all people undergo psychological as well as physical and social adjustments to new cultures, some knowledge of acculturation may be helpful.

### Stage I

This may be called the "tourist stage," "the honeymoon phase," or the "stage of euphoria." The student is fascinated and thrilled with all that is new and tends to see similarities between the host and the home country. Even difficulties are viewed as novel and interesting.

### Stage II

During this stage, the student will be taking a more active role in his/her setting. This will produce frustration, because of the difficulty in coping with even the most elementary aspects of everyday life. There may be a tendency to overreact to minor frustrations, delays, or inconveniences with irritation or anger out of proportion to the cause. Accomplishing small tasks, such as shopping and making telephone calls, become a major nuisance. The student's focus will turn to the differences between the host and home cultures, and these differences can be troubling. These sometimes-insignificant difficulties can be blown into major catastrophes. Hence, this stage is referred to as "culture shock."

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, Arthur. "How to Cope with Culture Shock," Re-entry Preparation and Integration for Study Abroad. Center for International Education. Cal. State U., Long Beach (1986), pp. 1-6.

### Stage III

The student slowly recovers. Interest in and sensitivity to the new culture and other people emerge. A sense of humor and an ability to joke about new experiences and difficulties return. One is able to accomplish everyday tasks without undue amounts of stress.

### Stage IV

A meaningful understanding of the new environment develops. The student stops assessing the new culture by using his/her own culture as a model and accepts the culture and people for who and what they are—not better or worse, just different. Ideally, the student is able to make the transition between the cultures' value systems and behaviors without internal conflict. The student develops the ability to operate comfortably and effectively between cultures.

### Stage V

The last stage is the re-entry phase, when the student returns home. For some, this is the most painful phase of all! The student will be excited about sharing his/her experiences, he/she will realize that he/she has changed, but he/she will not be able to explain how or why. The student will have acquired different ways of behaving, feeling, and responding to others. One set of values has already been instilled in him/her, another he/she will have acquired in the host country. Both may seem equally valid.

## ***SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK***

Health care providers, exchange program coordinators, academic advisors, and all staff involved in international educational exchange need to understand the phenomenon of culture shock and the impact it can have on a student's personal life and educational experience. A person passing through of acculturation may experience some of the following symptoms:

- feelings of helplessness and a dependence on compatriots
- homesickness
- greater irritation than appropriate when things go wrong
- a fear of being cheated, injured, or robbed
- excessive concern about physical pains or skin eruptions
- a strong desire to be home with one's own people who understand them
- reluctance or refusal to learn the language of the country
- insomnia or fatigue
- excessive concern for cleanliness
- loss of appetite
- loneliness
- poor concentration
- headaches
- stomach problems
- withdrawal from the host culture
- depression



## **OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK**

Just as your experience of culture shock will be individual and personal, you will need to deal with it in an individualized personal way. In adopting the following suggestions and developing your own strategies, an important thing to keep in mind is that while you should only expect yourself to tackle the symptoms and cause of culture shock in stages, confronting rather than avoiding them will help you to adapt much faster and more effectively. The following ideas are drawn from the experience of past participants (and the sources listed under *Recommended Reading* below):

- *Resolve any personal and family problems before you leave.*  
While you may think that by going abroad you will be escaping pre-existing problems, they will only follow you and be exacerbated by the especially stressful time of adapting to a new culture. Resolving personal problems before you leave home will make you more emotionally free to deal with the stresses of your new environment.
- *Learn as much about your new culture as possible.*  
The more you can learn about the culture which you are traveling to, and its customs, the easier it will be to figure out the “cultural cues” necessary to communicate with new friends and to feel at home in the new society. As mentioned in the introduction to this book, don't stop when you're through at the library. Seek out nationals of the country you'll be visiting through international student associations, international student centers, any local Embassies or Consulates, or community cultural organizations. Make friends with other students who have studied in the country you're heading to and keep on top of the news.
- *Develop cross-cultural communication skills.*  
Chances are you count on this strategy as one you have already developed if you've had friends from other countries or have lived abroad. If not, it would be worth taking advantage of any cross-cultural communication workshops arranged on your campus, participating in activities with international students studying at Millersville, and actively seeking out students from the country which you will be studying in.

One of the most important skills in cross-cultural communication, which you will need is the basic skill of learning to open-mindedly inquire and listen without being judgmental. You may be surprised to run into negative stereotypes. Americans, for example, are often assumed to be rude, always in a hurry, promiscuous, disrespectful of authority, and ignorant of other cultures. When trying to show that you are different, be tactful and try to understand the reasons for these stereotypes.

Likewise, you may find that you have brought along your own preconceived ideas about the people of your host country, and the ethnocentric attitude that the way

things are done at home is "better." Remember that you have chosen to study abroad to learn from your host country. Reserve judgment and try to understand and appreciate the new customs and ways of thinking you encounter, remembering that although different from what you are used to, they are equally valid.

- *Learn to indulge yourself in positive ways.*  
If you are feeling anxious, frustrated, lonely and/or confused, a first step, which will help you to adapt more easily, is to make yourself feel better and stronger by reducing these feelings. Spending 24 hours a day trying to communicate in a new language with new people in very new surroundings is extremely exhausting. This means that you will benefit from paying a little more attention to your physical and emotional health.

Obvious as it may seem, many students forget that added stress means needing more, not less sleep; and better, not worse eating habits. Exhaustion and eventually illness makes coping all the more difficult. A good sleep can sometimes put a previous day's crisis into perspective.

Feeling emotionally better may mean easing back a little on any campaign to become one of the natives in a few short weeks. Let yourself write letters home to friends and family who understand you, listen to any familiar music which you've brought along and try to incorporate familiar routines (such as running or making a favorite food, etc.), into your new life-style. While we certainly do not advocate hanging out only with other program students, we do not encourage you to alienate yourself from them. Avoiding students who seem bent on reacting against the host culture and making friends with other students who share both your country of origin and your desire to get to know the new one will make adaptation much easier and much more fun.

- *Form new friendships with host nationals as much as possible.*  
Students who have ultimately made friends among the students of the host institution and other host nationals are almost always those who have gotten to know the host country, its language and people the best and who have enjoyed themselves the most in the process. While spending some time with your own nationals will help ease culture shock, keep in mind that your purpose is to get better acquainted with the people, language, and culture of your host country. Making friends as early as possible with the nationals from your host country will speed the process of adaptation and allow you to get the most out of the experience.

## **CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESS WHILE ABROAD**



What personal characteristics are needed, not just to survive, but to enjoy the experience abroad?

Key traits are:

- An attitude for learning.
- Flexibility, a sense of humor, and the ability to laugh at yourself.
- Communication skills, especially the ability to communicate your feelings.
- The ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- The acceptance of different cultural demands.

## **COPING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

### **PAY ATTENTION TO SELF-CARE**

- Eat healthy foods
- Rest/Relaxation
- Exercise
- Avoid overuse of alcohol

### **KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

- Suspend judgment and keep an open mind
- Be curious
- Stay flexible
- Maintain your sense of humor – laughter relieves stress
- Read humorous books
- Rent a funny movie

### **THINK**

- Identify your expectations so you can minimize disappointment if they are not met- or turn them into realistic goals
- Try to identify situations that upset you the most
- Think about what you have control over and what you don't – let it go
- Take life one day at a time

### **GET INVOLVED**

- Ask questions
- Try new activities/foods
- Practice the language
- Set small goals for yourself
- It's okay to take risks and make mistakes

### **DO FAMILIAR THINGS – something you did at home to make you feel good**

- Familiar physical activities such as walking or sports
- Listen to music
- Share your culture
- Meditate

## EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

- Talk with others about what you're experiencing – they might feel the same way!
- Write – journals, letters, poetry
- Drawing, painting or other creative expression

## UTILIZE RESOURCES

- There are people who can help!

## **WHILE ABROAD – THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

### **LOCAL/EMERGENCY STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

You will be contacted by the Office of Global Education to provide your local contact information for while you are studying abroad. You will be emailed shortly after your arrival for your physical address (written in proper format), local phone number, and SKYPE name (if you have one). This information will be issued to a limited number of campus officials such as Millersville University Police and is extremely important in the event of an emergency. Throughout your stay the Office of Global Education may need to contact you and without reliable contact information this will not be possible.

You will also be provided with a Trip Notification form which we strongly suggest you complete and submit to the Office of Global Education if you are traveling away from your host city overnight. It requests information of where you are going, dates of travel, accommodation details, mode(s) of transportation itinerary, availability of email access, etc. Should an issue or emergency occur while you are traveling, Global Education will have resources to assist you. If you do not inform Global Education of your whereabouts, we will have no information to go by in the event of an emergency.

### **CONFIRMATION OF CLASSES REGISTERED (AT HOST INSTITUTION)**

In order to facilitate both you and the Registrar's Office with processing your transcript from your study abroad institution, Global Education will request a list of the classes that you are actually taking soon after you have been abroad. This is for the purpose of cross checking that list with your Transfer of Credits Form that you completed pre-departure with your academic advisors. We encourage you to do this on your own as well. If the Transfer of Credits Form does not match the courses that you are currently taking, then you will need to work with your academic advisor to make the appropriate changes so that the Registrar's Office may process your host institution transcript. Not ensuring that the Transfer of Credits Form matches the list of classes you take seriously delays processing the transcript once it is received at MU.

### **MU CLASS REGISTRATION/GRADUATION APPLICATION REMINDER**

A reminder of Millersville class registration will be sent to you while abroad. You will need to communicate with your academic advisor(s) for advising and to obtain your TAP number.

If you are studying abroad during your last semester prior to graduation, you will need to complete and submit a Graduation Application to the Registrar Office prior to departure and ensure that you are registered for graduation.

## FINANCIAL AID ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The release of financial aid for the following academic year may be delayed while Millersville awaits the receipt of your academic transcript from the international institution. Transcripts from Spring semester study abroad will not arrive until early September. Because Millersville University cannot confirm that you have made “Successful Academic Progress” (SAP) in May, for the previous academic year without the transcript, your financial aid may be placed on hold until the transcript is received. The definition of SAP differs between state and federal aid:

- *Federal:* SAP is defined as earning 75% of ALL credits attempted at MU. (Example: A student completed 30 credits but earned 24 credits, therefore he/she earned 80%, calculated  $24 \div 30$ , meaning he/she made successful academic progress and will not have issues with financial aid for the following academic year.)
- *State:* SAP is defined as successfully completing, at minimum, 24 credits for the academic year.

We strongly encourage you to check your **MAX account** mid/late May to determine if you are identified as not making SAP. If you did not make SAP, you will receive an email from the Office of Financial Aid and it will be stated on your MAX account.

### **What If You Do Not Make SAP?** – Release Your Aid:

- *Federal Aid:* To ensure that your federal aid is released without your study abroad transcript being received, we suggest you complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form by indicating that you are studying abroad. The official appeal form is accessible from the Office of Financial Aid website and it is due in mid-June.

This process will release your *federal* aid even if the transcript has not yet arrived. Power of Attorney, processed prior to departure, may be required if you will need someone else to complete this form for you in your absence. This form can also be submitted as a scanned document via email with required signature(s).

Note: If your transcript is received, and you did not meet the minimum required Satisfactory Academic Progress, you will be required to immediately reimburse the Office of Financial Aid for any money already received. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on your account at Millersville University which will affect registration/graduation.

- *State Aid:* Your PA State Aid cannot be appealed because of study abroad yet it will be retroactively released upon receipt of your study abroad transcript confirming Satisfactory Academic Progress.

## **Section 2**

# Country-Specific Information

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## **COUNTRY BACKGROUND**

Before you leave for your study abroad experience, it is important that you are aware of the social, cultural, political, and economic history of your host country. It is recommended that you research these topics to better understand your new environment and to help with your assimilation into the country.

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

#### **Students Abroad Resource- U.S. Department of State**

<http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>

The Students Abroad website managed by the State Department gives information about almost every aspect of studying abroad in any country. In this website you can find information about how to travel safely as a United States citizen. The website provides information varying from Emergency Contacts, to Voting, Packing Lists, and much more.

The State Department website on Germany gives in-depth information about almost every aspect of Germany, from history to culture to travel and business information. The second link is to the State Department's Travel page, which has information about traveling to and within Germany.

#### **U.S. Department of State – Germany**

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3997.htm>

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/germany.html>

This is the website of the U.S. presence in Germany. Information about U.S. citizen services and current U.S. issues in Germany can be easily found on this website.

#### **U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany**

<https://de.usembassy.gov/>

Frommer's and LonelyPlanet are two of the most highly respected guidebooks for any travel needs. The guidebooks and their online counterparts contain detailed information about travel spots, safety precautions, and visitor information.

#### **Frommer's Travel Guide – Germany**

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/germany/>

#### **Lonely Planet – Germany**

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/germany>

*\*Fodor's, Let's Go, and Insight Guides are among other travel guidebooks that students may choose to take advantage of. More information on these guides can be found online and in bookstores.*

This site contains detailed information about German culture, history, and travel hotspots from a German perspective.

#### **Deutschland.de – Das Deutschland Portal**

<https://www.deutschland.de/de>

The CIA World Fact book is a great resource for a short, mostly statistical analysis of Germany as a whole.

**Central Intelligence Agency World Fact book – Germany**

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gm.html>

MONETOS is a comprehensive European research and information portal, providing independent advice and guidance on social systems and private financial sectors in various countries across Europe. Within the Service section you will find a range of European Living guides with practical advice and tips on handling different cultures and financial systems when moving to live, study or work abroad.

**Monetos – European Information Portal**

<http://www.monetos.co.uk/>

## **CULTURAL AWARENESS**

### **ADDRESSING INDIVIDUALS**

(as taken from [www.executiveplanet.com](http://www.executiveplanet.com))

The general rule would be to always use “Sie” (you - formal) unless someone specifically offers you the “Du” (you – informal). (Note that among students and younger people, using “duzen” right from the beginning is the standard.)

Titles are very important to Germans. Do your best to address people by their full, correct title, no matter how extraordinarily long that title may seem to foreigners. This is also true when addressing a letter.

“Dr.” can be a medical or academic title, and is often used, especially among Germans, as part of their names (e.g., in passports, in phone books, on official documents, all forms of official addresses, etc.). Accordingly, Dr. Martin Meyer should be addressed as “Herr Doktor Meyer”. If you are going to meet a professor, address him/her as Herr [or Frau] Professor (Surname). Accordingly, Prof. Dr. Karin Schmidt should be addressed as “Frau Professor Schmidt”.

**Note:** In Germany ‘Professor’ doesn’t necessarily mean that you are teaching. It is a higher title than the doctor title. That is why students address their university professors with this title if they have it. If not, they are called Doctor.

### **SOCIAL INTERACTION**

(as taken from [www.executiveplanet.com](http://www.executiveplanet.com))

Germans tend to come across as rather reserved, warming up more slowly than people in some other countries. Do not interpret that reservation as rejection. Make that first, important step and you’ll almost be certain to get a positive response. Timing is all important. When invited out by a German, punctuality is appreciated, as well as a small

gift. A bottle of wine is a good choice or even something from your home university would suffice. Whatever you get, just try to keep it small and light. It's the gesture that counts and not the cost. But be careful when it comes to flowers. Red roses can be understood as a declaration of love.

Please note though that gift-giving does not apply when you are not going to someone's house. You do not have to bring a gift if you're going out to dinner or to get drinks. However, if you're invited to someone's house for dinner, you might want to bring a little something.

Be prepared to take the first step as the newcomer to introduce yourself to an established group when you arrive in a new environment (e.g., student dormitory, social gathering, new neighborhood, etc.). Unless you are specifically invited to join a group, do not automatically expect the established group to send out the "welcome wagon". The German culture--unlike the highly relationship-oriented European countries whose initiating communication behavior serves to facilitate emotional comfort and social networking--is highly "fact-oriented". This extends to a recognizable difference in the communication behavior extended to "friends" ("Freunde") and "acquaintances" ("Bekannte"). Be prepared for unsolicited attempts to start a conversation with a complete stranger in a new environment to be awkward, often taking the form of very stilted Qs & As. However, once you've gotten closer to a German who you can really call a friend you can be sure to count on that person.

### **PUBLIC BEHAVIOR**

(as taken from [www.executiveplanet.com](http://www.executiveplanet.com))

Despite the high value of rules and social order in most aspects of public life, queuing and waiting your turn are not strong traits in present day Germany. Sales personnel in bakeries, for example, do not expect lines and will tend to aggravate the problem by typically asking "Wer ist jetzt dran?" ("Whose turn is it now?"). Don't feel intimidated and speak up when it is your turn or somebody might jump in front of you if you are not quick enough. This is common behavior so don't think that you are treated differently because of your nationality or any other feature that might make you stand out.

Please note though that oftentimes there are lines. If there is a line, most of the time it goes from left to right. There may even be a sign telling you which way the line is supposed to go. If there is a line, make sure not to cut the line, because people tend to get offended.

You can expect the distance of comfort between strangers in public to be much smaller than is considered normal in the US, but more than in African and Arab countries. While people in conversation typically maintain a comfortable distance of at least 2 ft between them, the person directly behind you in the supermarket line can be literally breathing down your neck.

### **GREETINGS**

(as taken from [www.executiveplanet.com](http://www.executiveplanet.com))



Germans traditionally use "Wie geht es Ihnen?/Wie gehts?" (Formal/Informal: "How are you?") as a question that expects a literal answer, in contrast to the common English usage of the phrase "How's it going?" to simply say "Hi". Therefore, it may be considered superficial or strange to ask the question and then keep on going without waiting for an answer. Many people when asked, will, in fact, give you a very detailed answer, including why they are not doing well at that moment. The "Americanization" of the usage of "Wie geht es Ihnen?/Wie gehts?" as a casual greeting is starting to become more and more common, something that many people find irritating and label "superficial".

When shopping or approaching a customer service provider, it's common courtesy here to say "Guten Tag" or "Hallo" ("Hello") upon entering an establishment, and later "Vielen Dank, auf Wiedersehen" ("Thank you, goodbye") to the presiding store clerk when leaving. Greeting strangers on the street, however, with a "Hallo" or "Guten Tag" is not expected and you may well get no reaction despite there having been direct eye contact.

Firm, brief handshakes at the time of arrival and departure are standard in both business and social relationships. Hugging and kissing on both cheeks are only common among good friends and family members (though hand-shaking between parents and grown children, or between adult siblings is not at all uncommon). When arriving and leaving, take the time to shake hands with everyone individually in a group. The simpler American "group wave", for example, will not be appreciated in all but the most casual and familiar gatherings. The most important thing is to feel comfortable with the way you decide to greet people.

### **HOST COUNTRY'S HOLIDAYS**

(as taken from <http://www.holidays-info.com/Holidays-Germany/holidays.html> )

- 1 January** New Year's Day
- 6 January** Epiphany
- 3 April** Easter Sunday
- 4 April** Easter Monday
- 1 May** Labour Day
- 14 May** Ascension
- 25 May** Whit Monday
- 4 June** Corpus Christi
- 15 August** Assumption
- 3 October** Day of German Unity
- 31 October** Day of Reformation
- 1 November** All Saints' Day
- 18 November** Penance Day
- 25 December** – Christmas

## **VISAS**

Citizens of the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, the Republic of Korea, as well as EU citizens **may apply for their residence permit after entering Germany without a visa.**

### **Required Documents for Residence Permit:**

**-You must register with the local Resident Registration Office (*Bürgeramt*) within two weeks after arrival.**

**-You will apply for a "residence permit for purposes of study" within three months after arrival if you plan to stay in Germany for more than 90 days.**

**-For preparation purposes, the following documents are necessary to apply for a residence permit:**

- Proof of admission to undergraduate or graduate studies or confirmation of admission to an exchange program
- Passport
- 1 current passport photograph (must be biometric, and that you can get biometric photos right at the Stadtbüro.)
- Evidence of registration at the Local Registration Office
- Evidence of health insurance coverage
- Application form for a residence permit, obtainable from the Internet in several languages "Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels". The document must be filled out in black ink: [RESIDENT PERMIT APPLICATION](#)
- Evidence of financial means and possibly proof of scholarship in German or English:
  - 1) **Proof of financing: show proof of finances for each year of study in advance. If you receive a scholarship that is less than €659 per month, you will also need to provide proof from your parents or another sponsor that they will cover the monthly difference.**
  - 2) **Proof of financial stability in the form of bank statements from American and/or German bank accounts.**
  - 3) **PLEASE inquire yourself at the German embassy in your country, in whatever form you have to provide proof.**

**Note:** You may also need to acquire a visa in order to travel outside of your host country. Please visit the websites of the embassies of the countries that you wish to

travel to in order to determine what the visa and entry requirements are for those countries.

For example, if you are studying in Germany, but you decide to take a weekend trip to Turkey, you may need to acquire a visa. Obtaining a visa may require you to fill out the appropriate forms, have passport photos taken, send or take your passport to the respective embassy or consulate, etc.; the requirements can vary by country, consulate and citizenship of the applicant. ***Because the process can be very involved and time-consuming, we recommend that you start planning or preparing several weeks or months prior to your departure for any trips that you intend to take while studying abroad that may require you to obtain a visa.***

Please see this website for more information about visa and entry requirements for Germany:

[www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/Startseite.html](http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/Startseite.html)

[http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/05\\_Legal/02\\_Directory\\_Services/01\\_Visa/Study\\_Visa.html](http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/05_Legal/02_Directory_Services/01_Visa/Study_Visa.html)

## **EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

### **HOST EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

An embassy is a permanent diplomatic mission that is usually located in a nation's capital. Its main responsibility is to represent its home country abroad and to help handle major diplomatic issues.

A consulate is generally described as a smaller version of an embassy. Consulates can usually be found in large tourist cities. They are responsible for handling minor diplomatic issues, such as issuing visas and taking care of migrants, tourists, and expatriates.

Most sovereign states have embassies and consulates within the United States that are responsible for issuing visas and working with U.S. citizens who wish to travel to their countries. The location of your official residence will determine which foreign embassy or consulate will be the point of contact for inquiries.



#### **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the U.S.:**

4645 Reservoir Road NW  
Washington, D.C., 20007-1998  
Tel: (202) 298-4000

#### **For residents of PA, NY, NJ, Fairfield County of CT, and Bermuda:**

**Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany**  
871, United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

**Tel:** (212) 610-9700  
**Fax:** (212) 610-0402

Please visit [www.germany.info](http://www.germany.info) for more information.

If you reside outside of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Fairfield County of Connecticut, or Bermuda, please determine through research the consulate that you should visit based upon your area of residency.

### **U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**



Should you encounter serious problems, the American Embassies and/or Consulates can offer limited assistance. They can, for example, provide you with a list of local attorneys and physicians; they can contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or serious illness; they can contact friends or relatives on your behalf to request funds or guidance and they can replace a lost or stolen passport. They cannot, however, provide the services of a travel agency, give or lend money, cash personal checks, arrange free medical service or legal advice, provide bail or get you out of jail, act as couriers or interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local authorities. Remember that their primary responsibility abroad is to help fulfill the diplomatic mission of the United States Government, not to act as nursemaids to American travelers.

**Note:** As a citizen of the United States, you are able to visit any U.S. embassy or consulate within your host country in order to seek assistance. Your location within your host country does not determine which embassy or consulate you will be able to visit as it does in the United States.

#### **U.S. Embassy in Berlin**

Pariser Platz 2  
14191 Berlin  
**Tel:** (030) 832-9233; *for emergencies:* (030) 8305-0  
**Hours:** 8:30am – 12 noon, Monday – Thursday  
**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/>

#### **U.S. Consulate General in Frankfurt**

Gießener Str. 30  
60435 Frankfurt am Main  
Federal Republic of Germany  
**Tel:** (069) 7535-0  
**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/frankfurt/>

#### **U.S. Consulate General in Düsseldorf**

Willi-Becker-Allee 10  
40227 Düsseldorf  
Federal Republic of Germany  
**Tel:** (0211) 788-8927; *for emergencies:* (030) 8305-0

**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/dusseldorf/>

Commented [QQ1]:

### **U.S. Consulate General in Hamburg**

Alsterufer 27/28  
20354 Hamburg  
Federal Republic of Germany  
**Tel:** (040) 411 71-100; *for emergencies:* (040) 411 71-300  
**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/hamburg/>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Leipzig**

Wilhelm-Seyfferth-Straße 4  
04107 Leipzig  
Federal Republic of Germany  
**Tel:** (0341) 213-840  
**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/leipzig/>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Munich**

Königinstraße 5  
80539 München  
Federal Republic of Germany  
**Tel:** (089) 2888-0  
**Website:** <https://de.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/munich/>

## **WHAT TO PACK**



When planning what to take with you, remember that the first rule is to take a minimum of clothes. You will tend to accumulate things as time passes, so, if in doubt, leave it at home. Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve several different seasons and temperatures.

European heating standards are not the same as in the United States, so buildings and homes may seem somewhat chilly. Dark conservative colors are fashionable and they will wear longer without laundering, and will often help to make you less conspicuously American. Try to take "heavy-duty" practical clothes that can withstand lots of wear especially if you plan to do any traveling. Clothes that wrinkle and show dirt easily are not ideal. Above all, pack light. You should be able to get all your gear into two suitcases and a carry-on bag. You will be buying some gifts and souvenirs to bring back, and you will have to lug and handle everything there and back!

## **CLIMATE AND WEATHER**

Most of Germany has a temperate seasonal climate. Rainfall occurs year-round, with the most rain falling during the summer months. Winters are usually mild and summers tend to be cool, although temperatures in the summer can exceed 86°F for prolonged periods of time.

Be sure to consider the climate and weather when you pack in order to ensure that you pack appropriately.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKING

We have compiled a list of items that some of our previous study abroad participants thought were useful while they were abroad.

- Extra Batteries
- Travel Alarm Clock
- Money Belt (to discreetly carry passport)
- Country Travel Guides
- Towel (Take 1 to start)
- Contact Solution (Could be available in host country, however it may be expensive - \*easy & cheap to find at a "DM")
- Shower Shoes
- Language Dictionary
- Toiletries (Take travel-sized and then you can purchase more in your host country)
- Photos (In order to personalize your room)
- Coat
- Hat
- Gloves
- Umbrella

Keep in mind that you will need a converter/adaptor for all of your electrical appliances (razors, hair dryers, etc.). Some students choose to purchase converters/adapters before they depart for their host country. Other students, though, purchase converters/adapters once they are in their host country.

Every student will need to adjust the list above to fit his/her personal needs and tastes. You may find that you will choose to take somewhat different items, but you should remember that you can purchase similar products abroad. Also, take into consideration the season that you will be in your host country (or countries that you may be traveling to) and pack accordingly.

**NOTE:** Remember to leave room in your luggage for souvenirs and gifts. Previous study abroad participants have packed a rolled-up duffle bag in their suitcases. They were then able to use this for travelling while they were abroad and for bringing souvenirs and other items back to the States.

It has been recommended by some experienced travelers that after you pack your bags you should carry them around the block for at least 15 minutes. You'll probably repack!

## MONEY

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE



Upon arrival, you may wish to exchange some of your American currency into the currency of your host country. This can be done at most major international airports, major banks, and railroad stations abroad. **Note:** It would be wise to exchange a small amount of your money prior to your departure in order to have some cash on hand upon arrival at your study abroad location.

While you are living in your host country, you may wish to exchange large amounts of money. Previous study abroad participants have found that banks are generally the best place to exchange large amounts of money while abroad. The airport is usually not the best place to exchange large amounts of currency, as airports do not offer the best exchange rates. It is also recommended that you do not exchange money at hotels, restaurants, or retail shops; the exchange rate at these locations is less favorable.

During the first week in Germany, I knew that I would need to make payments in cash. Because of this, I exchanged a lot of my money at the bank here in the U.S. and brought the cash with me abroad. The banks normally do not charge extra fees for the exchange process like they do in the airport.

After the first week abroad I set up to have my own bank account in Germany. You can either do this on your own or during Marburg's orientation. Once my account was set up, I had money transferred from my U.S. account to my German account. It is best to do single large transfers, rather than frequent smaller transfers, due to fees. Also, one cannot complete a transfer from a U.S. account to an international account without being at the U.S. bank in person. Because of this, it is highly recommended that you get someone else (a parent or guardian) to also be assigned the rights to your U.S. account so that they may complete the transfer process for you at the U.S. bank. Once I had my money in the German account, I could use the ATMs in Germany as often as I wanted without any fees.

You can expect to pay a commission (which varies from one country to another) every time you exchange currency. Sometimes, this commission is a flat fee regardless of the amount of the transaction. If the commission is a flat fee, it is to your advantage to exchange larger amounts of money to avoid repeated visits to the bank window. This means that you will be carrying more cash than might be advisable. You will need to find a happy medium between the risks of carrying large amounts of cash and paying repeated bank commissions for exchange transactions.

**Note:** A few exchange services offer commission-free exchanges to students (just ask and be ready to show your ISIC) or they may even give you free exchange back to your original currency if you retain your original transaction receipt.



When you get to the airport, only exchange enough money for the first few days of your trip. Currency exchange in the airport is not the best deal for your money, as there are additional fees charged

and the exchange rate is poor. It may be better to wait until an ATM machine is available to you once you arrive.

**EXCHANGE RATE**

As with all currency, the exchange rate for dollars to euros is constantly changing. Please see this site to find the most up-to-date exchange rates: <http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>. An **EXAMPLE** is listed below.

Before your departure, you should also begin thinking about exchange rates in the foreign currency which you will be using when you make purchases here in the U.S. This will help you become a little more comfortable converting money in your head before your arrival in your host country.

\*Please note that currency exchange rates change every day.

USD	EUR	USD	EUR	USD	EUR
	1 = 0.94	10 = 9.44		100 = 94	
	2 = 1.89	15 =14.16		200 = 189	
	3 = 2.83	20 =18.88		300 = 283	
	4 = 3.78	25 =23.60		400 = 378	
	5 = 4.72	30 =28.32		500 = 472	
	6 = 5.66	35 =33.04		600 = 566	
	7 = 6.61	40 =37.76		700 = 661	
	8 = 7.55	45 =42.48		800 = 755	
	9 = 8.50	50 =47.20		900 = 850	
		60 =56.64			
		70 =66.09			
		80 =75.53			
		90 =84.97			

**OANDA.com**  
 FXCheatSheet for Travelers  
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<http://www.oanda.com>

Interbank rate  
 US Dollar (USD)  
 Euro (EUR)  
 November 21, 2016

EUR	USD	EUR	USD	EUR	USD
	1 = 1.06	10 =10.59		100 = 106	
	2 = 2.12	15 =15.88		200 = 212	
	3 = 3.18	20 =21.17		300 = 318	
	4 = 4.23	25 =26.47		400 = 423	
	5 = 5.29	30 =31.76		500 = 529	
	6 = 6.35	35 =37.05		600 = 635	
	7 = 7.41	40 =42.35		700 = 741	
	8 = 8.47	45 =47.64		800 = 847	
	9 = 9.53	50 =52.93		900 = 953	
		60 =63.52			
		70 =74.11			
		80 =84.69			
		90 =95.28			

**OANDA.com**  
 FXCheatSheet for Travelers  
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<http://www.oanda.com>

Interbank rate  
 Euro (EUR)  
 US Dollar (USD)  
 November 21, 2016

## ACCESSING MONEY

### **TRAVEL MONEY CARDS/TRAVELERS CHECKS**

It is not recommended that you carry large amounts of cash with you. Travel money cards or travelers checks can be safer ways of carrying your money.

#### **Travel Money Cards**

**Visa Travel Money Card** – The Visa Travel Money Card is prepaid card; therefore, you can spend up to the card value anywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. You can also use the Travel Money Card to withdraw cash at any Visa/PLUS ATMs worldwide. Cards can be reloaded where they were purchased, online, or by phone. Use cash, funds from your bank account, credit or debit card to reload your card. If your card is lost or stolen, you can have the money refunded generally within 24 hours. Visa has a Zero Liability policy, which means you would not be responsible for any fraudulent purchases. It also offers emergency and emergency assistance services.

There are a number of fees associated with Visa Travel Money cards which can add up easily. If interested in using a Visa Travel Money card you will want to research into any additional costs associated with purchasing, reloading, and general use of the card.

For more information about the Visa Travel Money Card, visit <https://usa.visa.com/pay-with-visa/cards/prepaid-cards/travel-money-card.html>

#### **Travelers Checks**

**American Express Travelers Checks** – While Travel Money Cards have become more common, travelers checks from American Express also have many benefits. For example, they can usually be refunded within 24 hours if lost or stolen, they come with 24/7 customer support, and they never expire. A drawback is that these must still be exchanged for local currency before making a purchase and exchange locations may be limited.

For more information about American Express Travelers Checks, visit <http://www212.americanexpress.com/dsmlive/dsm/dom/us/en/personal/card/member/additionalproductsandservices/giftcardsandtravelerscheques/travelerschequesandforeigncurrency.do?vgnextoid=6d17fc671492a110VgnVCM100000defaad94RCRD>

## **AAA**

AAA offers both Visa TravelMoney cards travelers checks to members. For more detailed information about these options, go to [AAA.com](http://AAA.com) or contact your local AAA office.

## **BANK TRANSFERS**

For certain host universities and programs abroad, students *must* make payments directly into a bank account. Programs that offer this payment option will provide the detailed account information needed to do so. You will need to check with your bank to see if they are able to conduct an international bank transfer. Most banks charge a fee, which is determined by each individual bank. We recommend that you contact your bank in order to determine what their transfer policies and fees are.

## **AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATMs)**



ATM cards issued by U.S. banks should work in other countries. There are two ATM systems worldwide: CIRRUS and PLUS. If you have a CIRRUS card, you need to use a CIRRUS machine; the same applies to PLUS. The PLUS or CIRRUS logo is located on the back of your card and on the front of each ATM. The machines work in the same way as they do in the U.S. and many machines have instructions in a variety of languages, including English. You will receive your cash in the currency of the country you are in and the equivalent amount will be deducted from your account at home. The exchange rate on these transactions is usually the best available; however your bank or the local bank may charge additional transaction fees.

## **WESTERN UNION**

Western Union is one of the largest companies that offer wire transfer services. Western Union allows individuals to transfer or receive money even if they do not have an account with Western Union or any other financial institution. Western Union has a number of divisions, with products such as person-to-person money transfer, money orders, and commercial services. The company has approximately 350,000 Western Union agent locations in over 240 countries and territories.

For more information about Western Union, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com).

## **MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL**

MoneyGram International is a financial services company that provides money transfer services, money orders, and bill payment services to consumers. MoneyGram has offices in 190 countries around the world. Similar to Western Union, MoneyGram offers highly secure and reliable person-to-person money transfers virtually to any place around the world, taking only minutes to transfer.

For more information about MoneyGram International, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.moneygram.com](http://www.moneygram.com).

### **FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT**

Opening a bank account in your host country may be required or recommended. By opening a foreign bank account, you will receive a debit card for that account. Using your debit card to withdraw money from your foreign account, as opposed to using your American account, may save you a significant amount of money by cutting down on the number of international transaction fees. If you transfer a large sum of money from your American account into your foreign account, you can then rely primarily on your foreign account and debit card for day-to-day transactions. This is particularly helpful in Germany as credit cards can sometimes be more difficult to use depending upon your location.

### **CREDIT CARDS**



Credit cards are helpful to have while abroad, especially to use for any emergency situations that may potentially arise. Visa is the most commonly accepted in the world among major credit cards.

Keep in mind, however, that not all merchants abroad accept credit cards. The amount on your credit card statement will be based on the exchange rate on the day that your bank or credit card company processes the transaction. If the merchant doesn't submit in a timely fashion, the amount on your statement could be different from what you might have expected.

We recommend that you make copies of the front and back of your credit card(s) and leave some of these copies at home. If your card(s) were to get lost or stolen while you are abroad, you and your family would have the information for the cards on hand. We also recommend that you take the phone number of your credit card company(s) abroad with you. Previous study abroad participants have found it useful to put the phone number(s) of the company(s) on a small sheet of paper, which the students then kept with their passports.

Please pay attention to your credit limits. Make sure that you know what the credit limit is for each of your credit cards. Please note that newly acquired credit cards generally have low credit limits.

**\*\*\*We recommend that you advise your credit card company(s) and/or bank(s) that you will be studying abroad so that they will expect foreign transactions to appear on your monthly statements. This will avoid the possibility of the credit card company and/or bank freezing your accounts because they are suspicious of foreign spending. You should notify them each time you travel out of your host country as well.**

### **INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES**

All credit card companies charge international transaction fees, usually in the form of a percentage of the total amount of the purchase, when their company's credit card is used abroad. We recommend that you contact your credit card company before your departure in order to find out what the international transaction fee is for your particular

card. To help you remember that fee, we recommend that you write the percentage on the back of your credit card. This will remind you of the additional fees that you will incur with each purchase while you are abroad.



When using a credit card overseas, a special international purchasing fee may apply for each transaction. Please be sure to read the fine print on the contract you signed with your credit card company and contact them with any questions. Fees may vary from card to card, so it is important to know how much you will be charged ahead of time.

### **TIPPING**

(taken from: <http://www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-q187275-s606/Germany:Tipping.And.Etiquette.html>)



Service and VAT are included in the menu price in restaurants, bars, etc. all over Germany. If a restaurant bill says "Bedienung" a service charge has already been added, so just round up to the nearest euro. However, if you are paying for more than one person, you might go even higher. A rule of thumb is to add 5-10%, generally ending with a full Euro amount.

**Caveat:** it is not typical to be given a check, then leave your money on the table. You have to tell the amount including tip you want to pay before you pay (via cash or credit card)

**How You Pay:** Typically, the waiter/waitress always comes to you and tells you your total. You then tell him/her how much you will pay, i.e. the amount you owe plus any "rounding up" -- for example, the waiter/waitress might say "€7.60;" you hand him/her a €10 note and say "9 Euros." S/he then will give you €1 in change.

If the bill is much higher, it is preferable to apply the "5-10% rule." For example: If your check totals €101, you will likely want to round up to €110. If the service was stellar or you are particularly fond of your server, you may always be more generous. And the inverse is true, too. If service was extremely bad, don't tip!

Tip taxi drivers about 5%, and porters and others who assist you with baggage one Euro per item. You should tip hair dressers and barbers 5% to 10%.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Before you depart, the Office of Global Education will provide you with an orange, wallet-sized emergency card. This card contains important information, including:

- The numbers that you must dial in order to call to the U.S. from your host country out of the U.S.
- The numbers that you must dial in order to call out of the U.S.
- The telephone numbers of the U.S. embassy and/or consulates that are located in your host country
- Your host country's emergency contact numbers (e.g., for fire and police)
- emergency contact numbers for the Office of Global Education during office hours and, outside of the Office of Global Education's office hours, emergency contact numbers for the Millersville University Police Department

While you are abroad, please keep this orange card in your wallet at all times. You never know when you may need to reference it. Also, in case your wallet gets lost or stolen, we recommend that you place a copy of the card with any important documents that you may keep in your room.

#### ***WITHIN HOST COUNTRY***

**Fire/Ambulance:** 112

**Police/General Emergencies:** 110

#### ***CALLING MILLERSVILLE***

**Office of Global Education:** (*within office hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm*) 717-871-7506

**Millersville Emergency Number:** (*outside Global Education office hours*) 717-871-5506

The *Millersville Emergency Number* should only be used in the case of a true study abroad emergency. Should you call the emergency number outside of our regular business hours, you will be connected with an Office of Global Education team member. If your call goes to voicemail, leave a very clear and detailed message with your first and last name, your study abroad location and a number to reach you. A member of our office will return your call promptly.

## **INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CALLS**

### ***FROM U.S. TO ABROAD***



Most areas in the U.S. are now able to directly dial internationally. Should you or your parents wish to make a direct-dial international call from the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 011
2. Dial the country code (Germany: **49**)
3. Dial the city code (normally a 1 to 5 digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

A cheap way for your parents to call you in Germany is to use **10 10 297**. For further information and the newest updates check out the website [www.1010297.com](http://www.1010297.com). This can



be used from any landline in the US and can connect to a landline in Germany. (Calling a cell phone in Germany even within Germany itself is more expensive than calling a landline.)

### **FROM ABROAD TO U.S.**

Should you wish to make a direct-dial international call from your host country to the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 00
2. Dial the U.S. country code: 1
3. Dial the U.S. area code
4. Dial the local U.S number

### **Calling Home Upon Arrival**

Some students wish to call home immediately upon their arrival in their host country to inform their families that they have arrived safely. Because students usually do not have a cell phone, phone card, or internet access upon their arrival, they may choose to make a collect call.

A collect call is when the calling party places a call, and the party receiving the call pays the expense. The simplest way to do this is to dial an operator from a payphone in your host country and tell the operator that you want to make a collect call to the United States. The operator will call the number you give them and ask the recipient if they will accept the fees for the call. If they accept, the operator will connect you.

### **SKYPE**



The Skype communications system is notable for its broad range of features, including free voice and video conferencing, and its ability to use peer to peer (decentralized) technology.

Skype users essentially make telephone calls and/or video calls through their computer using Skype software and the Internet. The basis of the system is free communication between users of Skype software; however, the product also allows Skype users to communicate with users of regular landline and mobile telephones and charges a reasonable per minute rate. This software is currently available free of charge and can be downloaded from the company website: <http://www.skype.com>.



Practically all of the international students used Skype. It's cheap and VERY easy to use. When you call people who also have Skype, the calls are free; when you call people who do not have Skype, the calls are very inexpensive compared to the price of phone calls with phone cards or cell phones. If you have a webcam, you can also video chat with other people who have Skype for free.

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE**

Depending upon the length of time you will be abroad, you may want to consider options for using a cell phone to make local calls from within your host country. Described below are two options for using a cell phone abroad. Either option is an additional expense and it is up to you to decide if this is necessary.

Most Millersville students decide to purchase cell phones with a pay-as-you-go plan. The prices of both the cell phone itself and the plans vary greatly from country to country. Upon your arrival, it is important to research the local cell phone providers in your host country to see which provider is best for you.

You will see many, many people using their cell phones, called "*Handys*", in Germany. A lot of people send text messages instead of calling one another. Calling a cell phone from a landline ("*Festnetz*") is very expensive. However, the person who receives a call on her/his cell phone is not charged for the call.

Another option is to replace your current cell phone's SIM card (if your phone has a SIM card) with an alternative SIM card. This process requires some research before departure and sometimes does not work with certain providers. A SIM card is a small card that lets the phone work on a particular mobile network. It can easily be swapped around in some phones. SIM cards for foreign networks can be purchased abroad at many locations including international airports. Before departing for your host country, you should contact your cell phone provider and ask them if your phone will work in your host country. If it does, you should also ask whether they have locked your phone against use with a different SIM card, and what, if anything, they will charge to unlock the phone. When purchasing a SIM card in your host country, make sure to ask if the alternative SIM card will expire after a fixed time. Often, you will pay a flat rate for the SIM card and instead of signing a contract, you can choose a pay- as- you- go plan.

## **CALLING CARDS**

We recommend if you plan to purchase calling cards, that you do so upon your arrival in your host country. Oftentimes, calling cards purchased in the United States do not work abroad. International calling cards can be purchased in many locations and can be a cheaper way to call home compared to using a cell phone. You can use these international calling cards from public phones, from your cell phone or from landlines. The prices vary greatly and some cards have very cheap per minute rates so you should research these prices before purchasing.

Caution: If using an international calling card from a cell phone, you may have to pay for the minutes used on your cell phone as well as the minutes used on the international calling card. This varies by country and cell provider.

## **PAYPHONES**

Public payphones in Germany operate mostly by phone cards.

## CALL-BY-CALL

You can save money on calls by using the call-by-call service. The “Deutsche Telekom” is the largest phone service in Germany; however there are small businesses that offer very good deals on national and international calls. For up-to-date information you should check out the deals on one of the many websites, such as <http://www.teltarif.de> and <http://www.billiger-telefonieren.de/>

After 9 p.m. the prices for calls within Germany are less expensive.

## ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONICS



The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volt/ 50 cycle. You may need to purchase a converter in order to run and operate any American appliances.

More information about converters and adapters can be found under the heading **Suggestions for Packing.**

## DVDs

It is important to note as well that DVDs are formatted differently around the world. Most DVDs have a regional code, which generally restricts them from being played on American DVD players. You can purchase a universal or region-free DVD player which will allow you to play DVDs from every region. Many laptops will also play DVDs from different regions. Please note though that laptops generally only allow users to switch regions a limited number of times. Please research the number of times that the DVD player on your laptop will allow you to switch regions.

The DVD regional code for the United States, U.S. territories, Canada, and Bermuda is **1**. The DVD regional code for Europe is **2**.

## CAMERA/PHOTO SUGGESTIONS



If there is one piece of advice I would give anyone studying abroad it would be this: As soon as I came back from a weekend getaway or had a lot of pictures on my camera, I immediately uploaded them to the hard drive on my lap top. After that I uploaded those pictures onto walmart.com (or any other store that develops photographs - riteaid.com, walgreens.com, etc.). Once they were uploaded, I had the option of getting them developed, which I did. When you are not using one hour photo, digital pictures can be relatively cheap. I chose the longest time period for them to develop (which is the least expensive) and had them shipped directly to my house. Every time I came back from a trip, I ordered my pictures, had them delivered to my home in the U.S., and my entire four months abroad was printed out and ready for me when I got home. I printed pictures out little by little, so I never had one big bill to pay. Waiting until you get home to develop all your photos will be very expensive. More than likely you will not have

extra money to spend when you return home from your host country. Not only were my pictures ready when I came back but it saved me the trouble of printing them out. People have the tendency to never get their digital photos printed. I am guilty of leaving the pictures sit on my camera for months. This is one experience you are not going to want to forget. Develop your pictures immediately and know that they are ready and paid for you when you come home.

## **PRESS**

There are five daily newspapers in Germany that have good reputations because of their sophisticated domestic and international coverage: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)*, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Handelsblatt*, and *Die Welt*. The *FAZ* is probably Germany's most prestigious daily newspaper and is the one newspaper read by virtually all members of the political and business establishment.

## **TRAVELING IN HOST COUNTRY**

### **CARS**



Students may drive cars while abroad, but Millersville University will accept no responsibility in case of an accident or insurance problems. An International Driver's License may be required and can be purchased through the American Automobile Association (AAA).

Can also use BlaBlaCar <https://www.blablacar.de/>

### **TAXIS**



Taxis are available to get around towns and cities; however, they are not a bargain and you will end up paying about the same as you would for a taxi in the U.S. You can wave taxis down in the street but often the best idea is to find the closest taxi rank. Taxis in Germany are not cheap and the prices range between urban areas even for a short two kilometer journey in the inner part of a big city.

### **BUSES**

(as taken from <https://www.buseurope.eu/front/> )

Germany has an extensive domestic bus network that many travelers use to get to smaller towns. With services to destinations throughout Europe, buses are a popular alternative to the train.

Some domestic bus operators include Berlin Linien Bus, which operates the Berlin - Dresden, Berlin - Hamburg and Berlin - Munich routes and Touring, which operates the Hamburg - Hannover - Frankfurt - Heidelberg - Mannheim route.

Another bus operator to use is Flixbus <https://www.flixbus.de/>

Central bus stations (Busbahnhof) are usually located near the main train station (Hauptbahnhof) in most big towns and cities. There are, however, some smaller bus companies, such as those serving eastern European destinations, which operate from their own terminals.

**Note:** You must have a valid ticket on you at all times during the duration of your time on a bus. If you do not, you may be penalized.

## **METRO**

Most large German cities have a well-integrated network of underground subways (U-Bahn) and suburban commuter trains (S-Bahn).

Because the platforms are on different levels, changing from S-Bahn to U-Bahn can at times be a little confusing. There will be signs designating station entrances at the street level: a white 'S' on a green background for S-Bahn and a white 'U' on a dark blue background for U-Bahn.

**Note:** You must have a valid ticket on you at all times during the duration of your time on the subway. If you do not, you may be penalized.

## **TRAINS**



Combining convenience with inexpensive rates, perhaps the most widely used form of transportation within Europe is the railroad. Travel by rail within Europe will be a pleasant surprise. The trains are far more reliable in Europe than in the United States and travel to any destination worth visiting. Many universities offer a so-called "Semesterticket", which enables you to travel for free on buses and trains in the local traffic area during the semester.

### **RAIL PASSES**

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT RAIL PASSES**

Information about these passes may be obtained from a travel agent. Rail passes are personal and nontransferable and will be forfeited if presented by anyone other than the person to whom they are issued. Presentation of your passport is compulsory when making use of the pass. Also, passes do not guarantee you a seat; some trains require seat reservations for a nominal fee.

#### **TYPES OF RAIL PASSES**

##### **EURAIL PASS**

The Eurail Pass must be purchased in the U.S., before departure. It is available for unlimited travel periods of 15 days, 21 days, 1 month, 2 months, or 3 months. This pass is limited to those under the age of 26. The Eurail Pass is good in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Hungary. The pass must be used within six months from the day that it is issued; however, it is good only for the length of time for which you bought it within that six month period. For example,

with the one month pass, the clock begins to tick the first time you use your pass, and you can use the pass for one month from that time.

[www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com)

### **INTER-RAIL PASS**

The Inter-Rail Pass is available for purchase in Europe and cannot be purchased in advance in the U.S. Before purchasing this pass, you must be a resident of Europe for at least six months. It provides half-price travel in the country where you purchase it, and free travel in the rest of Europe, including much of Eastern Europe.

For more details, please visit <http://www.interrail.net/>

### **GERMAN RAIL PASS**

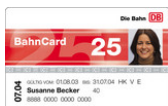
A German Rail Pass is available to be purchased for 4 to 10 travel days to be used at any time. The Rail Pass is valid within 1 month (Flexi pass) and offered for 1st and 2nd class. For young people (ages 12-25), the German Rail Youth Pass is available with a discount on the German Rail Pass. The most economical way for two adults to travel via German Rail is by using the Twin Pass. Each German Rail Pass is valid on all routes throughout Germany and for transfer routes between major German airports and main railway stations. It also includes the following ship tours: Ships of KD Köln-Düsseldorfer Rheinschiffahrt AG on the rivers Rhine and Moselle (Cologne-Mainz, Cochem-Koblenz). Cabin ships are excluded.

For further details, please visit <http://www.k-d.com/>

Outside Europe the German Rail Pass offer is available through travel agents with rail sales. You can also buy the German Rail Pass (4 to 10 day passes, prices are calculated in euros) at selected train stations in Germany (Aid Offices), for example at the airport in Frankfurt.

### **PAYING FOR THE TRAIN**

#### **BAHNCARD**



If you plan to travel around Germany by train a lot and are staying in Germany for at least a couple of months, you might want to consider purchasing a BahnCard. You have the option of buying a BahnCard 25, 50, or 100. The numbers stand for the percentage of the discount that you get on your train tickets. The BahnCard 25 provides a 25% discount on regular tickets as well as Germany's PlanundSpar (Plan and Save) program and for tickets purchased in Austria and Switzerland. Another good feature of the BahnCard 25 is that the discount is applicable to not only you, but to a maximum of 4 people traveling with you. The BahnCard is valid for a year and has to be cancelled in written form about 6 weeks before it expires or else another BahnCard will be sent to you.

#### **PLANUNDSPAR**

Under Germany's PlanundSpar (Plan and Save) program, you can reserve a seat one day in advance and receive a discount off one-way and round-trip fares. For three days in advance, the discount increases but requires a round-trip purchase. For seven days,

the discount increases yet again but requires both a round-trip purchase and a weekend stay. Users of the BahnCard get an additional discount.

Two caveats: First, change penalties are as high as € 45 but don't apply to missed connections. Second, the number of discount seats available is limited on any given train.

For more information, go to <http://www.bahn.de/p/view/index.shtml> and look under "International Services," where you can review plan details, check timetables, and purchase advance tickets.

## FLIGHTS



Air travel is a bit more complicated than traveling by train because you need to find transportation to and from the airport, whereas train stations are generally found in the center of town. One of the most inexpensive airlines is Ryanair. On the website you will find great deals for trips to places within Europe. However, keep in mind that the airports that the airline flies into are sometimes further away from the main cities and that you will need transportation to and from the airports. For more information, please visit Ryanair's website at <http://www.ryanair.com/de>

More general information can be found here <http://goeurope.about.com/>.

## NOTES

### **DO NOT HITCHHIKE!**



Be careful when traveling and review the travel tips in this handbook before you go. Do not underestimate the amount of walking you will be doing in Europe. For other traveling details and guidelines, you can look on the State Department Travel Advisory website: <http://travel.state.gov/>.

## MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION

### HOSTELS

A website that many students use to travel within Europe is [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com). This lists every hostel that registers with the site and provides guest ratings and reviews and sometimes pictures. It also lists the price and allows you to reserve your bed.

Though private rooms are sometimes available, it is not uncommon to share a room with other travelers. This can be daunting to an American who may be used to more privacy; however, sharing hostel rooms is a common practice in Europe. While most travelers do not encounter any difficulties, it is still important that you use common sense and take precautions with your belongings. Many hostels allow you to use lockers but you should bring a lock and secure your luggage either way.

Many hostels require your passport at check-in, so even though some may suggest not taking your passport for domestic travels, it will be required for most hostels for their records.

## YOUTH HOSTELS



A cheap place to sleep is a youth hostel. Youth hostels in Germany attract all kinds of people, not just younger travelers as the name might suggest. There are approximately 600 youth hostels throughout Germany. Before you go, try to get some recommendations from some other students or online reviews.

To save some more money, you can buy a Hostelling International (HI) card.

Even if you are not already an HI member, you can stay in German Youth Hostels by paying a small extra charge. For non-members, for every overnight stay you will receive a 'Welcome Stamp'. Once you have collected six Welcome Stamps you will receive a free Hostelling International full membership card, which is valid for 12 months from the day you get your last stamp.

To learn more about this card check out <http://www.hiusa.org/>

Some useful websites to learn more about available hostels are:

<http://www.europeanhostels.com/>

<http://www.hihostels.com/>

Another option would be Airbnb <https://www.airbnb.com>

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY IN HOST COUNTRY**

(as taken from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>)

Germany regularly experiences demonstrations on a variety of political and economic themes. Demonstrations are common on politically significant holidays, such as on May 1, German Labor Day, and during international summits hosted in Germany. Americans are cautioned to avoid the area around protests and demonstrations and to check local media for updates on the situation. In addition, "hooligans", most often young intoxicated "skinheads," have been known to harass or even attack people whom they believe to be foreigners or members of rival groups. On occasion, Americans have reported that they were assaulted for racial reasons or because they appeared "foreign." Americans should be aware that congregating in areas known as expatriate hangouts such as restaurants, bars, and discos frequented by high numbers of resident American citizens and/or American tourists could attract unwanted attention from disorganized groups of rowdy patrons seeking to start a fight.



## **SAFETY TIPS-CRIME**

Violent crime is rare in Germany but can occur, especially in larger cities or high-risk areas such as train stations. Most incidents of street crime consist of theft of unattended items and pick-pocketing. There have been several reports of aggravated assault against American citizens in higher-risk urban areas. American travelers are advised to take the same precautions as they would in any American city.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS**

### **24-HOUR CLOCK**



In the 24-hour clock system, the day runs from midnight to midnight and is divided into 24 hours. This system is the most commonly used time notation in the world today. If you subtract 12 from all times between 13:00 and 24:00, you will arrive at our standard afternoon and evening times. On the 24-hour clock, for example, 1:00 p.m. appears as 13:00.

### **TIME ZONES**



There are different time zones around the world. Please keep this in mind when calling home. Be sure to remind friends and relatives of this time difference. You can check the world's different time zones at <http://www.timezoneconverter.com/index.php>

Germany is 6 hours ahead of EST.

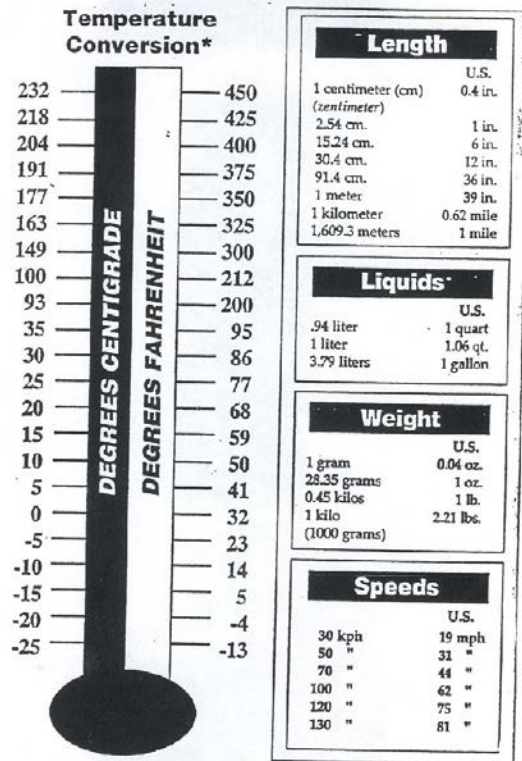
### **METRIC SYSTEM**



The metric system has been the standard in most countries for years; it is only the U.S. that has been out of step. If you are accustomed to thinking in terms of quarts, miles and pounds, it may take some time to get used to the metric system. Conversions that might be helpful:

1 gram	=	.04 ounces
1 kilogram	=	2.20 pounds
1 liter	=	1.06 quarts
1 meter	=	1.09 yards
1 kilometer	=	.62 miles

## **CONVERSION CHART**



\* To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit, multiply the Centigrade temperature by 1.8, and then add 32 to that number. To convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade, take degrees Fahrenheit, then subtract 32 and divide by 1.8.

## SIZE CONVERSION CHART

(as taken from [http://german.about.com/library/blmode\\_sizes.htm](http://german.about.com/library/blmode_sizes.htm))

When it comes to clothing and shoe sizes, Europeans, Americans and the British, use very different systems. Not only is there the difference in metric versus English measurements, but there are different philosophies in some areas, especially in children's sizes.

See the conversion charts below for more information.

**Konfektionsgrößen**  
**Clothing and Shoe Sizes**  
 Metric (German) versus English

<b>DAMENBEKLEIDUNG (LADIESWEAR)</b> Ladies' Sizes - Dresses, Suits						
<b>METRIC</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HERRENBEKLEIDUNG (MENSWEAR)</b> Men's Sizes - Jackets, Suits						
<b>METRIC</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>US/UK</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>HEMDEN (SHIRTS)</b> Kragenweite - Neck Size						
<b>METRIC</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>US/UK</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>DAMENSCHUHE (LADIES' SHOES)</b>						
<b>METRIC</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>US/UK</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>HERRENSCHUHE (MEN'S SHOES)</b>						
<b>METRIC</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>US/UK</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>KINDERBEKLEIDUNG (Children's Clothing)</b> Children's Sizes - Ages 1-12						
<b>METRIC</b> Size	<b>80</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>US/UK</b> Age	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Note:</b> Take care in converting children's sizes since the two systems use two different criteria (age vs height).						
<b>METRIC</b> Size	<b>122</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>US/UK</b> Age	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **PHARMACIES**



You should go to a pharmacy if you need to buy medication while abroad (with or without a prescription). You can locate a pharmacy by the big red A (for “Apotheke”) in front of the store. While they generally keep the same business hours as other local businesses, on Wednesdays and Saturday’s pharmacies are only open until 1pm and closed completely on Sunday’s. However, at least one pharmacy per district is required to be open at all times. If a pharmacy is closed, the nearest open pharmacy will be posted on the storefront.

# Section 3

## Program-Specific Information

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## **PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

Philipps-Universität was founded in 1527, shortly after the beginning of the Reformation, as the first university in Europe with a Protestant theological faculty. Founder of the university was Philipp the Magnanimous, Landgrave (Count) of Hesse, and descendant of St. Elisabeth. St. Elisabeth's Cathedral, the first Gothic church on German soil, dates from the 13th century. Towering over the city is the castle, once residence of the Landgraves of Hesse and now used, in part, by the university.

From the castle walls you can see the many university buildings scattered over the city. The view is a striking contrast of century-old sandstone buildings and modern steel and glass structures of the post-war years. Philipps University Marburg is considered one of the best in Germany and is on its way to becoming one of the most modern in Western Europe, however its surroundings have lost none of their original charm.

Marburg has approximately 86,000 residents, with 20,000 students and 6,000 people working for the university. The majority of students in Marburg come from all over Germany. The Philipps-Universität also has more than 30 international partnerships and exchange agreements with other colleges and universities worldwide.

The campus is spread out throughout the city of Marburg and some of the dormitories are just a 20 minute walk to town. The city of Marburg is located approximately 1 hour (by train) from Frankfurt.

### ***PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM INFORMATION***

Millersville's program in Marburg is the longest-running international exchange partnership that Millersville has. The immersion program has been in operation since 1963, and the IUSP program began in 1986. MU participants stay in university accommodations and are considered visiting international students.

We have a good working relationship with the IUSP/International Office at Marburg, as well as the upper administration of the university, who very much support international collaborations. The campus/city of Marburg has been site visited on many occasions by multiple members of MU's Office of Global Education and Partnerships. Because of this, we are able to provide active "hands-on" support to students as they embark on their study abroad experience.

### ***MU RELATIONSHIP/INTERNATIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT***

Philipps Universität Marburg has a fully staffed International Office and personnel dedicated specifically to the IUSP program. They are available to provide assistance to study abroad students at Marburg/IUSP. You will receive much more information about the university at a multi-day orientation provided by the IUSP International Office when you arrive.

## **BILLING PROCESS**

Studying abroad through the IUSP program in Marburg will still be billed according to the MU billing cycle. You will be billed for Millersville Tuition, Tech Fee, and General Fee.

Students are responsible for (and **NOT** billed by Millersville for):

- **Accommodations** - paid directly to the IUSP program in Germany by wire transfer. No other form of payment will be accepted. There is also a 250 Euro security deposit required upon arrival in Germany.
- **Meals** – students pay for their own meals/food, however a 200 Euro meal stipend/per semester is included in the “Accommodations” fee. Upon arrival you will be given a cafeteria debit card, and the card will be credited with EUR 50 per month. It can be used in the university facilities (cafeterias, the Mensa) to pay for food. IUSP will explain to you how to go about using the card.
- **German Health Insurance** - is required and proof of your US insurance will be due upon arrival at Marburg. More information is found under Health Services.
- Other **miscellaneous** expenses - visa fees (approx. 110 Euros), airfare, personal spending money, transport to and from the airport, books/texts, and passport.

Refer to your cost worksheet for a complete list of relevant costs, both billed and estimated for budgeting purposes.



Do NOT bring a bank check or check of any kind for expenses paid to Marburg/IUSP. **THEY WILL NOT TAKE IT!** Travelers Cheques take over 2 weeks to clear in the bank so do not plan on using this as a form of payment upon arrival.



Make sure that you have enough cash with you to cover the first few days in Marburg, including some money for food and beverages. (Check with your bank, you may be able to withdraw money from the ATMs in Germany directly for a small fee or no fee at all.) Foreign currency **CANNOT** be exchanged at the banks in Marburg!

## **HOUSING**

Students are housed in seven dormitory buildings called the *Studentenwerk*.

The dorm rooms are single rooms with a closet, bed and some have sink and vanity in their room while others do not. The university provides all students with linens (sheets, pillows, and a comforter), but does not provide students with towels. The bathrooms in the dorm are communal, as are the kitchen facilities. The bathrooms, however, are not segregated by gender so men and women will be using the same restroom facilities. The kitchens in the dormitories include a shared refrigerator and some cooking utensils.



Every student receives an individual locker for storage. Each dormitory also includes laundry facilities typically located in the basement.



Some kitchens may be better stocked with kitchen utensils/supplies than others. Many students buy utensils and then leave them behind when they leave. The university does not stock the kitchens themselves. The people who leave dishes, utensils and supplies also have the right to take them back whenever they want to, meaning that one day they may be there and the next day they're not. Every student receives an individual cabinet with a lock for food.



Just like at Millersville, people in Marburg often do all their laundry at the end of the week. The dorm I stayed in when I was there only had three washers and dryers. I would advise no to wait until the last minute to do laundry, as they are often in use.

**Please note:** Some buildings have curtesy hours and frown upon doing laundry past a certain hour; you may need to plan accordingly and check ahead of time if this applies to your building.

As the IUSP/International Office at Marburg takes care of booking accommodations for the study abroad students, no specific requests can be accommodated – students will receive whatever room, in whatever building they are registered for/assigned to.

**Payment:** As described above.

**Security Deposit:** The security deposit will be returned at the end of the stay if the caretaker of the dorm (in German: “*Hausfrau*”) checks the room and determines it is in good shape. The *Hausfrau* will give the student a checklist which they will present at the *Studentenwerk* to get the security deposit back, minus a cleaning fee which is about 20 Euros.

Students will need to contact the caretaker and schedule an appointment for her to come check your room and sign your release papers so you can pick up your security deposit from the school housing office.



Make sure you bring things to make your room look/feel homey - they have tile floors and may feel emotionally cold.

## **FOOD OPTIONS**

There are several cafeterias in university buildings where you can purchase beverages and snacks. In town there are several snack bars, bakeries and fast food facilities, and full service restaurants.

Breakfast is available in the bistro in the nearby university cafeteria ([Mensa](#)). Lunch and dinner are served in the Mensa as well, where prices range from approx. EUR 1.50 to 4

for a full meal. The bistro and the Mensa are located in the student services center (*Studentenhaus*). Note that there are no cafeterias in the dormitories.

Kitchen facilities are used often by the university students to prepare their own meals and usually become a “social event”. This is where you will get to meet a lot of people, not only on your floor, but from other floors and buildings.

Included in the “Accommodation” fee is a small meal subsidy/food allowance: upon arrival you will be given a cafeteria debit card, and the card will be credited with EUR 50 per month. It can be used in the university facilities (cafeterias, the Mensa) to pay for food.



There is no Meal Plan like there is in Millersville. However, every student gets a “U-card” (German: “U-Karte”) that he/she can load with money to buy meals in the Mensa. You also use this card to pay for anything you print out at the library as well. These cards can be loaded at machines located in the Mensa. Certain machines allow you to add 5 or 10 Euros, while others may allow up to 20 Euros.

### **COMMUNICATION IN YOUR UNIVERSITY**

No landlines are readily available in the dormitories. Students usually purchase inexpensive cell phones (either pay-as-you-go or a cheap plan).

### **COMPUTERS**

Internet connection and computers are available in the library & computer center; however there are no public computers in the dorms.

### **INTERNET**

Not all rooms in the dormitories are guaranteed to have WiFi or an internet connection so you should be prepared to purchase internet once you get there. Some dorm rooms will have internet already installed, and sometimes students may be able to pick up a wireless signal. However, it is not possible to request a room with internet – Philipps can only guarantee that a room is reserved. You can get internet by purchasing access to a router from a student who already has one or you can purchase an internet stick from an electronics store such as *Media Markt*. Wireless internet access is also available in campus buildings such as the Mensa, classroom buildings and in the library.

Internet and computer access is also available on campus at the library and in various computer laboratories.



Do not count on having internet in the dorms. You may be able to get access from someone else in the dorm who has paid for it - generally, they

ask you for €5-10 a month, and you get to use the internet. (Ask someone in your dorm if you could share their internet or if they know anyone who would be willing to split the internet with you) **DO NOT TRY TO NAVIGATE THE GERMAN INTERNET-CONTRACT WORLD!** It's really difficult to do so. I know this from personal experience.

### **CELL PHONES**

Since a regular telephone extension from the "Deutsche Telekom" is not feasible for a short stay, it is suggested that students buy a cheap cellular phone or sim card in Germany.

There are some options to get a cell phone (Handy). Here are a few suggestions:

1) If you already own a T-Mobile carrier cell phone, bring it with you to Marburg. T-Mobile is one of the only companies that can convert between European and American frequencies, so a T-Mobile cell phone can be used in both places. You have to make sure that the SIM card (the card inside the phone) is "unlocked" so you can purchase and insert a card in Marburg.

2) Pre-Paid Phones - Many cellular phone providers offer well-priced pre-paid phones. These phones come without a contractual commitment. However, the pre-paid calls are typically more expensive. Depending on the provider, the prices vary (phone, per-minute rates, etc.) – it is worthwhile to Simyo/Congstar - Simyo and Congstar sell pre ask around in various shops once in Marburg. -paid SIM cards for cellular phones with good rates for phone and text messaging. There is no long-term commitment to a contract or a monthly service charge through this provider. Another advantage is that the credit can be viewed and reloaded online. A Dual-, Triband- or UMTS cellular phone without SIM lock is required for utilizing the services. More information is available on their web site.



I used Aldi Talk. Before I went to Germany, I unlocked my Samsung phone, so when I arrived in Germany, all I had to do was buy a new SIM card. The grocery store, Aldi, sells the SIM card and you can go there and get minutes for your phone whenever you want! No contract!

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

#### **HEALTH INSURANCE/MEDICAL**

NOTE: In Germany it is mandatory for everyone to have health insurance - visiting students included. Thus, IUSP requires students purchase the German government health insurance plan, which is paid monthly while you are in Germany. When weighing your options for ISIC coverage, you will want to consider the coverage for TRAVEL

insurance benefits, since no travel insurance is included in the German government health insurance plan.

UPON ARRIVAL you will be asked to show proof of your international health insurance. IUSP has confirmed that the ISIC health insurance you purchased is not enough, thus you will have to purchase the German government health insurance plan.

More information will be provided during Orientation at Philipps where representatives from several insurance companies will come and speak to you individually about health insurance options. If for any reason you need to see a doctor while abroad, it is required that all patients pay 10 Euros at the first doctor's visit per quarter of the year (similar to a co-pay). The German government health insurance for students offers full coverage of all medically necessary treatments. Students are free to choose their own doctor, however initially they must see a general practitioner. A list of doctor's practices in Marburg will be handed out during orientation.

Students will not be covered under German government health insurance until the official enrollment date for the semester. If arriving in Germany earlier, students need to make sure to cover this period with their own medical or travel insurance.

Please note that many prescription drugs may not be available over the counter in Germany. It is very important to ask a pharmacist about the over the counter drugs as strengths and doses of similar medications may vary.

Please see **Section 2 of the German Handbook** for more information on medications, travelling with medications and laws pertaining to this.

## **ARRIVAL**

You will be given further directions by the IUSP/International Office for after your arrival in Marburg. However, on arrival day, please wait at or go to Marburg's *Hauptbahnhof*. Someone from IUSP will pick you up at the station. Be on the lookout for someone bearing an IUSP sign. If you do not see anyone right away, do not panic, and just wait for a moment.

- Emergency telephone when dialing from within Germany: **0160.265.57.42**.
- Please arrive at the *Hauptbahnhof* in Marburg prior to 6 pm (18 hrs).

## **GETTING TO YOUR HOST DESTINATION**

Step-by-step directions from the Frankfurt Airport to Marburg's train station:

### **Arrival by Plane**

Destination Airport: Frankfurt / Main

#### **Arrive at Terminal 1:**

- Pick up your luggage on the arrivals level

- Follow the signs to the Regional Train Station (*Regionalbahnhof*)
- Buy a train ticket to Marburg / Lahn (max. EUR 20) in the Travel Center (*Reisezentrum*)
- Take the S-Bahn to Frankfurt Main Train Station ("*Hauptbahnhof*") (approx. 10 min.)
- Change trains to go to Marburg

#### **Arrival at Terminal 2:**

- Pick up luggage on the arrivals level
- Take the "Skyline" or the direct shuttle bus to the airport train stations
- Buy a train ticket to Marburg / *Lahn* (max. Euro 20) in the Travel Center (*Reisezentrum*)
- Take the S-Bahn to Frankfurt Main Train Station ("*Hauptbahnhof*") (approx. 10 min.)
- Change trains to go to Marburg

#### **Train to Marburg**

The train trip from Frankfurt's Main Train Station ("*Hauptbahnhof*") to Marburg *Hauptbahnhof* lasts about one hour. The trains depart every sixty minutes between 5:22 am and 10:28 pm and at 11:26 pm from Monday to Saturday. On Sunday, the trains depart at 5:09 am and between 7:22 am and 10:23 pm and at 11:26 pm. There is an additional train every day at 12:32 am.

In order to find the train suitable for you, please visit the website of the German railway company, "[Die Bahn](http://www.diebahn.de)".

**Do not travel without a valid ticket! Do not leave the train at the Marburg South stop ("*Marburg Süd*"), but continue on to the next stop, which is the Marburg *Lahn* Main Train Station ("*Hauptbahnhof*")!**

For more directions/arrival information visit:

<http://www.uni-marburg.de/iusp/practicalinformation/planeandtrain>



I was so tired and exhausted when I got to Frankfurt that I didn't realize that trains might travel on different tracks depending on the destination. It's important to make sure that you get on a train that travels over FRANKFURT HAUPTBAHNHOF - and this is NOT the first station. I remember worrying about that too when I was first on the train - "Which station is mine?" The Hauptbahnhof is NOT the first station - it's well identified with a loudspeaker, but when you're as exhausted as I was, it might still be hard to identify. At the Hauptbahnhof, any train that travels over *Gießen*, *Treysa*, or *Kassel* will stop at Marburg. Sometimes Marburg will also be listed, but it's not always. Normally these three other stations are though. Just make sure you get on the right platform, and you're fine.

## **ORIENTATION PROCESS**

The orientation program is a multi-day program that takes place right before the German Language and German Culture courses begin. The first day you arrive, you will take a placement test for the German language course. The orientation program will assist with the visa process and city registration forms, activating your university email account, and finding your way around Marburg. A schedule for the first days in Marburg can be found under "[Downloads](#)".

## **OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT**

Although it is not necessary to open up a German bank account for one semester, it is definitely suggested for those abroad for a year. One semester abroad students will want to decide once they are in Germany. Only a passport is required to open an account. Money can either be deposited into the account by the student (cash or American Express Travelers Cheques) or via wire transfer.

**Note 1:** You should know that wire transfers can be expensive depending on which bank you transfer from and Travelers Cheques can take as long as two weeks to clear in your account. Keep in mind that U.S. credit cards are often difficult to use in Europe and in Marburg specifically. This may be a reason to open a German bank account as you cannot rely on credit cards to work everywhere (in Marburg and across Europe in general).

**Note 2:** Make sure you tell your bank that you are going abroad! They will freeze your account if they think that someone stole it and started spending money in Europe and it will be difficult for you to communicate with your bank while abroad to get it fixed. Tell your bank where you will be going, how long you will be going abroad, and if you will be traveling to any other countries while abroad.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The academic calendar for the IUSP program differs to the "regular" university in that the IUSP program begins approximately 6 weeks prior to the normal start of term. During this time IUSP participants will take an intensive German Language course and a German History and Culture course. At the end of the 6 weeks, these two courses will end and students will begin their two seminars (previously selected and registered for).

Fall semester usually begins the end of August and ends mid-December (prior to the Holidays) and the spring semester begins mid-February to early-June.

For specific dates for the IUSP program visit:

<http://www.uni-marburg.de/iusp/programinformation/dates>

## **CLASSES/SCHEDULING**

IUSP participants take a required intensive German language course and a required German History and Culture course. After 6 weeks, students change gears and take two seminars of their choice.

The language courses are an integral part of the IUSP program. These German language courses accommodate all levels of language proficiency, including beginner's level. You will receive language instruction for four to five hours a day, Monday through Friday. A language placement test upon arrival in Marburg will help determine each student's German proficiency level/course level.

The intensive language training will be supplemented by the German History and Culture course relating to economy, politics, geography, history and institutions of contemporary Germany. The language of instruction will be English.

In addition, there is a German conversation class which is also offered in order to provide you with additional opportunities to practice the German you have learned.

The IUSP seminars are part of the regular Marburg University curriculum. They are chosen for the IUSP program because they are suited to helping students gain a broader perspective on Germany and Europe. The IUSP seminars are not focused on aspects related solely to Germany, but rather have an international focus.

If a seminar is only taught in German, there will be a tutorial offered in English to help students with the material that was covered (in German) in class. Students will be able to be tested and obtain credit for the English version of all lectures.

The classes for the spring semester at IUSP are published in January; classes for the fall semester at Marburg are published in June. We recommend looking at classes from the previous academic year to get a feel for what classes will be offered in the corresponding semester of the current academic year. In most subject areas, similar courses are offered on a rotating basis one time each academic year. They do not offer the same classes every year/semester.

For a list of past semester seminars please visit:

<http://www.uni-marburg.de/iusp/programinformation/studyprogram>

## **EXAMS**

### **ACADEMIC GRADE/CREDIT CONVERSION**

The following courses are taken by all IUSP participants and will transfer back to Millersville, based upon the successful completion of each course, with the following credits (a maximum of 17 credits total is possible):

<u>Course</u>	<u>MAXIMUM IUSP ECTS Credits</u>	<u>MAXIMUM MU Credits</u>
<p><b><u>German Language Course</u></b> offered at three levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced)  This will transfer back to MU as <b>two</b> 3.5 credit German language courses. One class will transfer back to MU as a German course/elective at whichever level the other German Language course is taken (example: 3.5 credits of GERM 101 and 3.5 credits of GERM 1XX, G1 - maximum total of 7 credits).</p>	6 ECTS	3.5 credits each (7 total)
<p><b><u>Introductory Course in Geography, History, Politics, Society, Economy and Europe in Germany</u></b>  Most students transfer this course back to MU as HIST 224: Modern Germany (G3, W).</p>	6 ECTS	3 credits
<p><b><u>Conversation Course (German)</u></b>  This course will transfer back to MU as a German course/elective at whichever level the German Language course is taken (example: if you are in beginning German and your language course will transfer back as GERM 101 and GERM 1XX, then your Conversation Course will transfer back to MU as GERM 1XX - a 100 level German elective, 2XX for a 200 level elective, etc.).</p>	1 ECTS	1 credits
<p><b><u>Two additional courses/seminars</u></b>  (selected from IUSP course offerings)  These offerings will vary by semester, however all seminars are worth a maximum of 3 MU credits each</p>	6 ECTS each	3 credits each

**Credit Conversions:**

*The above credits are the MAXIMUM possible credits to be earned. Credits at IUSP are contingent upon attendance. Both grades and credits are variable; the quality of the assessed work will determine grades, and attendance will determine credits.*

Please see the following charts to reference the attendance vs. credits award scale:

**German Language Course (120 Contact Hours)**

Number of Hours Course Attended	ECTS Earned	US Credits Earned
120-108 hours	6	7
107-94 hours	5	7
93-90 hours	4	6
89 hours or less	0	0



### **Culture Class & Seminars (48 Contact Hours Each)**

Number of Hours Course Attended	ECTS Earned	US Credits Earned
48-41 hours	6	3
40-39 hours	5	2
38-37 hours	4	1
36 hours or less	0	0

### **Conversation Course (based on 16 contact hours)**

Number of Hours Course Attended - must attend all classes	ECTS Earned	US Credits Earned
16 hours	1	1

**Note: MU credit equivalencies are based upon ECTS credits earned - which are based upon attendance. The maximum ECTS credits per class should be used for the completion of Pre-departure Paperwork (on Resident Credits Form).**

### **Grades:**

Grades at IUSP are awarded based upon a numerical system. The following chart is the grade conversion scale that is used:

### **Grade Conversion**

"Local Grade" from IUSP      US Equivalent

15      A+

14      A

13      A-

12      B+

11      B

10      B-

9      C+

8      C

7      C-

6      D

5      D

4 and below      F

**Refer to the following IUSP website for further information regarding grades, credits and transcripts: <http://www.uni-marburg.de/iusp/programinformation/credits>**

### **EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES**

The "school spirit" that is virtually always present on U.S. campuses does not exist at German universities, and it is largely for this reason that U.S. students may feel a lack of community and comradeship. This may, in part, be due to the fact that German universities do not have official university sports teams. There are, however, many intramural sports opportunities available through the University such as aerobics, basketball, volleyball, soccer and swimming. You may want to check out what the **Zentrum für Hochschulsport** (<http://www.uni-marburg.de/zfh/kursangebot>) has to offer. International students who

are interested in joining a sports team can also do so by joining a local private club (a "Sportverein" or a "Fussballverein", for example).

## **LIFE IN YOUR HOST CITY**

### **OVERVIEW OF HOST CITY**

Philipps-Universität Marburg was founded in 1527, which makes Marburg an extremely old university town. Marburg is located just 1hr and 30min. away from Hessen's capital city, *Wiesbaden*, and is just an hour away from Frankfurt, which makes the town a great central hub for traveling; the North Sea coast and the Alpine peaks, the industrial "*Ruhrgebiet*," and Berlin are all less than a day's drive away. The excellent public transportation enables students and residents alike to travel easily to any city in Germany and to many European cities.

Marburg is made up of the old and the new. The Medieval town sits on a mountainside with cobblestone streets and a castle above it. It is Germany's largest secular Gothic building still in existence, and it contains the University Museum of Cultural History. The newer part of the city is found below and this is where the university is located. The city is very "walkable" and both the old and new parts are easily accessible. Restaurants and shops are found in both sections of the city and the old and new botanical gardens do not only attract visitors in the summer months, but the tropical greenhouses and botanical exhibitions can be visited all year round.

### **CLIMATE AND WEATHER**

The weather in Marburg is very similar to here in Pennsylvania without the extremes. It does not usually get excessively hot, nor extremely cold with large amounts of snowfall. The weather is quite temperate with lots of rain, so make sure to have a good jacket or coat and umbrella for the rain and occasional wind.

### **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**

Trains are readily accessible in Marburg and students can be ride for free with a student ID (*Studienausweis*) within the State of Hessen (all public transportation except ICE trains).



Read the bus schedule carefully and make sure that you're traveling in the direction that you should be. This was something that I felt the orientation program did a poor job of preparing me for. I'd never really used public transit before and had no idea how to interpret the schedules. It's rather logical and easy, once you figure it out. Feel free to ask questions if you're confused about something!

**Please Note:** On holidays the bus schedule follows the Sunday schedule and is not available during normal hours, so keep this in mind when you are planning on going somewhere on a holiday!



The bus schedule changes depending on the day and sometimes they will alter it completely (with notice). Before you get on the bus or train, make sure you have your student ID, *Studentenausweis*, which you will be given upon arrival at Marburg. (You do not want to get a fine for not having your transportation pass with you, it is quite inconvenient)

## COMMUNICATION IN YOUR HOST CITY

### **INTERNET**

There is Wi-Fi in most of the university buildings and it is usually reliable and fast. Some café's also offer Wi-Fi but you must buy something from their shop and ask them if you can use their internet.

### **POST OFFICES**

There is a big "Deutsche Post" building on Bahnhofstrasse (the main road the Hauptbahnhof is on). If you wish to send a package, or someone has sent you a package and you need to pick it up, you will do so there. There is also a smaller "Deutsche Post" office on Gutenbergstrasse in Tegut, however it is more convenient to go to the main office to send/receive packages.

## RESTAURANTS/FOOD

There are many local restaurants including the university dining facility called the *Mensa*. Students can purchase prepared meals here with cash or with the *U-Karte*. There are also a variety of local grocery shops so that you cook for yourself in the dorms. Marburg is full of little cafes, restaurants, and Döner-Kebab stands. Many of the restaurants and cafés are found in the *Oberstadt*. You will never run out of places to eat. Note: that most American credit cards and American debit cards are not accepted in many local grocery stores/supermarkets, so make sure you always have cash with you when you go out to eat. If you need to get cash, there are multiple ATMs open 24hrs throughout the city.



The mensa has relatively cheap food and is very convenient if you only have a few minutes to eat and want to stop in to get something on your way to and from classes. However, most students simply go grocery shopping and

eat most of their meals at home. The two most convenient grocery stores are REWE and ALDI, they are not far from the center of town and are quite cheap.



I would buy food for dinner either at Rewe, Aldi or Tegut. Many times my friends and I would buy a lot of food and make a larger meal. Being able to split the prices kept the overall cost down. It is also a HUGE plus if you know how to cook. I was able to cook big dinners for 15 people or more and everyone would just pay a few Euro's to cover the cost.



There are a ton of great little restaurants and bakeries scattered throughout the city. One of my favorite places to go was Paprika. Paprika is located in the Oberstadt near the elevator and is always a great place to meet up with friends!

## SHOPPING



There are many small Boutiques and shops throughout the city. There are also a number of larger stores and a large department store called Ahrens. These are all within walking distance of the center of town. Depending on where your dorm is within Marburg, there might be other smaller shops within walking distance from there too.

## HOSPITALS

If for any reason you get into an accident or need to go to the hospital, you can call an ambulance (for a true emergency) a cab, or take the bus. The hospital in Marburg is called the UniKlinikum. The number 7 bus stops at UniKlinikum, which is one stop after the Studentendorf bus stop. The address of the hospital is the following:

Universitätsklinikum Gießen und Marburg  
Baldingerstr. 1  
35043 Marburg  
0 64 21 5 8-60



For any other non-emergency, like you need allergy medicine, or a brace for a sprained joint, you can go to any Apotheke to get what you need. There are at least 10 in the city. The most convenient ones are probably the ones located by the Hauptbahnhof or in Erlenring (across from the Mensa by Aldi and Rewe).

## TRAVEL



When I arrived in Marburg, the International Office gave all of us travel passes (part of your Studienausweis) for the state of Hessen (the state Marburg is in). This allowed us to travel all over Hessen for free. We could take any bus and train (except for the ICE trains) to any city, at any time, within Hessen. It made for easy local traveling!