

# Germany, Bonn

## PROGRAM HANDBOOK



SPRING 2014

The Bonn, Germany program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in conjunction with the University of Bonn. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbooks or materials you receive from the University of Bonn as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to IAP at UW-Madison.

This program handbook contains the following information:

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# Contact Information

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## ON-SITE PROGRAM INFORMATION

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## UW-MADISON INFORMATION

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## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 262 2851 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff on call at (608) 516 9440.

## EMBASSY REGISTRATION

All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register on-line at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country's embassy or consulate.

United States Consulate  
Wili-Becker-Allee 10  
40227 Düsseldorf  
Germany  
Tel: +49 (0)211 788 8927  
Fax: +49 (0)211 788 8938  
Web: <http://duesseldorf.usconsulate.gov>

# Program Dates

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## Sommer Semester 2014

Arrival Day	March 4
Orientation Course	March 4 – April 4
University Classes Begin	April 7
Easter Break	April 18 – April 21
Pentecost Break	June 9-13
Classes End	July 18 (university courses will have exams after)
Move out of dorms	July 31

The University of Bonn will provide more detailed arrival information. Dates may be viewed here: <http://www3.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/exchange-and-study-abroad/jyp/academic-calendar> Students must check with their Professors about exam dates, as these may be after the class end dates. Most exams will be complete by July 31. **If you are taking courses outside of the International Office, please do not book your return prior to July 31.**

# Preparation Before Leaving

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## IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

**Passport:** A passport is needed to travel to Germany and to register with German immigration authorities. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>. If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

**Visa:** U.S. citizens do not need a visa to enter Germany. Non-U.S. citizens should consult with the German consulate for visa requirements.

**Residence Permit:** After entering Germany you will need to apply for a residence permit at the local *Auslaenderamt* (Immigration Office) if you will be staying in Germany for more than 3 months. During your orientation in Bonn, the staff of the International Office will explain the application process to you and assist you with obtaining the necessary documents.

You will need to bring the following documents with you in order to apply for the residence permit:

- Valid passport
- University of Bonn student identification/enrollment/insurance letter
- Passport-size photograph (this should be taken in Germany)
- Registration confirmation from Residents' Registration Office
- Application fee (approximately 110 Euro)

In order for immigration authorities to process your application for an *Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*, you will need to submit your passport for about seven to ten days, within the first three months after your arrival. Do not plan on traveling outside Germany during this time.

If you are planning to travel in Europe after the end of the program, please make sure to check current visa regulations. An extension of your residence permit will be granted up to four weeks if you have proof of health insurance and sufficient funds for this period of time.

## HANDLING MONEY ABROAD

The official currency of Germany is the Euro (EUR), with 1 Euro equaling 100 cents. As of 10/20/13, the exchange rate was \$1 USD to 0.74 Euro ([www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com)). Students should plan to have money available through a combination of ATM cards, cash, and/or traveler's checks to cover their first few days in Germany. At the minimum, it is recommended that you have available:

- **100 Euro** in cash to cover incidentals and meals during your first few days. Cash in Euro can be ordered for you by your U.S. bank if it is not already on hand (notify your bank in advance, as this can take several days), withdrawn from German ATMs using your ATM card, or exchanged from dollars at the airport (not recommended since exchange rate is high).
- **1,500+ Euro** for expenses associated with settling in (you may bring travelers checks to deposit into a new bank account or withdraw funds from your U.S. bank account using your ATM card).

Living expenses in the first month will be considerably higher than in other months because of some initial one-time expenses, and also because some time is needed to find the most economical lifestyle. For each month thereafter, you will need to budget at least 150 Euro per month for meals and basic living costs. The amount you will spend is ultimately an individual matter and depends on your own particular lifestyle and resources. For example, 150 Euro per month will not cover expenses for extensive travel or major purchases.

**Banks:** Most German banks are open from 8:00 a.m. until noon and again from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Most banks stay open until 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Banks are normally closed on Saturdays.

Most bank business in Germany is conducted by bank transfers (*Überweisungen*) from one account to another. You may open a *Girokonto* (bank transfer account) upon arrival in Germany. The International Office recommends opening an account at a local bank or *Sparkasse*. In order to open an account, you will need the following documents:

- Valid passport
- Registration certificate from the city of Bonn
- Student identification
- Funds to open the account

If you have your own bank account in the United States, you may transfer money to your Bonn account by initiating a wire transfer between the U.S. account and your Bonn account (there is a bank fee for processing wire transfers).

For in-country bills and/or payments which you will be making on a regular basis, you can authorize your German bank to make automatic transfers on an on-going basis (*Dauerauftrag*), which may be a requirement for many types of obligations. It is your responsibility to make sure you have sufficient funds in your bank account. If you are overdrawn, the transfer can not be made and you will incur a fine and have to go to your bank in person to make the *Überweisung*.

**ATM/Debit Cards:** Probably the simplest way to access funds from the U.S. is to use an ATM debit card for your U.S. checking account. You will be able to withdraw cash (in Euros) from a *Geldautomat* (money machine) and have it debited (in U.S. dollars) to your U.S. account at a fairly favorable exchange

rate (a transaction fee may apply). Consult your U.S. bank to determine if there are any German bank partners that will not incur transaction fees. Bank of America and Deutsche Bank have such an arrangement. Please notify your bank that you will be living in Bonn and using your card in Germany.

Throughout Western Europe, *CIRRUS* and *PLUS* are the most widely available ATM systems. Be sure to ask your U.S. bank or credit union for an internationally accepted ATM card and PIN number. The upper limit on the amount that can be withdrawn at any one time or on a single day is established by your U.S. bank. Thus, it is important to consult with your bank on these matters prior to leaving for Germany. Past participants recommend increasing your ATM withdrawal limit so that you may withdraw enough funds for program expenses.

**Traveler's Checks:** You should be aware that traveler's checks (be they in dollars or Euro) are not accepted at the overwhelming majority of German restaurants, hotels, and stores. Instead, you must exchange your traveler's checks for cash at a bank, which generally imposes high transaction fees.

**Credit Cards:** Both Visa and MasterCard may be used to obtain cash advances at most banks and many ATMs (fees apply). Prior to departure, ask your credit card company for an international four-digit PIN if you do not already have one. Also, find out what your credit card company charges for cash advances. American Express offices will also cash personal checks up to \$1,000 every 3 to 4 weeks, as long as you are a card member and have a passport as identification. The American Express office in Bonn is located at Bonngasse 10 (tel. 76 61 10). It is open Monday through Friday, and Saturday mornings. Please notify your credit card company that you will be living in Bonn and using your card in Germany (provide other countries if you will be traveling for leisure).

## PACKING

Students who studied in Germany in previous years will assure you that almost everyone takes more than necessary. Keep in mind also that you will be carrying your own luggage when you arrive, so avoid bringing baggage that is so heavy that you cannot lift or move it without help.

Germany has a moderate climate in comparison with Wisconsin, but the weather is cold and unpleasant during the late winter and early spring. Be prepared for overcast skies and nonstop drizzle. Be sure to bring an umbrella, or plan on buying one shortly after you arrive. Most things you will want will be available once you get to Bonn, so avoid over-packing. Be aware that certain items, such as jeans and shoes, are more expensive in Germany than in the U.S.

You will find that German students dress very similarly to U.S. students. Although the winter in Bonn may not be as cold as in Wisconsin, you will still need warm winter clothing—including a warm coat and heavy sweaters—which will also be useful if you travel to northern countries. Highly suggested items:

- Hiking Boots (if you are the outdoorsy type)
- Rain Coat / Umbrella
- Hat / Gloves
- One Nice Outfit
- Passport Pouch/Money Belt
- Towels
- Journal
- Laptop Computer (with Ethernet cable)
- Travel Guide
- Collins (large) German-English dictionary
- Pictures/Postcards of your hometown

## ELECTRONICS

Germany runs on 220V (volts), 50Hz (cycles) AC and uses the “europlug” with two round pins. If you plan on bringing any appliances from the United States, keep in mind that they will require adapters/converters which you should purchase before departure. It may be more convenient and less expensive to purchase appliances in Germany rather than purchasing the necessary converter/adapters in the United States.

## Travel and Arrival

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You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements. Most program participants choose to fly to Germany and to land at one of three airports: Frankfurt am Main (FRA) [www.airportcity-frankfurt.com](http://www.airportcity-frankfurt.com), Cologne (Köln) (CGN) [www.koeln-bonn-airport.de](http://www.koeln-bonn-airport.de), or Düsseldorf (DUS) [www.dus-int.de](http://www.dus-int.de). The Frankfurt airport, which is the second largest in Europe, is by far the most frequently selected. Düsseldorf is actually closer than Frankfurt to Bonn, but there are fewer flights into the Düsseldorf airport. The Cologne airport, situated between Cologne and Bonn, is the most convenient but also the smallest, and there are fewer flights into it.

All participants must ensure that they arrive at the International Office (53 Poppelsdorfer Allee) between 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on the arrival day for the program. At the International Office you will register and receive materials for orientation. Your orientation material will include a detailed program calendar listing dates and times for the *Einführungskurs* (four-week orientation course) and for the rest of the semester. Visit <http://www3.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/exchange-and-study-abroad/jyp/pre-departure#section-2> for up-to-date information from the International Office.

After you register at the International Office, you will then be transported to your dormitory, where you will need to meet with your *Hausmeister(in)*, the person who runs the dorm, in order to complete housing paperwork. Finally, your *Hausmeister(in)* or a *Tutoren/Senioren* (similar to a housefellow) will show you to your room. Dormitory rooms will not be available prior to arrival day.

Please note that only on the arrival date can the International Office be held responsible for transportation to your housing. The tutors in the dorms are also only available for helping newly arrived students with moving into their dorm rooms on that day. If you are unable to reach the International Office on time, be sure to notify the office staff in advance. If you are delayed on your trip and are likely to arrive late, call the office staff.

If you arrive in Bonn earlier than the arrival date, you will need to find your own accommodations, such as the local youth hostel (*Jugendherberge*):

Jugendgästehaus Venusberg  
Haager Weg 42  
53127 Bonn  
Germany  
+49 (0) 228) 28 99 70  
+49 (0) 228) 28 99 714 fax  
E-mail: [bonn@jugendherberge.de](mailto:bonn@jugendherberge.de)  
Web: [www.bonn.jugendherberge.de](http://www.bonn.jugendherberge.de)

You can reach the hostel by catching city bus line 621 at the main train station in Bonn. You exit the bus at the stop named "Jugendgästehaus."

**Arrival in Frankfurt:** The train is the best way to travel between Frankfurt am Main and Bonn, with several direct trains from the Frankfurt airport to Bonn every day. Trains depart about once an hour, and the journey takes about an hour and a half to two hours. There are even more possibilities involving a transfer in downtown Frankfurt (the Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof) or in Mainz. You can inquire at the airport DB counter when the next good connection to Bonn will be departing, and be sure to ask where and when you may need to transfer (you can conduct your business with the train staff in either German or English).

You can also check out possible train departure times and connections at [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de) as well as purchase tickets online with your credit card. You may buy your ticket either before you depart for Germany or right at the DB information and ticket sales counter in the airport station. A one-way ticket between Frankfurt and Bonn costs between 35 and 80 Euro. You can pay with a credit card or with cash.

At the Frankfurt airport, the train station is on the basement level directly underneath Terminal 1 the international terminal. After your flight, you will proceed through passport check, claim your luggage, and pass through customs control. Then you will need to find your way through the airport to the escalator leading down to the train station. Look for the signs with red and white train icon and the letters DB (Deutsche Bahn), and follow the arrows.

Once you go onto the airport train platform with your luggage, take your time and make sure you are at the right track (*Gleis*, numbered 1 through 4) and boarding the correct train. They come and go frequently, so don't worry if you miss one: another will be coming soon. The *Schaffner* (conductor) or uniformed train workers on the platform can help you find your way to the right track. You will notice that German trains have 1st and 2nd-class cars, marked prominently with 1 and 2 beside the doors. Just as with coach and business class on the airlines, there is a steep price difference between traveling 1st or 2nd class on the trains.

Be sure that you get a ticket and a train that will take you to the Bonn Hauptbahnhof. Some of the trains from Frankfurt go to Bonn-Beuel (a nearby suburb, but on the opposite side of the Rhine River from the university, and thus an inconvenient place to get off) or Siegburg (another town very close to Bonn, but you will have to transfer to a subway train to the Bonn Hauptbahnhof). Also, find out in advance at what time the train is scheduled to stop in Bonn, either by consulting the printed schedule or asking the *Schaffner* or other passengers. If you are not prepared when the train pulls into Bonn, you may find it very difficult to gather your suitcases in time to exit the train before it continues on to Cologne.

**Arrival in Düsseldorf:** If you deplane in Düsseldorf, you will have two choices. Once you have collected your luggage and gone through passport control and customs, you continue on to Bonn by taking either a train all the way or a shuttle bus/train combination. Directly underneath the airport there is a small train station. Trains depart for Bonn about every 20 minutes, and the trip takes a little over one hour. Depending on the particular train(s) you select, the ticket costs between 18 and 25 Euro. At the information and ticket sales counter in the airport station, you can ask when the next cheap (12 Euro) train connection will be departing. Some trains travel directly to Bonn, but others will involve transferring at the Düsseldorf train station (*Hauptbahnhof*).

If you choose to take the airport shuttle bus instead, you will exit the airport and take the bus to the Düsseldorf train station and proceed from there to Bonn via train. Either way, you can buy a one-way train ticket to Bonn (*einen einfachen Fahrschein nach Bonn*), and then find the appropriate track. Find out in advance when the train is scheduled to arrive in Bonn so that you will be prepared to gather your luggage and exit the train in a timely manner.

**Arrival in Cologne/Bonn:** There are no direct flights from the U.S. to Cologne/Bonn; instead, you will fly to some other German or European airport, where you will go through passport and customs checks,



and then transfer to a second flight on to Cologne/Bonn. If you fly into Cologne/Bonn, you will need to make your way outside the airport to the shuttle bus stop. (Unlike Frankfurt, there is no direct train service from the Cologne airport to Bonn.) The shuttle bus to the Bonn Hauptbahnhof is Bus #670 and is clearly marked, but if you have questions, simply ask for information. Shuttle buses depart about every half hour during the daytime, and the ride to Bonn takes about 35 minutes. You buy the ticket directly from the bus driver for 6 Euro (bus driver will only accept Euro), so be sure to have some money handy.

**Arrival in Bonn Hauptbahnhof:** Whether you arrive in Bonn via shuttle bus or train, you will disembark at the main train station or *Hauptbahnhof* (Hbf). For bus passengers, this is the final stop on the route. Train passengers, however, need to be alert so as not to miss the stop. Once you have arrived at the Bonn station, the International Office is within walking distance approximately four long blocks, or five minutes on foot. The International Office is located at Poppelsdorfer Allee 53, which is the street located directly behind the train station and is perpendicular to the train tracks. It is best reached by exiting the train station at the front entrance, turning to the right, and going approximately 100 meters to the pedestrian underpass that leads under the tracks. The underpass leads directly onto Poppelsdorfer Allee.

You will receive a student handbook from the International Office prior to your departure which will provide detailed directions as well as a map. You can also study an on-line city map of Bonn available at <http://map24.de>. Once you are at the train station, you can consult the large, illuminated city map prominently positioned at the entrance to the train station or also ask a passerby to point you in the right direction: “*Wie komme ich zur Poppelsdorfer Allee?*” Most Bonners do not know the precise location of the International Office, but they should know the street.

## **The Academic Program**

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### **THE RHEINISCHE FRIEDRICH-WILHELMS-UNIVERSITÄT BONN**

The predecessor of today’s Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität was an Academy of Sciences (*Akademie der Wissenschaften*) founded in 1777 by the then ruling electoral prince (*Kurfürst*) of Cologne. It was devoted exclusively to research, not teaching. In 1786, the Academy was officially restructured as a university with a teaching mission, but less than a decade later it had to close because of the German-Austrian Coalition War against revolutionary France. On October 18, 1818, just three years after Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität was (re)founded. It was named for Friedrich Wilhelm III, King of Prussia from 1797 to 1840. There was already a university named for him in the Prussian capital Berlin, so the university in Bonn received the added designation “Rheinisch”.

Today, the University of Bonn (*Universität Bonn*) is one of the larger ones in Germany, with around 27,500 students. It is the third largest university in the state North Rhine Westphalia. The university has approximately 4,100 international students and 100 visiting professors from over 100 different countries each year. Its outstanding reputation in teaching and research and its splendid location on the banks of the Rhine River are some of the reasons why the University of Bonn ranks at the top in Germany.

Unlike UW-Madison, the University of Bonn is not contained in one campus. Rather, the *Hauptgebäude* (the main university building) is in the historic city center, while many other university buildings are located throughout Bonn and the city’s environs.

University of Bonn website: [www.uni-bonn.de](http://www.uni-bonn.de)

## THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

The Director, Ulrike Kind and Coordinator Christina Flach provide individual and group academic advising for UW-Madison students. The *Akademisches Auslandsamt* (International Office) generally conducts business in German, but all the staff are willing and able to speak with you in English if necessary. They will guide you in the study abroad program, provide course placement and other types of academic advising.

The International Office also employs peer counselors each year who are available for academic and personal advising. These peer counselors are German students selected on the basis of prior experience abroad, especially at American universities. They are very helpful for any foreign student who asks for their assistance on personal and social matters as well as academic issues.

In terms of social and cultural orientation, the International Office also handles dormitory room assignment, facilitates visa arrangements and university enrollment, and familiarizes new students with banking procedures, the German health insurance program, employment possibilities, and other aspects of daily life.

The International Office will provide you with a free regional public transportation pass that is valid for the entire duration of your studies in Bonn. It is valid throughout the state of North-Rhine-Westphalia. In addition to the abundant opportunities open to students who use the transportation pass to explore Bonn and Cologne on their own, the International Office provides an extensive program of activities each semester. Activities include: free tickets to concert and plays, excursions to museums and other sites in Bonn and elsewhere, video evenings in the basement clubroom at the International Office, and parties for foreign students to which German students are also invited.

University of Bonn International Office website: [www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de](http://www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de)

## THE GERMAN ACADEMIC SYSTEM

As you adjust to your new academic life in Bonn, it will be helpful to keep in mind a few key differences between the German and U.S. academic systems. While the program courses are structured much like U.S. university courses, regular university courses follow certain patterns that will initially strike you as foreign.

**Your relationship with German professors:** German university professors are generally less available for providing individual student guidance than U.S. professors. This is partly because of the high student/professor ratio in Germany, but also partly because they spend a large part of their time on research projects. Nonetheless, professors do hold weekly office hours, and in this setting they are reasonably approachable. Experience has shown that they are especially open to foreign students and appreciate the challenges you are facing as a non-native speaker of German. Keep in mind, though, that there is a tacit understanding that office-hour visits will be limited to at most about fifteen minutes each, and professors often have only a single office hour per week.

Students are required to visit each of their Bonn professors during office hours early on in the semester to introduce themselves as a UW-Madison student and to briefly describe their background and interests. Students should discuss exams dates and requirements during this meeting as well. Later in the term, students will want to visit some or all of their professors again to discuss particular course assignments. This is especially important because few German professors provide a printed syllabus and/or the kind of clear week-to-week assignments students are accustomed to at UW-Madison. Figuring out what a professor expects, but leaves unexpressed, will almost certainly require close attention and added

initiative on the student's part. German students taking the same courses will be able to give some pointers. Unless students seek it out, they may receive little or no feedback until final grades are posted. This is why it is required to visit your professors during their office hours. Some faculties have exams after the semester is officially over, and therefore, students need to meet with Professors and make arrangements early in the semester.

**Grading:** Depending on the course and the instructor, final grades may be based on a single term paper or on a paper in combination with an oral report (at times assigned as a group project) as well as class participation. Though most instructors do not take attendance, class participation does have some influence on course grades. Only a few university courses have final exams, which may be written or oral. Thus you may have to make some adjustments in your study habits to be successful. Generally, you will need to be more self-motivated and should expect to receive less regular feedback than you are accustomed to at UW-Madison.

## COURSE INFORMATION

### JUNIOR YEAR PROGRAM

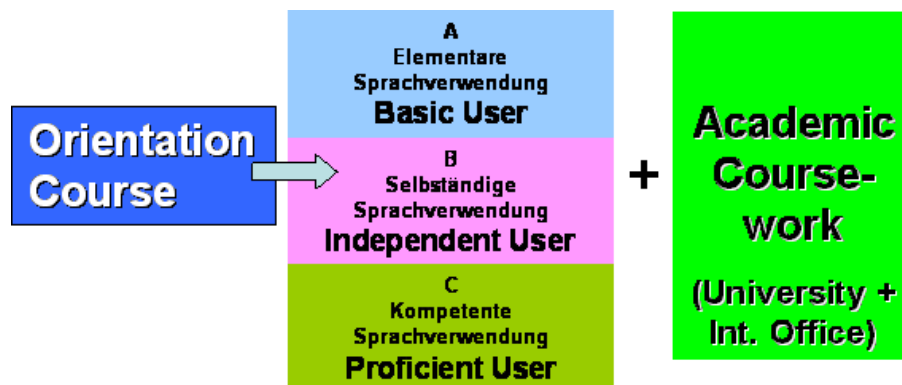
For nearly fifty years now, the University of Bonn has been organizing the Junior Year Program with partner universities all around the world. The flexible program structure and the different course offerings present students with a tailor-made study abroad program. Despite the name, which reflect traditional models of study abroad, the program is open to Sophomores to Seniors for a semester or year. The Bonn study abroad program is designed to:

- further education within a flexible program structure that caters to different needs and interests
- increase intercultural competence through integration into the German education system and through firsthand experience with everyday life
- improve German speaking skills through German language instruction with native speakers and integration into a German-speaking environment

The program offers:

- total language immersion
- specially designed courses on German culture and civilization
- regular University courses
- an extensive cultural program

The Junior Year Program is comprised of a complementary set of orientation, language, culture, and other course components outlined below:



In addition to the academic work above, a cultural component is available as well, including Bonn Buddies, local and regional excursion. University of Bonn Junior Year Program website: [www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de](http://www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de)

## **COURSES OFFERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE**

The International Office offers a number of German language and culture classes you can take, depending on your German proficiency:

**Orientation Course:** All students are required to participate in a four-week *Einführungskurs* (orientation course) in March or September. The aim of the *Einführungskurs* is to prepare you in terms of language and culture for classes at the university and to offer an introduction to German life and civilization. The *Einführungskurs* meets 15 hours per week for approximately four weeks, and is worth **four UW-Madison credits in German**. The exact UW German class equivalent is dependent upon your last UW German course taken here. Your equivalent for the orientation course will be the next UW German class in sequence.

The course begins with a German-language placement test that will determine your place in one of the language class levels. When placing you in a language class for the *Einführungskurs*, the International Office will rely primarily on your performance on the placement test, not on your prior course work or your status as a participant in either the Intensive or the Regular program. Apart from language instruction you can choose from different workshops on topics like German literature, history, politics, and theater. In addition, the International Office offers an extensive cultural program including excursions, concerts, and other activities.

At the end of this class, you will take a final exam, which will help in determining your grade for the course. Based on the exam results the International Office will also issue recommendations on courses at the International Office that you should take during the semester.

**Language and Culture Courses:** During the semester, the International Office offers German language classes on different levels (from Intensive German for beginners and intermediate learners up to more specialized courses for advanced students, e.g. Conversation and Vocabulary, Advanced Composition, Advanced Phonetics, etc.), as well as specially designed interdisciplinary classes from the fields of German culture and civilization.

Program courses organized by the International Office are designed especially for UW-Madison students and other international students. These courses will generally proceed at a somewhat slower pace and will have greater student/teacher interaction than regular university courses. Also, the class size will be smaller and teachers will be more available during office hours.

<b>Elementare Sprachverwendung</b> <b>Basic User</b>		<b>B Selbständige Sprachverwendung</b> <b>Independent User</b>		<b>C Kompetente Sprachverwendung</b> <b>Proficient User</b>	
/	\	/	\	/	\
<b>A1</b> <i>(Breakthrough)</i>	<b>A2</b> <i>(Waystage)</i>	<b>B1</b> <i>(Threshold)</i>	<b>B2</b> <i>(Vantage)</i>	<b>C1</b> <i>(Effective Operational Proficiency)</i>	<b>C2</b> <i>(Mastery)</i>

Kurstitel (Course Title)	Wstd. Hrs./ week	GER Stf.- Level		
Intensivkurs A / <i>Intensive Course A</i>	12 (9 UW credits)	A1		Elementary/Basic
Landeskunde Grundstufe / <i>German Culture and Civilization</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	A1/A2		
Intensivkurs B / <i>Intensive Course B</i>	12 (9 UW credits)	A2/	B1	Intermediate
Deutsche Medien / <i>German Media</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	B1/B2		
Phonetik / <i>Phonetics</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	B2		
Deutsch in Wirtschaft und Handel, Nr. 1 / <i>Business German</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	B1/B2		
Intensivkurs C / <i>Intensive Course C</i>	12 (9 UW credits)	B2		Advanced
Landeskunde Fortgeschrittene / <i>Advanced German Culture and Civilization</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	B2/	C1	
Deutsche Lit. des 19. u. 20. Jahrh. / <i>German Literature of the 19th and 20th Century</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	C1		
Lektüre und Sprachpraxis / <i>Advanced Grammar and Reading</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	C1/C2		
Textproduktion / <i>Text Production</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	C1		
Wortschatz und Konversation / <i>Vocabulary Building and Conversation</i>	3 (3 UW credits)	C1		

In addition, the following language courses are usually offered for intermediate- and advanced-level students:

- Lektüre und Sprachpraxis für Fortgeschrittene - meets 3 class hours per week
- Schwerpunktkurs: Wortschatz und Konversation - meets 3 hours per week
- Schwerpunktkurs: Textproduktion - meets 3 hours per week
- Deutsch in Wirtschaft und Handel I - meets 3 hours per week
- Deutsch in Wirtschaft und Handel II - meets 3 hours per week

**International Office courses that meet for 3 hours per week are given the equivalent of 3 UW credits.**

Most participants in the Intensive program are placed in *Intensivkurs*, while Regular program students generally take either one of the *Schwerpunktkurse* and/or *Lektüre und Sprachpraxis für Fortgeschrittene*.

The last-named course is generally taken in preparation for the national test of German language (*Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang*, DSH), which, is not part of the program. If you pass the DSH, you will be entitled in the future to register as an independent, i.e., non-program student at Bonn or any other German university.

If you still need to work on your German (grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension), the staff of the International Office will assign you to *Intensivkurs* A, B or C. If you are placed into one of these courses, you are required to enroll in it. Students who place into *Lektüre und Sprachpraxis für Fortgeschrittene* or one of the *Schwerpunktkurse* are not required to take this course, though it is highly recommended.

## REGULAR COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY

In addition to courses offered by the International Office, students can choose from all courses regularly offered at the University of Bonn, provided they have the necessary qualifications. The university offers about eighty degree programs and a wide range of courses. The classes offered by the seven faculties encompass the entire range of the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, medicine, and law. In general, the language of instruction is German. Some departments offer a few courses in English. A list of these courses are available for download from the International Office website [www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de](http://www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de) soon after the new *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* (course catalog) has been published.

**Course Catalog:** As at all German universities, most regular university courses at Bonn (though not the International Office courses) are rarely repeated. Consequently, there is no direct counterpart of the standard U.S. college catalog, with its convenient listing of all regularly offered courses.

For University of Bonn courses, there is a *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* (course timetable) issued each semester that provides a list of courses and times as well as a campus directory. Each semester's *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* is published about six weeks before the semester begins and is available at local bookstores for 3.50 Euro. In some cases, the information on a given course may be incomplete in the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*. For example, the room assignment may be missing, or the instructor may be designated as AN.N., meaning that an instructor had not yet been appointed at the time the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* went to print.

Some departments publish a *Kommentiertes Vorlesungsverzeichnis* (KVV or annotated course catalog) which provides more detailed information on individual courses, course descriptions, reading lists, and registration information. You can get these annotated course catalogs at the individual departments' offices, the departments' libraries, or from the *Fachschaften*, as well as online.

Each department also has its own *schwarzes Brett* (bulletin board), and they are located in the hallways near the departmental office. It pays to consult these departmental bulletin boards when planning your semester schedule, because they are the best source of completely up-to-date information on any last-minute course cancellations, room changes, and even entirely new courses which were set up too late to appear in the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* or the *Kommentar*.

When planning a semester schedule, students should always have a back-up plan with appropriate alternatives in case one or more courses are canceled. Just as in the United States, courses are subject to last-minute cancellations due to unexpectedly low enrollments, illness of a particular instructor, etc. The International Office will provide students with additional information on selecting courses during orientation.

**Faculties:** The *Fakultäten* (Faculties) are roughly comparable to the Colleges, Schools, or Divisions at UW-Madison (for example, the College of Letters & Science or the Law School). As you will see in the Spring 2014

following listing of major subject areas at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, the term philosophy is also used rather differently than in English.

- Faculty of Protestant Theology
- Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology
- Faculty of Law and Political Economy
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Philosophy
  - Philosophy
  - Education
    - Philosophy
    - Political
    - Psychology
    - Sociology
  - Psychology
  - Linguistics
  - Applied Linguistics
  - Language Lab
  - Classics
  - Germanic Languages and Literatures
    - German as a Foreign Language
    - Language
    - Literature
    - Culture
  - Romance Languages and Literatures
  - English Language and Literatures
  - American Studies
  - Slavic Languages and Literatures
  - Near Eastern Studies
  - Central Asian Studies
  - East Asian Studies
  - Comparative Religion
  - History
  - Political Science
  - Sociology
  - Music
  - Archeology
  - Art History
  - Ethnology and Anthropology
  - Sports
- Faculty of Mathematics & Natural Sciences
- Faculty of Agriculture
- Faculty of Education

Many UW-Madison students choose to take courses only in Bonn's Faculty of Philosophy. You are not limited to these classes, though enrollment in the other faculties typically requires the consent of the course instructor and should be undertaken only after consulting with the staff at the International Office. Pre-enrollment is required for very few courses in Faculty of Philosophy. In these instances, it has been instituted to cap the sheer number of students enrolled in a given class or section. To enroll in such a course, students must contact the course instructor, usually via email or by visiting the instructor during

their office hours (available at the bulletin board or online). The staff of the International Office will help you in enrolling for these courses.

**Non-University of Bonn Courses:** In addition to taking courses at the University of Bonn, you are entitled to enroll in courses offered at the Universität Köln (University of Cologne), which is a very easy and free commute from Bonn. In order to receive UW-Madison credit for a University of Cologne course, however, you will need to receive special permission in advance. If you have questions about course equivalents for University of Cologne courses you take, you should contact IAP and the University of Bonn International Office.

## COURSE LEVELS

Within each departmental listing in the Bonn *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*, the courses are arranged by level. Unlike courses at UW-Madison, which are both numbered (from 101 to 699, for example) and also categorized as Elementary, Intermediate, or Advanced, courses at German universities are separated into broken down into six or so categories. (There is some variation from one department to another.) The range of German university courses, from most elementary to most advanced, is roughly as follows:

### *Vorlesung*

A lecture course (there is a different German word for a single lecture outside a course framework: *Vortrag*). Lecture courses are typically offered by prominent senior professors, who usually read (*vorlesen*) an unpublished book manuscript or a set of draft essays to a large audience. Students are generally given little or no opportunity to raise questions or to discuss during class sessions, though some professors do allow for it. To take a *Vorlesung* is called *hören*, to listen (*Was hörst du dieses Semester?*), and indeed that's about all you can do. The German students sitting in the *Vorlesung* are essentially auditing it, for *Vorlesungen* are not offered for grades or credit (*Scheine*).

### *Übung*

Literally, an exercise. This is a relatively small class, usually with an enrollment cap, devoted to weekly reading assignments and sometimes writing assignments as well. Oral reports may also be assigned, and depending on the instructor these may be given by individual students or by small groups, the latter providing an opportunity to interact with German students. In some cases, an *Übung* is offered in conjunction with a *Vorlesung*, in which case it is very similar to a *Tutorium* (described above). Many *Übungen* are offered, however, entirely independently of *Vorlesungen*.

### *Einführung or Grundkurs*

An introductory course in which a department acquaints beginning students (usually within their first four university semesters) with the topics and methods of its discipline. Several parallel sections are typically offered each semester, and reading and writing assignments will differ totally from one section to the next. Since the course title is generic, you will need to consult a departmental *Kommentar* to find out what each section aims to cover. An *Einführung* usually has a more narrow focus than a "survey course" at UW-Madison and is more comparable with an upper-level undergraduate course at UW-Madison taken by juniors and seniors. Please note that at Bonn, many *Einführungen* fall within the category of *Übungen*, but there are also some *Einführungen* that are entirely separate from *Übungen*.

### *Proseminar*

The starting level of independent academic study, comparable to a senior seminar or other advanced undergraduate course at UW-Madison. Students (anywhere from 15 to 50 in a class) are generally required to give an oral report (*mündliches Referat*) and/or write a term paper



(*schriftliche Hausarbeit*). If the course enrollment is large, students will probably be assigned to work on group *Referate*, and this may provide you with an opportunity to interact with German students.

### ***Hauptseminar or Oberseminar***

One level higher than a *Proseminar*, comparable with an American graduate seminar at the master's degree level (*Hauptseminar*) or Ph.D. level (*Oberseminar*). German students are usually allowed to take these courses only after passing a *Zwischenprüfung*, which corresponds roughly to our B.A. degree. If you are fairly proficient in German and especially if you already have some background knowledge of the course topic, you may consider enrolling in a *Hauptseminar*, but you should definitely confer beforehand with the advisors at the International Office and visit the professor during office hours at the very beginning of the term to explain your interests and background.

### ***Colloquium***

A top-level course that prepares students for an upcoming comprehensive examination for an advanced degree, such as the Ph.D. (A similar function is carried out by the *Seminare für Examenskandidaten*.)

## **TUTORIALS**

A helpful feature of the Bonn program is that each term the International Office offers a tutorial (*Tutorium*) for selected university courses. Tutorials are generally offered for courses with a substantial anticipated enrollment of foreign students (usually a minimum of six). The tutors, in many respects, are comparable to UW-Madison Teaching Assistants.

These tutorials fill a double need by offering an expansion of material covered in the regular course and by enabling students to take a two-hour university course for three UW credits. If you are enrolled in a regular university course for two-hours (equivalent to 2 UW credits), and take a tutorial, please inform the International Office at time of registration, so the one extra credit can be added to your transcript for a total of 3 UW credits.

Since enrollment in the tutorial groups is small (approximately 6 to 12 students), you will have more opportunity to speak, raise questions, and express views that may be more challenging to share in a regular class meeting. Past program participants have expressed a high level of satisfaction with the tutorials. You will find out about the availability of tutorials for regular courses through listings posted on the International Office bulletin board or in individual academic advising sessions at the beginning of the semester.

## **REGISTRATION**

Towards the end of the orientation there will be an information session by the International Office about how to choose classes and the registration process. Students will also receive a *Belegbogen* (course list) from the International Office. On this form you need to indicate all classes you are taking during the semester (classes at the International Office and the *Einführungskurs* as well as classes at the University) and submit this form to Bonn's International Office Associate Director.

For most regular university courses you have to register in advance. Generally, professors will accept international program students into their classes. However, you should always speak to the instructor beforehand. The registration process varies—it could be by email, by seeing your instructor during his or her office hours, or by signing your name on a list that is posted in a prominent place at the department.

You will find information about this in the annotated course catalogs published by the various departments and on their webpages and noticeboards.

The International Office will have staff available for individual counseling and will help you as best as he can with planning your coursework. Whenever you have questions or concerns about your studies, please do not hesitate to contact the staff at the International Office.

## **EQUIVALENTS AND COURSE EQUIVALENT REQUESTS (CER)**

Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison “equivalent” course in order for your grades and credits to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit a Course Equivalent Request. Detailed information on the UW course equivalent process is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and your MyStudyAbroad (MySA) account.

**All CERs must be entered in your MySA account, even if approved by email or phone with your advisor at UW. Professor Louden will review German equivalent requests through this online portal to finalize your CER approval.**

Since most UW-Madison students choose to take some of their Bonn coursework in German language, literature, and culture courses, more detailed information on these equivalents will be offered here.

### ***A. German Language Courses***

Credits you earn in Bonn language courses—including the 4 credit German Language Course during the Orientation month—are applied directly to the course sequence at UW-Madison. The regular German sequence consists of German 101, 102, 203, and 204. After 204, students may continue in any of the intermediate courses, 249 (Speaking, 3 cr.), 258 (Reading, 3cr.), 262 (Writing, 3 cr.), or 274/284 (Introduction to German Literature, 6 cr.). Intermediate courses may be taken in any sequence and simultaneously; however, 274/284 counts as the equivalent of 258 and 262, so students may receive credit for either (a) 258 and 262 or (b) 274/284. In order to take advanced-level courses in German, students need a total of 9 credits of coursework at the intermediate level, either (a) 249, 258, and 262; or (b) 249 and 274/284. Note that these 9 intermediate credits may be applied to the requirements for the Certificate in German or to the prerequisite requirements for the Major in German.

The equivalents you receive for German language courses taken in Bonn will be determined by your prior language coursework at UW–Madison. For example, if you arrive in Bonn having completed 204 and have taken no courses at the intermediate level (249, 258, 262, or 274/284), you will receive credit for 249 (Intermediate German: Speaking and Listening). If you have taken one or two intermediate-level language courses, please contact Prof. Mark Louden ([mllouden@wisc.edu](mailto:mllouden@wisc.edu)) in the Department of German for guidance as to which equivalent to request.

If you have completed three courses (9 credits) at the intermediate level, you will receive credit for 337 Advanced Composition and Conversation. Note that 337 may be repeated once for credit. One additional comment: although 249, 258, 262, and 337 are all 3-credit courses when taken on the Madison campus, you will still earn 4 credits if you take the equivalent in Bonn. Any questions regarding German course equivalents may be directed to Prof. Louden.

### ***B. Other German Courses: Literature, Culture, and Linguistics***

Credits you earn in German literature, culture, and linguistics courses at Bonn will also be assigned UW-Madison course equivalents based on your prior coursework. As mentioned above, once you have

completed the equivalent of 9 credits of German language courses at the intermediate level you are prepared for German studies courses at the advanced level.

The following courses, which have been offered by the Deutsch als Fremdsprache department at Bonn during the spring term (*Sommersemester*) in recent years, are, in addition to the language courses offered during orientation and the spring term, examples of appropriate equivalents for UW-Madison intermediate-level courses:

- Moderne deutsche Literatur (3 cr.)
- Lektüre und Sprachpraxis für Fortgeschrittene (3 cr.)
- Landeskunde für Fortgeschrittene (3 cr.)

Turning to advanced-level courses in German literature, culture, and linguistics, literally dozens of courses are offered at Bonn's Germanistik department each semester. If you seek advising from the staff at the International Office, they will help guide you to the most appropriate course selections and can also inform you of particular courses accompanied by tutorials, which are similar to discussion sections at UW-Madison.

In contrast to advanced-level course offerings in German literature, culture, and linguistics at UW-Madison, which may have a broad survey approach, Bonn course offerings are more likely to cast a spotlight on a narrowly defined topic.

Because many Bonn courses lack any direct equivalent among the courses listed in the UW-Madison Undergraduate Catalog, three special course numbers are available for entering Bonn courses on your transcript:

- German 367: Study Abroad in German Literature (2-3-4 credits; repeatable)
- German 368: Study Abroad in German Culture (2-3-4 credits; repeatable)
- German 369: Study Abroad in German Linguistics (2-3-4 credits, repeatable)

Note that these courses can be repeated for full credit (i.e., they can appear on your transcript more than once).

### ***C. The Major in German at UW-Madison***

Prerequisites for admission to the German major are: 249, 258, and 262 or 249 and 274/284.

The undergraduate Major in German requires a minimum of 27 credits in advanced-level German courses. The courses presented for the major must include German 337 (Advanced Composition and Conversation) and German 676 (Advanced Seminar in German Studies). Working closely with an advisor, students will create their own program of study, selecting from the wide range of departmental and cross-listed courses. With the approval of the major advisor, up to 9 credits of work may be taken outside the Department of German, generally selected from a list of cognate courses.

These cognate courses are classes with German-related subject matter in such departments as Anthropology, Art History, Business, Communication Arts, Folklore, Geography, History, Jewish Studies, Medieval Studies, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, Theatre and Drama, and Urban and Regional Planning. German 676 and at least 3 additional credits of the required 27 credits must be taken on the Madison campus.

### ***D. The Certificate in German at UW-Madison***

The undergraduate Certificate in German requires a total of 15 credits of German (GER) coursework after 204, including at least 6 credits at the 300-level or above. For most students, this will mean taking 249, 258, and 262 (or 249 and 274/284) and two 300-level courses.

Any questions about the Major or Certificate in German should be directed to Prof. Mark Loudon, Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of German: [MLLouden@wisc.edu](mailto:MLLouden@wisc.edu).

## **CREDITS**

**Conversions:** As a general rule, credit hours for regular university courses at Bonn (those not offered by the International Office) are based on the number of hours per week that a course meets. The great majority of University of Bonn courses meet two hours per week and are equivalent to two UW credits. There are; however, two ways of earning a third UW credit in a two-credit university course:

You may choose to enroll in a course (such as a seminar) with an instructor who requires a term paper. Alternatively, you may be enrolled in a course (such as a lecture survey) with an instructor who does not require a term paper but who is willing to assign you one individually and give you a grade for it. If you write a term paper with a minimum length of ten pages in either situation (i.e., in courses where a term paper is required or in courses where it is additional work evaluated and graded by the instructor), one additional credit will be granted for the course. To receive the additional credit, you must submit a copy of the paper to Christina Flach in the International Office in addition to giving your instructor a copy. **If you do not submit your paper to Ms. Flach and your instructor, the additional credit will not be added to your transcript.**

A second way of earning an additional credit is to enroll in a course that has an associated *Tutorium* as described in the Tutorial section. In no case, can more than 1 extra credit be granted for a given course. Extra credits are not available for International Office courses.

**Orientation Course:** Students earn 4 UW credits for this month-long course.

**Intensive Courses:** Students participating in the Intensive courses will earn 9 UW credits (course usually meets 12 hours/week). Generally, the Intensive course is divided into two UW courses depending on current language level. Students will consult with German Professor Mark Loudon for equivalent.

**International Office Courses:** Students will receive 3 UW credits for courses that meet 3 hours/week.

**Regular University Courses:** Students receive 2 UW credits for courses that meet 2 hours/week.

**Limits and Load:** A typical tentative schedule comprises 12 to 18 UW credits per semester (including the 4 credits earned during orientation), and you must have the permission from UW to register for fewer than 12 or more than 18 credits.

## **PASS/FAIL/DROP/AUDIT**

Within the first four weeks of the semester, you may change your schedule by adding or dropping courses **up to the respective deadlines**. It is imperative that you contact the International Office prior to drop deadlines about any changes in your schedule. After this your course schedule will be considered final

and no further changes can be made. Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for academic policies.

## GRADES AND GRADE CONVERSIONS

German universities do not issue either transcripts or semester grade reports. Instead, your work in each course you take is recorded on an individual *Schein* (certificate), which is signed by the instructor. While German students assemble their *Scheine* in a *Studienbuch*, program students will not normally have to do this.

After you have filled out your *Belegbogen* or course registration form provided by the International Office, your professors and lecturers will be officially informed of your course participation by a letter from the International Office. With that letter, they receive a grading sheet which they are asked to send back to the International Office after whatever examination you had to take. Should you, in spite of this procedure, receive a graded *Schein*, please deliver it to the International Office. They in turn will use the grading sheet or the *Schein* to prepare official transcripts.

Keep in mind that German students sometimes take courses on a pass/fail basis without being graded. Please note that the UW-Madison program at Bonn does not grant any credit for an ungraded course. You must receive a grade for each university course you take, even if you only want to have it recorded on your Madison transcript as a pass/fail course. You will need to complete your pass/fail request in your MySA account.

Bonn grade	UW grade	German number grade with decimals
A	A	1,0
A-	A	1,3
B+	A	1,7
B	AB	2,0
B-	B	2,3
C+	B	2,7
C	B	3,0
C-	C	3,3
D+	C	3,7
D	C	4,0
	D	4,3
	D	4,7
	F	5,0

Please note that the Bonn grade and German numerical grade are set by Bonn. Grades D-F at UW have been assigned based on the German numeric grade. Bonn currently does not award grades below D.

## **Living Abroad**

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### **GERMANY**

Considering the limited space which it occupies (only 138,000 square miles—about 15 percent smaller than Wisconsin, Michigan, and Iowa taken together), Germany is a remarkably diverse country. Its topography ranges from the coastal lowlands on the North and Baltic Seas, where Low German is still spoken, to Alpine heights in the south. Bordered by nine different countries, Germany lies in the heart of Europe and acts as a bridge between the east and west. With its 80 million citizens, Germany is the most populous Western European nation. The famed Ruhrgebiet of Germany, just north of Bonn, is Europe's largest industrial region, boasting such world-famous companies as Braun, Krupps, and Bayer.

It is important to learn about Germany's past and present to gain a deeper insight into the country and its people. Before you leave, while you are there, and when you return, reflect on how Germany's unique features affect it. Consider, for example, that Germany is bordered by nine countries (compared to the two neighbors of the United States), which the government has to take into account when making political decisions. The more you learn and think about German culture and everyday life, the more rewarding your stay abroad will be.

You will have the pleasure of experiencing all of the differences between Germany and America firsthand, and there are many. You are sure to find some of these differences quaint and interesting, but others you may be inclined to find annoying and bothersome. Regardless of how you respond, however, try to keep in mind that you are in a foreign country experiencing different ways of doing things. Accept these customs for what they are - different, rather than better or worse. After all, if Germans did everything just like Americans, there would hardly be any reason to study abroad for a year!

Here are a few examples of things you will notice. Germany is a much smaller country than the United States: cars are smaller, streets narrower, stores and homes less spacious. For example, you might do your grocery shopping in a store about the size of Walgreen's rather than Cub's or Woodman's. On the other hand, you'll find a larger selection of goods than in America: instead of twenty kinds of cheese at the grocery store, you may find fifty from all over Europe.

Remember to look around while you are in Germany or wherever you may be. Think about what you see and how it is different from or similar to what you're accustomed. As Americans, we are often considered egocentric, thinking that our way is the only or best way. Your experience abroad will introduce you to many other ways of doing things. Welcome them!

### **BONN**

Bonn is one of Germany's many great cities and the one that you will call home for the coming term. Spend as much time as possible, especially in the beginning, exploring the historic city center. The more quickly you familiarize yourself with the city and all of its parts, the more quickly you'll feel at home.

The city of Bonn is located in the most densely populated German state (*Bundesland*) Nordrhein-Westfalen, along with other cities such as Köln, Düsseldorf, Essen, and Dortmund. Bonn has a population of around 350,000 people and is over 2,000 years old. Throughout history, Bonn has been the home to many great people and events. It is famous as the birthplace of Ludwig van Beethoven, and his boyhood house is located just a few blocks from the university. Following World War II, Bonn became

the Federal Republic of Germany's capital, a status that it ceded to Berlin only after the fall of the Wall. You will find that Bonn has a highly international flavor, for it is still home to many agencies of the federal government as well as diplomats, foreign journalists, and UN institutions/organizations.

One of Bonn's leading assets is the Rhine River. From the university campus, you can observe a steady stream of large tourist steamers cruising up and downstream as well as long cargo ships carrying raw materials and finished products to and from the Ruhrgebiet and neighboring Holland. If you enjoy biking or hiking, the Rhine offers miles of beautiful walking and biking paths. If you like, you can easily bike to and from many of the cities that lie on the river (e.g., Bonn to Köln is only 2 to 3 hours, and Bonn to Koblenz takes 5 to 7 hours). Perched atop the Rhine's steep riversides are numerous medieval castles, some intact, most in picturesque ruins. The Rhine region is also well known for its festivals: Karneval (corresponding to Mardi Gras), Rhein in Flammen, or Rheinkultur. In addition, the *Rheinland* (as the Germans know it) has a reputation as a very hospitable region because of friendly, outgoing, and humorous people, no doubt in part because of the celebrated wines that grow on the riverbank's terraced hillsides.

City of Bonn website: [www.bonn.de](http://www.bonn.de)

## HOUSING

UW-Madison students are assigned a single room in one of thirty-four different dormitories in Bonn. Some dormitories offer a private bathroom and kitchen, but in most cases students will share a large kitchen and bathrooms with other students. Students with a community kitchen may be able to use the equipment left by previous students or borrow kitchen equipment from other students; otherwise, kitchen equipment can be purchased upon arrival in Bonn. Please note that a microwave is considered kitchen equipment, not an appliance, and may not be in your kitchen. This is just one of many subtle differences you will notice between US and German student housing.

Rooms are equipped with basic furniture and in most of the dorms you can also get bed sheets through your dormitory's management. Some students prefer to bring their own sheets as although the sheets are cleaned, they are re-used from previous tenants. Students should plan on bringing their own towels and toiletries. All dorms are either within walking distance of the university or have easy access to public transportation.

Each dorm has a *Hausmeister(in)*, whose job is to oversee the dorm. When you arrive, you will need to see your *Hausmeister(in)* to fill out certain forms. See your *Hausmeister(in)* at any time if you have any questions or concerns about your living situation; you can also turn to the staff at the International Office.

There are international students in each dorm building, but 80% of dormitory residents are Germans. Since housing for German students is scarce, German students are only able to live in the dorms for a limited number of semesters (generally six). They can extend their *Wohnzeit* (living time) by being voted to the positions of *Tutoren*, *Senioren*, or *Mentoren*. Each position serves a particular function that helps the dorm function smoothly. For example, one person may plan field trips for dorm residents while another may run the bar. Most dorm buildings have a student bar, and there should be plenty of activities for you to participate in and other opportunities to get to know your dormmates, be they Germans or other international students. There are also *Auslandertutor* at your dorms who will help you with any questions/problems you may have.

Students will have access to the internet in dorms. However, the access is not immediate as you will need to set up an account with the help of your *Hausmeister(in)*. Please expect to use public internet cafes for

the first week for internet access. You should also bring an Ethernet cable as wireless is not as widely available as it is in the US.

Students are responsible for leaving their rooms clean and damage free when vacating. Failure to do so may result in a hold placed on the student's transcript.

University of Bonn Housing website: [www.studentenwerk-bonn.de](http://www.studentenwerk-bonn.de)

**Meals:** You will be responsible for arranging your own meals. Plan to budget around 250 Euro a month for food. This amount varies depending on several factors: how much you eat, whether you prepare food yourself; eat out, what type of food you like, etc.

For those who do not like to cook, there are plenty of small *Imbissbuden* located in Bonn. They offer such snacks as Döner Kebab (a Turkish dish similar to gyros), Falafel, Oriental Pizza, and of course *Wurst mit Pommes* (sausage with french fries). For the less adventurous, there is the university *Mensa* (cafeteria), which has a few different branches throughout the city. Thanks to government subsidies, they offer filling food at a remarkably low price.

University of Bonn Meals website: [www.studentenwerk-bonn.de](http://www.studentenwerk-bonn.de)

## STUDENT LIFE

You can meet friends anywhere. The only place you cannot expect to meet others is sitting alone in your dorm room. The key for any student, from the most shy to the most outgoing, is to get out and do whatever you like to do. It takes time to make friends, no matter where you are. Be sure to get involved in the activities planned by your dorm. Also, consider getting involved in the extensive program of activities organized by the International Office. Beyond occasionally providing free tickets to concerts and plays, it frequently organizes excursions to museums and other sites in the region, video evenings in the basement clubroom at the International Office building, as well as Kafeestunden and parties organized for foreign students to which German students are also invited.

UW-Madison students may also participate in a full range of intramural men's and women's sports activities organized each semester by the Uni Bonn. Participation in some of the sports requires payment of an additional fee. The entry fees for municipal indoor swimming pools are very modest, particularly for students. In addition, Bonn has numerous sports clubs devoted to LaCrosse, rowing and so on. Bonn/Cologne are also home to baseball teams and an American football team, both eager to recruit new players. For more information on sports, see [www.sport.uni-bonn.de](http://www.sport.uni-bonn.de).

University of Bonn International Office Living in Bonn [http://www3.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/exchange-and-study-abroad/jyp/study-abroad?set\\_language=en](http://www3.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/exchange-and-study-abroad/jyp/study-abroad?set_language=en)

U.S. State Department Students Abroad site:  
<http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/>

## SHOPPING

Because of a long tradition of laws written to prevent abuse of workers and unfair competition, German stores have rather limited hours in comparison with those in the United States. All stores are required to close by 8:00 pm Monday to Saturday, though some supermarkets may remain open until 10:00 p.m. Most stores close even earlier, typically at 2:00 pm on Saturdays. Some local and small shops even close during the lunch hour for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. With the exception of restaurants, a few pharmacies, bakeries,



and flower stores, all businesses are closed on Sunday. Shops in the train station do remain open though and many 24-hour gas stations have substantial food sections.

When shopping for groceries, it is advisable to follow the German practice of taking along your own shopping bags, since practically all stores charge for them. You will receive information on grocery stores near your dorm from other residents and the International Office during the orientation period.

You are responsible for your own food/meal costs while abroad. In the city center (*Innenstadt*), there is a department and grocery store under one roof called Kaufhof, but their prices tend to be high. The budget-conscious grocery shopper will find better selections and cheaper prices at stores such as Aldi, Lidl, Hit, Coop, Netto, or PennyMarkt. Even If you choose to shop at these stores (and most students do), part of the fun of being in Germany is to buy some items at specialty shops (*Fachgeschäfte*), such as bread at your local *Bäckerei*, meats at the nearest *Metzgerei*, fruits and vegetables at the *Markt*. Monday through Saturday, a "farmer's market" is held at the *Marktplatz* in the *Innenstadt*. Here you will be able to find great fresh fruit and vegetables.

## TRANSPORTATION

Students of the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn are allowed free use of public transportation within the state of NRW. This means you may board all buses, U-Bahn cars, S-Bahn trains, and certain specific DB (*Deutsche Bahn*) trains free of charge. All you need is your Bonn student ID card, along with a picture ID. You will learn more about the details during orientation in Bonn. Until you receive your student ID, you will need to pay for your fares individually. If you get on a bus, subway, or train without a valid ticket, you are guilty of *Schwarzfahren* (riding illegally) and are subject to a fine upon being caught in the act. There are officials (*Kontrolleure*) who come aboard rather often to check all passengers' tickets.

**Bicycles:** Traveling by bike is often quick and easy. You may want to look into buying a used bicycle, for they are usually reasonably priced. Be aware of Germany's strict laws governing bicycle travel. German law requires that all bicycles have working headlights. In addition, bicyclists have to follow ordinary traffic laws, and they are somewhat different than U.S. laws (on right of way and passing, for example). If you bring your own bike, be prepared to make adjustments to it so that it will be legal in Germany.

The used bikes you can buy in Bonn may be suitable for short trips but less good for long distance travel. And there are plenty of great places to bike around Bonn. For example, Köln to Bonn is about a 2 to 3 hour bike ride. There are also mountain biking opportunities in Siebengebirge. You must be cautious about bike theft. If you plan to bring or get a bike, it would be wise to bring a lock with you, as they are more expensive in Germany. Also, make sure to wear a helmet at all times. Since helmets are expensive in Germany, you should plan on bringing one from home.

**Trains:** For train transportation, you can purchase a BahnCard valid for one year. There are various options, but the BahnCard50 will give you a 50% discount on almost all train tickets for travel within Germany. Additionally, BahnCard holders receive a 25% discount in Switzerland and Austria. The student price for the BahnCard 50 is 100 Euro. You can find more details at the Deutsche Bahn website [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de).

Explore your transportation options once you are in Germany. A Eurail pass may turn out not to be the cheapest form of transportation, although it may be the most flexible and convenient for your particular plans. Make sure to investigate your various options. Other options are renting a car, the various special fares offered by the Deutsche Bahn system, and *Mitfahrerzentrale* / *Mitfahrgelegenheiten* (ride sharing service).

## SAFETY

According to the State Department Travel Information on Germany, "Germany has a low crime rate." Crimes of property, however, do occur. Keep your bike and dorm room locked at all times. When you travel, keep your passport, train tickets, and money in a safe spot, preferably in a money pouch next to your body. Violent crime is much less common in Germany than in the U.S. Even so, you should always let your common sense dictate your behavior--for example, avoid walking alone in unfamiliar areas after dark if doing so would make you feel uneasy.

## HEALTH

Feel free to ask the staff of the International Office if you want a recommendation for a doctor or a referral to psychological counseling. There are many clinics and hospitals located throughout the Bonn area. Hours may be limited, so do call ahead for an appointment, or check their hours before you go. Many doctors are English-speaking, and the International Office maintains a list of English-speaking doctors. Listed in the paper every day is the number of the doctor who is on 24-hour call in case of an emergency. Pharmacies rotate being open 24 hours a day, and at night the addresses of the nearest open pharmacies are always posted on the front of every single pharmacy. Look there if you need help during non-office hours or weekends.

**Insurance:** The German insurance you will receive is quite comprehensive and includes the following:

- All office visits and x-rays.
- Hospital stays, including any operations and medications. A hospital patient must, however, make a co-payment of roughly eight dollars per day regardless of how expensive the rest of the treatment or how long the stay is.
- Prescriptions (there may be a modest co-payment (i.e.: 1 to 2 dollars) for each medication regardless of how expensive it is).
- Dental work is partially covered. Normal visits are fully covered, but cases of major work, such as crowns, cover only 50% of material costs.
- Students are covered in all European Union countries and in a few others that have agreements with Germany. (Please note that you are not covered by your German health insurance in Switzerland, Eastern Europe, or the United States. You can purchase special short-term travel health insurance if you plan to travel to those countries, although this is probably unnecessary for Wisconsin students who continue their U.S. health insurance policies while abroad. Check with your provider).

You will also be enrolled in CISI health insurance by IAP for the duration of your term abroad. This provides not only health insurance, but other emergency services. For complete information on coverage, please log in to your MyStudyAbroad account and review the insurance tab. You may also extend CISI insurance directly with CISI for travel before and after your program.

## COMMUNICATION

**Telephone:** When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences [www.timeanddate.com/worldclock](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock). To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always "1") followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial "011", the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online at

[www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html). Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

The German telecommunications industry, long a monopoly enterprise, has only recently been opened for competition among providers. Rates vary considerably, depending on time of day or destination of phone calls, and on the provider chosen. The following internet sites give price comparisons: [www.teltarif.de](http://www.teltarif.de).

It is often cheaper for a call to originate in the States than in Germany. You might arrange specific times for your family and friends to call, or ask them to call you right back if you initiate the call. You can reduce the cost-per-call by using calling cards or a “Vorwahl,” a number you dial before the number you are calling which reduces the cost. “Vorwahl” numbers can be found at [www.billigertelefonieren.de](http://www.billigertelefonieren.de). Also consider getting an AT&T, MCI, or Sprint calling card, which will enable you to charge calls to the U.S., usually at a somewhat lower rate than the regular German cost. Calling cards are also useful for traveling because they can be used anywhere. Internet telephoning is a new and inexpensive way to call home as well.

Typically, dorm rooms do not have telephones, and most program students elect not to have one connected due to the high cost. Many students prefer a cell phone/mobile phone – or “Handy,” as the Germans say. Depending on the provider, there are various contracts and you have the choice between Pre-Paid-Calling Cards and contracts of different lengths. Consider the duration of the contracts before you sign them! There are several stores for mobile phones in Bonn where you can get advice – most of them located around the Marktplatz.

**Mail:** Many branch post offices close during the noon hour and by 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays. The main post office (*Hauptpost*), however, is opened during the *Mittagspause* and closes at 8:00 p.m.

Parcels mailed from the United States to Germany will require a customs declaration form, and what gets written on this form may have powerful consequences for the terms and conditions of delivery in Germany. Enforcement of the customs regulations by the German postal system is sporadic and often arbitrary, but at times it can be a major hassle. The customs declaration form asks for the content(s) and dollar value of the package. If a high value is listed (more than \$25 or so), the package is certainly subject to German customs duty (*Zoll*), and you are obligated to make an additional payment when taking delivery of it. In such a case, you may receive a notice from the German postal service directing you to pick up your package at the special (and inconveniently located) *Zollbahnhof*, where the customs clerk may require you to open the package and show the contents.

The simplest way to avoid the potential hassle of customs clearance is to write on the customs declaration form that the package contains Personal Property and is of No Value. Besides Personal Property, it sometimes helps to indicate that the contents are Used Items, or that they are Gifts. This is not an option if, for example, you want to insure the contents of a package and must declare a value. And whether you are mailing from the U.S. or from Germany, you would be well advised to insure a package if it contains a very valuable item (a camera, for example), especially if you name it on the customs declaration.

For any shipment made shortly after your move to Germany, your family members may additionally write on the customs declaration form – and in large letters on the outside of the box – the word “*Umzugsgut*” (i.e., goods that are part of your move). This is particularly useful for cutting down on customs problems with the many boxes of winter clothes that tend to arrive in Bonn starting in late October and early November.

You should not have parents send you medications through the mail. If your parents have to send medications, they should send them separately, in an extra package, rather than putting them together in one big box (with clothes, for example).

Personal mail for Junior Year Program participants may be sent to the International Office at the University of Bonn:

Junior Year Program  
z. Hd. (participant's name)  
University of Bonn – International Office  
Poppelsdorfer Allee 102  
53115 Bonn  
Germany

**Email:** Upon arrival in Bonn, students will be given a University of Bonn e-mail account through the university, which grants access to university computer labs, internet access in the dormitories, and wireless internet in university buildings.

Students are advised to bring along a laptop computer to facilitate writing papers and internet access. If you have a laptop, it is highly advisable to carry it along with you on the plane when coming to Bonn. Computers shipped from the United States, particularly brand new equipment, have often been held up by the German customs authorities who have required students to pay a stiff customs duty to import the equipment. Moreover, equipment shipped by mail has sometimes arrived in damaged condition. Be aware that PCs are very much favored in Germany, and there is correspondingly little support for Macs.

For students without laptops, there is free access to e-mail and the internet through the university computer lab (*Rechenzentrum*) and in a lab in the university's main building, where you can also print documents. However, the lab hours are limited and only a few printers are available. Past program participants have suggested that students should pool their resources in groups of three or four, buy one printer, and share it (almost all newer laptops will have no problem meeting the power requirement, but printers often require a separate converter). As an alternative to the computer lab, some students have patronized cybercafes near the university.

Please note that you may need an Ethernet cable in order to connect in the housing. Your *Hausmeister(in)* will have additional information for connecting to the internet via your room log-in ID. Please note that you may not have immediate access to the internet and may have to utilize a nearby cybercafé.

## **Student Testimonials**

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The testimonials below are from past participants; they reflect various students' experiences and are included to provide different perspectives. IAP does not endorse any specific view expressed in this section.

### **HANDLING MONEY ABROAD**

I found it easiest to wire the money to the bank account that I set up in Germany. There was a fee, but it was the easiest and quickest way to get money into the account. I also don't think that it is necessary to open a bank account, I had friends who didn't and just used their ATM cards from home (and generally weren't charged fees if I remember correctly).

If you decide to get a German bank account, I would suggest going with the day the Auslandsamt takes you. That way you know what to expect and have them to answer your questions also, as not everyone at

the bank spoke English. I got an account at Sparkasse, which I would recommend – there were ATMs everywhere. Deutsche Bank worked for others as well.

Set a monthly budget--it'll help you manage your finances a whole lot more easily and give you an idea of what you can afford to be spending on different things!

If you have a kitchen in your dorm, use it to cook. It will save lots of money. Don't be afraid to take a few inconvenient trains to get to your destination if the price is cheaper. Everything is efficient enough it won't hinder you in the long run.

## **TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL**

And I was very nervous about finding my way to the Uni since I had not been there yet. I got lost on the way back to my dorm after the test we had to take at the Uni. So suggest maps and that students familiarize themselves with them – the streets often change names even though it's the same street, there aren't really blocks.

I don't recommend [leaving your luggage at the train station]...once you get to the Auslandsamt they drive you to your dorms and drop you off... so it would be nice to have your luggage with you, some of the dorms are pretty far away.

[When I arrived at my dorm] my Tutor wasn't there and thankfully as I approached the door, my neighbor was outside and very excited to meet and help out an American. There was a note on the door from my tutor saying he wasn't around and I had to buzz some room to get my keys, and the guy who gave me my keys didn't really know what to do with me – so my neighbor helped me out with my luggage and then took me to the grocery store to get something to eat. If it wasn't for him it would have been an absolutely terrible first day.

It was also really stressful that I had to be up and at the Uni early the next morning since I was so tired I was worried I wouldn't wake up, and I didn't have an alarm clock – I usually use my cell phone as an alarm and didn't think about it.

I liked the excursions included in this program. The week-long trip to Berlin was well organized so we were able to see so many different sites and museums but we were also given ample free time to explore on our own. The excursions also gave us the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends outside of the classroom.

## **COURSES**

*Auslandsamt* courses were pretty easy, but I was kind of scared/talked out of taking Uni courses. I don't regret taking *Auslandsamt* courses, I still did benefit from them. I made some really good friends and was able to practice my German in a comfortable environment. It also left me a lot more time to travel, hang out with friends, and explore Bonn!

The opportunity to meet people from Germany and improve my German not only through classroom experiences but also by being encouraged to interact with people from the host country. I also appreciated the opportunity to take a class designed to prepare me for taking the DSH, the German proficiency exam that will allow me to study here on a master's program later in my academic career. And also I really enjoyed the Einführungskurs at the beginning of the semester--I learned a lot of German that prepared me for the rest of the semester.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

Freizeit Rheinaue Park – is awesome, and everyone should know about it ahead of time instead of having to discover it on their own.

The city was very nice, since it's quite comparable to Madison. There were always many events being held for international students that could get you out to meet people.

I enjoyed the benefits of the Bonn Buddy program. I became friends with my buddy as well as some of her friends. It was a great experience.

