

Germany – Academic Year in Freiburg (AYF) Program Handbook

2014-2015

The Academic Year in Freiburg (AYF) is a study abroad program operated by a consortium of Michigan State University, the University of Iowa, the University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in conjunction with the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. This program handbook supplements handbooks or materials you receive from your home university and aims to provide you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Please keep in mind that changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions regarding your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university, the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg, or academics (e.g., course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to the study abroad office at your home university.

Please take the time to read through the information in this Handbook carefully before you leave for Freiburg. It will help you prepare for all aspects of your AYF experience, from academics to managing daily life in Germany.

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Please Note: All price information quoted in this handbook is provided for informational and planning purposes. To the best of our knowledge, prices are accurate and up to date as of April 2014. Since currency exchange rates fluctuate and vendors may change prices without notice, AYF cannot make any guarantees regarding the availability of specific prices noted herein. Thank you for your understanding.

Contact Information

On-Site

Your primary contacts in Freiburg will be:

Professor Helmut Puff

AYF Resident Director 2014-2015

Email: puffh@umich.edu

Ulrich Struve

AYF Associate Director

Email: ulrich.struve@ayf.uni-freiburg.de

The location of the AYF Program Center is as follows:

<p><u>Program Center Location:</u> Academic Year in Freiburg Dietler-Passage Gerberau 5 / Grünwälderstraße 10-14 D-79098 Freiburg Germany</p>

The two mailing addresses for the AYF Program Center are as follows:

(Please note the differing ZIP codes and addresses for mailings sent via U.S. Mail and by courier service. Only courier services require a street address, but please do not have any mailings sent to center location at the Dietler-Passage.)

<u>Mailing Address (for regular U.S. Mail):</u>	<u>Mailing Address (for packages and letters sent by courier services such as DHL, FedEx, UPS):</u>
Academic Year in Freiburg Albert-Ludwigs-Universität D-79085 Freiburg Germany	Academic Year in Freiburg Albert-Ludwigs-Universität - Poststelle <u>Universitätsstraße 3</u> D-79098 Freiburg Germany

AYF Program Center telephone numbers (when dialed from within Freiburg):

Main office	2 96 21 – 10
Prof. Helmut Puff	2 96 21 – 11
Fax	2 96 21 – 20

When calling from within Germany but outside of Freiburg, dial "0-761" for Freiburg first.

When calling from the U.S., dial "011-49-761" first.

AYF homepage: <http://www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de>

Michigan State University

Office of Study Abroad
International Studies and Programs
International Center
427 N. Shaw Lane, Room 109
East Lansing, MI 48824
Tel: 517-353-8920, Fax: 517-432-2082
Web: <http://studyabroad.msu.edu>

<i>For Administrative Matters:</i> Dr. Inge Steglitz Office of Study Abroad Tel: 517-432-2685 E-mail: steglitz@msu.edu	<i>For Academic Advising:</i> Prof. Elizabeth Mittman Department of Linguistics and Languages Tel: 517-355-5170 Email: mittman@msu.edu
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University of Iowa

Study Abroad
1111 University Capitol Centre
Iowa City, IA 52242
Tel: 319-335-0353, Fax: 319-335-0343
Web: <http://international.uiowa.edu/study-abroad>

<i>For Administrative Matters, Grades & Student Records:</i> Kerby Boschee Advisor & Program Coordinator Tel: 319-335-0353 E-mail: kerby-boschee@uiowa.edu	<i>For Academic Advising:</i> Professor Glenn Ehrstine German Department 111 Phillips Hall Tel: 319-335-2276 E-mail: glenn-ehrstine@uiowa.edu
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University of Michigan

Center for Global and Intercultural Study (CGIS)
G155 Angell Hall
435 S. State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1003
Tel: 734-764-4311, Fax: 734-764-3229
Web: www.lsa.umich.edu/cgis/index.html

<i>For Program Advising:</i> Patrick Morgan CGIS Programs Manager Tel: 734-764-4311 E-mail: morganpt@umich.edu	<i>For Academic Advising:</i> Kalli Federhofer Tel: 734- 647-0411 E-mail: kallimz@umich.edu
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University of Wisconsin-Madison
 International Academic Programs (IAP)
 106 Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street
 Madison, WI 53706
 Tel: 608-265-6329, Fax: 608-262-6998
 Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

<i>For Program Advising:</i> Erica Haas-Gallo Study Abroad Advisor Tel: 608-261-1020 E-mail: haasgallo@studyabroad.wisc.edu	<i>For Academic Advising:</i> Mark Loudon Professor and German Undergraduate Advisor Tel: 608-265-4786 Email: mllouden@wisc.edu
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Emergency Contact

In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (U.S. central time) Monday-Friday; after hours or on weekends, call the IAP staff on call at **(608) 516-9440**.

You may also contact the Resident Director or the Associate Director at their homes or on their cell phones in case of an emergency:

		Intl. Access	Country Code	City Code	Phone Number
Prof. Puff	From the U.S.	011	49	761	76 99 84 49
	From Germany			0761	76 99 84 49
	From Freiburg				76 99 84 49
Cell phone	From the U.S.	011	49	170	781 65 46
Cell phone	From Germany			0170	781 65 46
Ulli Struve	From the U.S.	011	49	7641	95 75 84
	From Germany			07641	95 75 84
	From Freiburg			07641	95 75 84
Cell phone	From the U.S.	011	49	170	571 88 78
Cell phone	From Germany			0170	571 88 78

Emergency phone numbers in Germany:

Police110

Fire / Ambulance112

Embassy Registration

All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departing for Germany 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, please register at your home country's embassy or consulate. Michigan State University as well as

University of Iowa students do not have to register themselves with the Embassy, as the MSU Office of Study Abroad and UI Study Abroad do it for them.

Embassy of the United States Berlin Consular Section – American Citizen Services Pariser Platz 2 14191 Berlin Mailing Address: Clayallee 170 14191 Berlin Tel: 49-30-8305-0 (for after-hour emergencies request to speak to the officer on duty) Fax: (030) 8305-1215	U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt (Responsible for Baden-Württemberg!) American Citizen Services – Passport Unit Gießener Straße 30 60435 Frankfurt Tel: (069) 7535-0 (for emergencies) Fax: (069) 7535-2252 Tel: (069) 7535-2280 for general information (tape) or (069) 7535-2100. Public Transportation: From the main train station (Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof) take the U5 going to Preungesheim, exit at the Gießener Straße stop.
U.S. Consular Agency Bremen Flughafenallee 18, 4th Floor 28199 Bremen Tel.: 0421-301 5860 / Fax: 0421-301 5861 (For emergencies, contact U.S. Embassy Berlin)	U.S. Consulate General Munich Königinstraße 5 80539 Munich Tel: (089) 2888-0 Fax: (089) 280-9998

The U.S. embassy and consulates in Germany are closed on American and German holidays.

For more information see: <http://www.usembassy.de/>

Program Dates 2014-2015

Arrival in Freiburg / Check-in at train station (<i>Hauptbahnhof</i>)	Monday, September 1, 2014
ORIENTATION I: ● Registration, colloquia, excursions	Tuesday, September 2 – Friday, Sept. 5
ORIENTATION II: ● Language course ● Academic orientation	Monday, September 8 – Thurs., October 2 Wednesday, September 17 and 24
ORIENTATION III: ● Academic advising	Monday, October 6 – Friday, October 10
Free time to travel – <i>NB: some course registrations take place during this week</i>	Saturday, October 11 – Sunday, October 19 <i>e.g., in German, Political Science</i>

<i>WINTERSEMESTER 2014-2015</i>	
Freiburg University, Pädag. Hochschule and AYF <i>Wintersemester</i> classes begin	Monday, October 20 <i>Duration of Wintersemester: 15 weeks</i>
Tentative Registration Deadline	Friday, October 31
All Saints (holiday)	Saturday, November 1
Final Registration Deadline and Deadline to Add a Course	Friday, November 14
AYF Thanksgiving Celebration	Friday, November 28
Pass/Fail Deadline and Deadline to Drop a Course without entry on transcript	Friday, December 12
CER Deadline (Credit Equivalents Request forms due)	Tuesday, December 16
Holiday break	Sat., Dec. 20, 2014 – Tues., Jan. 6, 2015
Classes resume	Wednesday, January 7
Mandatory Group Meeting	January 8, 4-6 p.m.
Academic advising	February 2-6 (exact dates to be finalized)
<i>Wintersemester</i> classes end	Friday, February 13 (University, PH, AYF)
Deadline for submitting all <i>Wintersemester</i> papers to instructors, copies to AYF	Friday, February 27, 2015
<i>Vorlesungsfreie Zeit</i> a.k.a. <i>Semesterferien</i> Break (8 weeks)	Saturday, February 15 – Sunday, April 12 (University, PH, AYF)
Easter holiday	Friday – Monday, April 3 – 6
<i>SOMMERSEMESTER 2015</i>	
Freiburg University and AYF <i>Sommersemester</i> classes begin	Monday, April 13 <i>Duration of Sommersemester: 13 weeks</i>
Pädagogische Hochschule classes begin	Monday, April 20
Tentative Registration Deadline	Friday, April 24
<i>Tag der Arbeit</i> (holiday)	Friday, May 1
Final Registration Deadline and Deadline to Add a Course	Wednesday, May 8
<i>Christi Himmelfahrt</i> (holiday)	Thursday, May 14
Pass/Fail Deadline and Deadline to Drop a Course without entry on transcript	Friday, May 22
University break (Pentecost)	Saturday, May 23 – Sunday, May 31
<i>Fronleichnam</i> (holiday)	Thursday, June 4
Mandatory Group Meeting (end-of-year	June 9/10/11 (exact date to be finalized)

administrative procedures)	
CER Deadline (Credit Equivalents Request forms due)	Friday, June 12
Farewell Barbecue	Saturday, July 11
University <i>Sommersemester</i> classes end	Friday, July 17, 2015
PH and AYF <i>Sommersemester</i> classes end	Friday, July 24, 2015
Deadline for submitting all <i>Summersemester</i> papers to instructors, copies to AYF	Friday, August 7, 2015

Notes:

All AYF program participants are firmly expected to arrive in Freiburg on Monday, September 1, 2014, which for most participants will mean departing from the U.S. to Frankfurt or Zurich on August 31, 2014. The first orientation event will be held on Monday evening, September 1. Additional details concerning the orientation schedule will be posted online (www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de) in the section for "Incoming Students."

You should book your flight home for a date no earlier than two weeks after the end of the Sommersemester, i.e., August 7, 2015, to allow time to finish your academic work.

NB: Administrative dates may be subject to change; academic deadlines are firmly set.

Preparing for Your Departure to Freiburg

Pre-Departure Documents

The study abroad office on your campus will provide the AYF forms that you will need to fill out before your departure. In addition to these forms, you must submit eight (8) passport photos to the study abroad office. These photos are needed for various official registration procedures in Germany, for your Freiburg student ID, and for AYF records. One of the eight passport photos must be stapled or glued to the upper right corner of your dorm room application (*SWFR Wohnheimaufnahmeantrag*). Only real passport photos are acceptable – not Polaroids, not photocopies. Please print your name on the back of each photo and place them into an envelope back to back, taking care not to smudge the next photo. It is not necessary to bring additional passport photos with you to Freiburg, unless you wish to buy a *BahnCard* (see Living Abroad -> Transportation -> Trains). If you find that you need more passport photos once you are in Freiburg, there are inexpensive photo machines near the program center and at the train station.

Immigration Documents

Passport

A passport is needed to travel to Germany and to obtain your student visa. 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](#). 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

For U.S. citizens, no visa is required to enter Germany for tourist or business stays up to 90 days. In accordance with German law, all foreigners who stay longer than 3 months must acquire a residence permit (*Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*) – in effect, a visa. During your first week in Freiburg, in an orientation session devoted entirely to registration matters, the AYF program staff will guide you through filling out the paperwork required for university enrollment, for your *Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*, and for local address registration with Freiburg authorities. In order for the visa authorities to process your forms, they must be presented in person together with your passport and a German-size biometric passport photo. AYF staff will accompany you to the application appointment. Please note: If you are already spending the summer prior to AYF in Germany (on an internship, for example), you may be required to apply for an interim residence permit called a “Fiktionsbescheinigung”, depending on when exactly you entered the country. Please alert AYF staff to your early entry into the country.

Handling Money Abroad

The U.S.-style checking account is unknown in Germany. Most bank business is conducted by bank transfers (*Überweisungen*) from one account to another. You will need to open a *Girokonto* – a bank transfer account. During your first week in Freiburg, AYF will help you open a *Girokonto* with the Volksbank, a national bank that has branch offices all around Freiburg and near the dorms.

For set payments made on a regular basis you can authorize the Volksbank to make automatic transfers from your *Girokonto* on an ongoing basis (*Dauerauftrag*). Alternatively, you can authorize institutions to make one-time or repeated withdrawals from your account (*Einzugsermächtigung*). Your dorm room rent will automatically be withdrawn from your account at or near the beginning of each month.

It is your responsibility to make sure you have sufficient funds in your account to cover all your debits and withdrawals, be they for rent payments or purchases paid with the debit card for your Freiburg account. If your account is overdrawn, you will be notified that the transfer has not gone through, and you will be subject to a fee of roughly EUR 10 (or substantially more, if vendors subcontract the collection of failed debit card purchases). Also, once you are notified that an automatic transfer has failed because of insufficient funds, it is not enough to go to the bank and deposit more money into your account, since the failed automatic withdrawal will usually not be repeated at a later date. Instead, you must make a one-time *Überweisung* at the bank to cover the missed transfer.

German banking hours are generally from 9 AM until noon, and again from 2–4 PM, Monday through Friday. Most banks stay open until 6 PM on Thursdays but are closed on Saturdays. The Volksbank on Bismarckallee (across from the train station) is open 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Monday to Friday and 8:30 AM to 6 PM on Thursday. The branch at Bertoldsbrunnen is open 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM from Monday to Friday and 10 AM to 2 PM on Saturday.

Traveler’s checks (be they in dollars or euros) 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 will probably impose a rather stiff charge for the transaction – unless you have an account there. If you plan to use traveler’s checks in Freiburg, be sure to cash them at the Volksbank, and inform the teller that you have an account there to avoid processing charges

imposed on tourists. On the positive side, traveler's checks are an ideal, safe way to bring funds to Germany for establishing your account in Freiburg.

Transferring Money

If you have your own bank account in the U.S., you can use your personal checks to deposit money into your Freiburg account. This may be useful for family members, too, who can deposit money directly into your U.S. account instead of mailing a check to Germany. A U.S. personal check drawn on a third-party account will take five to six weeks to be credited to your Freiburg account. Checks drawn on your own personal U.S. account will be credited to your Volksbank account after a few days. Fees of ca. €12-30 are assessed for processing such a check. Do not have any checks sent directly to your bank in Freiburg. Instead, have them mailed to you, preferably c/o the AYF Program Center rather than to your dormitory address, for the sake of security.

The simplest way to handle cash transfers from the U.S. is to obtain an ATM debit card for your U.S. checking account. Credit cards are also very convenient. Be sure to arrange an **internationally accepted ATM card and PIN** with your U.S. bank before you depart for Freiburg. With the ATM card, you will be able to withdraw cash (in euros) from an ATM (*Geldautomat*) and have it debited (in U.S. dollars) to your U.S. account. ATM withdrawals use a fairly favorable exchange rate and do not entail the additional charges that could be imposed for processing checks, although your U.S. bank will probably impose a service fee for each international withdrawal (rates typically vary from 1 to 4%). Your U.S. bank establishes the upper limit on the amount that can be withdrawn at any one time and within any 24-hour period. You should inquire as to these figures and – if necessary – raise them at your bank prior to leaving for Germany. You may want to withdraw a large amount – up to the limit – at one time in order to minimize transaction fees (but make sure you don't misplace all the cash you just withdrew!). In any case, it is prudent to verify the policies and fee structure of your U.S. bank (flat fee vs. percentage, etc.) prior to departure to aid in your planning.

Both *VISA* and *MASTERCARD* can be used to obtain cash advances at most banks and many ATMs. Again, you must request an international four-digit PIN number from your issuing bank or card company. Also, find out what your credit card company charges for a cash advance. Freiburg does not have a branch office of American Express, but you may find an American Express card useful on your travels elsewhere in Europe.

A wire transfer is an option that is especially appropriate for bringing larger sums of money to Germany. This may be useful to you if you choose to transfer your funds on a quarterly basis or only once or twice per semester. The AYF office staff will assist you with the procedures at the receiving bank, the Volksbank in Freiburg, but it would be wise to speak to your U.S. bank prior to departure about its procedures and fees for wire transfers.

Each of the four ways to transfer money – personal check, ATM card, credit card, and wire transfer – has its advantages and disadvantages. It is therefore advisable that you arrange to have more than one of these options available to you when traveling to Europe. That way you can try them out and discover what works best for you in different situations. More importantly, you will have a backup in case a *Geldautomat* does not accept your ATM card or a personal check takes an unexpectedly long time to clear.

Monthly Living Expenses

Keep in mind that the currency exchange rate does fluctuate. Periodically, you should check the web for the latest value of the dollar (e.g., at www.xe.com/ucc). Students and family members must

bear in mind that because of the fluctuation of exchange rates and variable rates of inflation, it is impossible to quote an absolutely firm dollar figure for monthly living expenses.

Living expenses in September will be higher than in the following months, both because of some initial one-time expenses and also because you will need some time to establish an economical lifestyle. In addition, some expenses that you might have expected to pay following your arrival will already be billed to you before your departure by your home university (i.e., health insurance, liability insurance, student services fee, residence permit fee). Details on this process will be provided to you well in advance of your departure.

It would be advisable to bring:

200 euros	Enough cash to cover incidentals, such as meals, etc., during your first few days. Your bank can order cash in euros for you if they do not have it on hand, or you can exchange dollars for euros at any international airport in the U.S. or Europe. Also, you can use your ATM card at machines in any European airport to withdraw cash (in euros) from your home bank account as soon as you arrive in Europe.
1000 euros	Traveler's checks to establish a bank account, to cover various extra expenses associated with settling in, and for your first month's living expenses: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• first month's rent (between €232 and €320, depending on the room)• €400 room lease security deposit plus €21 processing fee <i>Please note: The first rent payment and processing fee will be withdrawn from your Freiburg bank account on or about September 15. The security deposit will be withdrawn at the end of September, shortly before the rent for October is also due. You must plan on having sufficient funds on hand for three rent-related withdrawals within about two weeks.</i>

Starting in October, you will need approximately €700-800 per month for rent, food, and other basic living expenses. The amount you will spend is, however, ultimately an individual matter and, as in the U.S., depends upon your own particular lifestyle and resources. The €700-800 figure does not cover extensive vacation travel or major purchases.

Toward the end of your stay in Freiburg, AYF staff will provide you with detailed information on the process of settling final bills, collecting your room deposit, closing your bank account, and collecting the balance or having the balance transferred back to you in the U.S. in due time.

Packing

Germany has a far more moderate climate than the American Midwest, but the weather can get nasty in the winter. Be prepared for rain, snow, chilly winds, and gray skies. Bring an umbrella or plan on buying one shortly after you arrive. Most things you want will be available once you arrive in Freiburg, so **do not over-pack**. Do be aware, though, that some over-the-counter medications may only be available by prescription. Similar kinds of toiletries are available; but if you are partial to a particular brand, you may want to bring enough for several months. Shipping cost, which can add up, is another factor to consider when deciding what to bring, ship, or purchase on site.

Suggested Items to Bring:

- hiking boots
- hat / gloves
- raincoat / umbrella
- travel guide
- favorite recipes / American measuring cups
- (large) German-English dictionary (recommended: Collins)
- German grammar book (recommended: Rankin/Wells)
- towels / washcloths
- favorite toiletries
- headache / cold medicine
- journal / diary
- one nice outfit
- passport pouch, money belt
- laptop computer
- pictures / postcards of your home
- flip-flops for shower

During the summer months prior to your departure, the previous year's AYF students will offer second-hand items for sale in an informal e-mail flea market. Offerings primarily include items of daily use such as office supplies (e.g., staplers, hole punchers, pens), bedding (sheets and comforter covers), household items (pots and pans, cutlery, plates, etc.), smaller furnishings (throw rugs, lamps, bedside tables), bicycles, and computer printers. Some printed materials (German dictionaries, books) are also offered occasionally. When preparing your packing list, you may wish to keep the prospect of the flea market in mind. During the summer, the AYF Associate Director will contact you via e-mail with detailed information about the flea market.

Also consult the section in this Handbook on customs issues below. You may decide to pack and ship specific items differently in light of customs regulations.

Travel and Arrival Information

Flight

The AYF program does not organize a group flight, so you are responsible for making your own travel arrangements. You are firmly expected to arrive in Freiburg on Monday, September 1, 2014, which for most participants will mean departing on Sunday, August 31, 2014. The first orientation event will be held on the evening of Monday, September 1. Please remember to turn in your completed "travel information form" to your study abroad office by the deadline set by your home university staff.

Note: Should your luggage get lost in transit, feel free to provide the airline with the AYF mailing address (Academic Year in Freiburg, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität – Poststelle, Universitätsstraße 3, 79098 Freiburg) and telephone contact information (use 0170 – 571 88 78, Ulli Struve's cell phone). Late delivery of your luggage at your dorm would be quite difficult, since you will be busy with orientation activities and not at home to wait for the airline courier. Upon arrival in Freiburg, inform Ulli Struve that you are dealing with lost luggage so that he can assist with additional arrangements as needed.

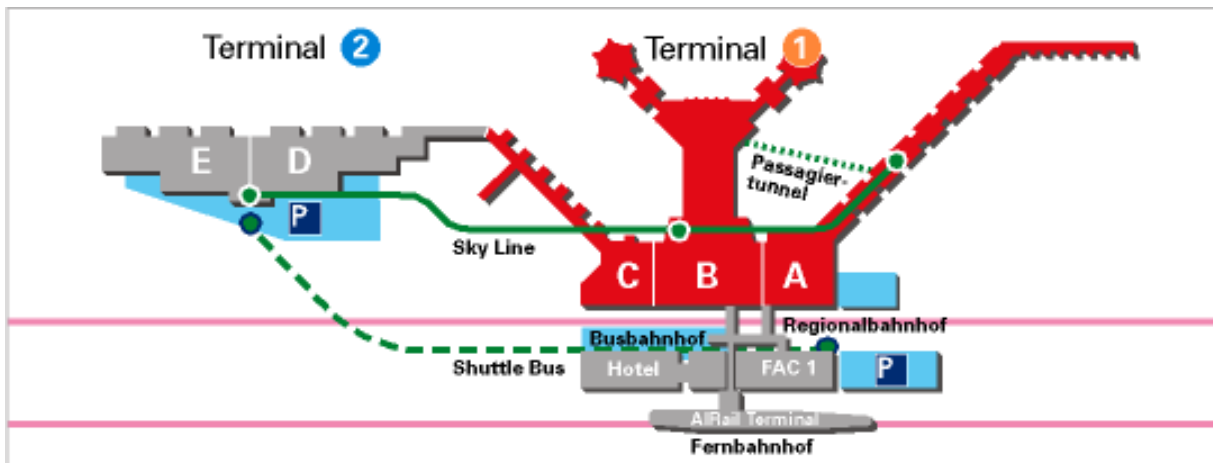
It is helpful to consider the total travel cost when looking for a flight. Some questions you may wish to consider are: Does your preferred airline allow one or two suitcases without additional charges? It is possible to book the train trip from the airport to Freiburg as part of the airline ticket at a lower rate? Can a student travel agency offer discounts?

It is generally cheapest and most convenient to fly from the U.S. to Frankfurt. Flying to Basel/Mulhouse or to Zurich are also options. Please consult the AYF website's section for "Incoming Students" for information on ground transportation to Freiburg from these airports.

Travel to Freiburg from the Frankfurt am Main Airport

The train is the best way to travel between Frankfurt am Main and Freiburg. The journey takes about two to three hours, and a one-way ticket costs about €60-70 (or less if you buy a *BahnCard* at the airport train station), depending on the particular connection you select and the type of train(s) you will be boarding. There is a train station in a building immediately adjacent to Terminal 1 B (see the map below). On disembarking from your flight, you will first proceed through passport check, then claim your luggage, and finally pass through customs control. If you arrive in Terminal 2, you can take either a shuttle bus or the so-called Sky Line to get to Terminal 1. Both services are free. The shuttle bus will drop you off outside the entrance to the *Bahnhof*. You need to follow the signs reading *Fernbahn* (long-distance trains). Do not confuse it with the *Regionalbahn* (regional commuter trains). You ought to allow yourself one to two hours between your flight arrival time and train departure time.

Map of Frankfurt Airport:



You may buy your train ticket before you depart for Germany, either at many U.S. travel agencies or online at www.bahn.de. Alternatively, you can buy a train ticket right at the Deutsche Bahn ticket sales and information counter in the airport station. If you purchase your ticket online, make sure to pay with the same credit or debit card that you intend to bring with you; once on the train, you must present both your ticket and the card with which you purchased the ticket to the conductor (*Schaffner*). If you are pressed for time, it is even possible to buy a ticket directly from the conductor, but in that case there will be a surcharge, so it is cheaper to buy a ticket before you board. If you are considering the purchase of a *BahnCard*, a discount card for train travel in Germany, then you may wish to buy it either online prior to departure or right at the airport to take advantage of the discounts from the start. If you choose to buy a *BahnCard* at the airport, you will need to go to the DB Reisezentrum on the ground level below Terminal 1. If you purchase it online, remember to print out your “temporary *BahnCard*” along with your online ticket. Generally, a *BahnCard* quickly pays for itself. For more details see “Trains” under “Transportation” in the “Living Abroad” section of this handbook, or consult www.bahn.de.

It is most speedy and convenient to take an ICE (*InterCityExpress*) train. On the ICE that travels directly from the Frankfurt airport to the final destination Basel, the trip to Freiburg takes about 2 hours and 10 minutes. There are direct trains from the Frankfurt airport to Freiburg every two hours. At every other hour, the train connection entails one transfer in Mannheim. This transfer is

not strenuous: in Mannheim, you usually need to walk just a few yards to the opposite side of the platform at which you have arrived, and do not have to go up and down stairs to reach a different platform. An hour and a half after leaving Mannheim, you will arrive at the Freiburg Hauptbahnhof.

You can check out possible train departure times and connections on the Internet: www.bahn.de. Please also visit the AYF homepage at www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de before your departure to check the latest update on "Information for Incoming Students."

Arrival Day – September 1, 2014

Detailed information about arrival day and the reception center will be provided to you with your housing assignment information in late June or early July. The full program of orientation activities, including the welcome pizza party on the evening of September 1, will be posted online.

In case you experience significant delays in your travel to Freiburg, please note that there is a "Plan B" that involves a secondary meeting point. On arrival day, the reception center at the Hauptbahnhof will be staffed from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. Should you arrive in Freiburg after 5 p.m., please be prepared to come to Haus 60 of the Studentensiedlung, the Stusie, where the welcome pizza party will be held. It is easiest to take a taxi, but it is possible to take streetcar no. 1 toward Landwasser to go to the Stusie. More detailed instructions and a map of the Stusie will be included in your housing information mailing. We suggest you print out the instructions for "Arrival Day – Plan B" and keep it in your carry-on luggage.

Since the arrival of the entire group of AYF students requires preparation and coordination, dorm rooms will not be available prior to September 1. If you arrive in Freiburg before that date, you will need to find accommodations elsewhere, such as a hostel. Hotels are more expensive. Here are some suggestions:

Jugendherberge Freiburg Kartäuserstraße 151 79104 Freiburg Tel: (0-761) 6 76 56 Fax: (0-761) 6 03 67 http://freiburg.jugendherberge-bw.de/	Black Forest Hostel Kartäuserstr. 33 79102 Freiburg Tel: (0-761) 881 78 70 Fax: (0-761) 881 78 95 www.blackforest-hostel.de
Hotel Bischofslinde Am Bischofskreuz 15 79114 Freiburg Tel: (0-761) 8 26 88 Fax: (0-761) 80 83 45 www.hotel-bischofslinde.de (across the street from the <i>Studentensiedlung</i>)	Hotel am Rathaus Rathausgasse 4–8 79098 Freiburg Tel: (0-761) 29 61 60 Fax: (0-761) 29 61 666 www.am-rathaus.de (10-minute walk from train station)
When calling from the U.S., dial "011-49-761" instead of "0-761."	

You will have to make your own reservations. For additional information on hotels, check out the homepage of the city of Freiburg (www.freiburg.de). A hotel database is available by clicking on the link "Touristen."

Please note that "plug and play" Internet access is provided in your dorm room. Internet service is part of the rent and automatically provided in each room. But since you may not

be travelling with an Ethernet cable, it might be necessary to use Internet cafés or use an AYF phone to call family to confirm arrival. There is also a public hotspot at the Starbucks in the Freiburg train station where you can send a message free of charge.

The Academic Program

General Information about the University

Founded in 1457, Freiburg's distinguished Albert-Ludwigs-Universität (www.uni-freiburg.de) initially focused solely on the standard Renaissance disciplines of philosophy, law, medicine, and theology. Over the past two centuries, it has developed into a comprehensive institution of higher learning offering the full range of subjects that, in the U.S., constitute a liberal arts education. The university consistently receives a very high ranking in the annual survey of German institutions of higher learning conducted by *Focus* magazine and recently won recognition in a national "Excellence Initiative" competition. At present, 21,000 students are enrolled at the university. In addition, Freiburg is home to two other notable institutions of higher learning, a Musikhochschule (music conservatory) and a Pädagogische Hochschule (University of Education). All in all, Freiburg has about 28,000 students in its total population of 224,000.

Over the years, thousands of U.S. students have benefited from enrolling in Freiburg university classes alongside native German and international students in such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, art history, botany, business administration, classics, computer science, economics, European ethnology, forest management, geography, German, history, mathematics, music, philosophy, physics, political science, religion, sociology, and zoology. With a few exceptions such as English literature and some business, political science, and natural science courses, all classes are conducted in German.

As a participant on the Academic Year in Freiburg program, you have several options for courses:

AYF Program: Topics and intensive language courses are offered exclusively to AYF participants. These include intensive language courses utilizing texts and media on current events in Germany. The small class size and experienced instructors in these classes help students to improve their German language skills rapidly. Topics courses provide a broad survey of literary or historical periods. In the summer semester, a course offered to AYF students participating in the Internship Program focuses on intercultural communication.

SLI Courses: The *Sprachlehrinstitut* (Language Teaching Institute) offers language and culture courses in the target language, generally at the intermediate level, at the University of Freiburg. In addition to German, more than 20 other languages, including *Alemannisch*, are offered. SLI German courses are frequented by international students from around the globe.

PH Courses: The local **University of Education**, *Pädagogische Hochschule*, offers teacher training and academic training in a student's chosen field. AYF participants are often permitted to join PH courses, for example in the PH German Department, as guests. Many AYF students have found the PH a very worthwhile part of their studies in Freiburg.

University of Freiburg / Albert-Ludwigs-Universität (ALU): AYF students are full-time, non-degree seeking students at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. In their course selection, AYF students are not limited to a particular department or set of departments. With very few exceptions, all fields of study and all courses for which students are adequately prepared are open to AYF participants (closed-enrollment fields such as the Med School and Psychology are off limits, for example).

As an AYF student you put together a course of study in individual academic advising sessions with the Resident Director. Your personal course of study is designed to allow you to stretch and challenge yourself academically--while keeping it manageable at the same time.

The AYF Program Center

The AYF Program Center houses the offices of the program's Resident Director and Associate Director. The Resident Director holds regular office hours there. During the semester, the Program Center is open 10 AM – noon Monday through Friday, and 2-4 PM Monday through Thursday. During the orientation period and during the semester breaks, the Program Center may have different hours. AYF students have mailboxes at the Program Center and should drop by regularly to check their mail (incoming mail is not forwarded to dormitories). Important program memos and announcements are distributed via these mailboxes as well as by e-mail.

The Resident Director and Associate Director are available to help you not just with academic concerns but with all aspects of daily life and cultural adjustment. Beyond teaching an AYF program course during the first semester in an area of his or her specialization, the Resident Director serves as your academic advisor throughout your year abroad and is ultimately the one who will approve or deny all your course selections during and after your individual advising conferences. At the end of the year, the Resident Director certifies the transfer of all your courses, credits, and grades to your home university. In addition, the Resident Director supervises locally hired program instructors, keeps in touch with university faculty members and administrators, and arranges tutorials for university courses with a substantial enrollment of AYF students.

Orientation

For AYF students, the academic year begins in early September with a six-week orientation program, including a 3½-week intensive language course in which you will earn **3 credits**.

During the first days after your arrival, AYF program staff will provide information and guide you through an array of bureaucratic formalities, such as opening a bank account, signing a dorm lease, applying for a residence permit, enrolling at the University of Freiburg, applying for mandatory medical insurance, and so on.

During the following weeks, you will attend an intensive German language course at the ESL Language School Freiburg. The aim of this course is to improve your language skills and convey information about German culture and life in Freiburg.

The orientation program will also feature colloquia on life in the dorms, various practical aspects of everyday life, and getting around in Freiburg, as well as academic issues (e.g., the German university system, registration procedures, course offerings, libraries, and research facilities). In addition, each student will have an individual academic advising appointment with the Resident Director to select courses for the *Wintersemester*. Excursions to places of interest in the vicinity of

Freiburg are intended to round out your initial experiences in Germany. Overall, the orientation program aims to ease your integration into the life of the university and the city.

Intensive Language Course at the ESL Language School Freiburg

ESL Freiburg (<http://www.esl-schools.org/de/deutsch-sprachschule-freiburg/esl-freiburg-deutschland.htm>) is located in a three-story building on Werthmannstraße, just around the corner from the University. This language school was founded in 1972 and began specializing in teaching German to foreign students in the early 1980s. In 1983, the Freiburg school became affiliated with the International House World Group, which has over 100 schools in 27 countries. In 1991, International House Freiburg became the center of a worldwide organization for teacher training courses in German as a Foreign Language. In 2011, International House Freiburg became part of the ESL Language Schools, headquartered in Montreux, but the key leadership at the school has remained the same and AYF students continue to benefit from specialized courses and superb teachers attracted to the school.

The classes you will attend at ESL Freiburg during orientation are tailored exclusively to AYF students. Depending on total enrollment numbers in the AYF program, three or four classes at different language levels will be offered. Your placement in these classes is based upon the results of a written exam, in consultation with the Resident Director. During orientation, you will have four class hours (in 45-minute sessions) daily, Monday through Friday. Grading is based on mid-term and final exams, homework, and classroom performance.

You will earn three credits for the intensive language course. Depending upon your level, the course will appear on your transcript as AYF 301 or 401.

AYF students are required to maintain full-time student status by carrying a minimum of 12 credits in each of the regular semesters – in addition to the 3 credits for the orientation language course – and will thus earn a minimum of 15 credits by the end of the first semester and a minimum of 27 credits by the end of the second semester. Credits for each of the regular semesters may include AYF program courses, university courses, courses at the university's Language Teaching Center (Sprachlehrinstitut, or SLI), courses at the Pädagogische Hochschule, and the AYF Internship.

The German Academic System

The university's *Wintersemester* runs from mid-October to mid-February and includes a two-week holiday break in late December and early January. The Pädagogische Hochschule has slightly different semester dates which are noted in the table of Program Dates at the beginning of this Handbook. After an eight- to nine-week inter-semester vacation, the *Sommersemester* begins in mid-April and ends in late July. During the *Sommersemester*, there is a one-week university break following *Pfingsten* (Pentecost). You are free to travel during the breaks and vacation time. When planning your travels, please keep in mind that one of the *Wintersemester* AYF courses will most likely offer a one-week field trip to a major European city, such as Berlin, as part of its academic curriculum. During the semesters you are expected to remain in Freiburg to carry out your academic work and to participate in all program activities. In past years, some students have sought full-time employment during the vacation breaks, but jobs are rather hard to find – not just in Freiburg, but also throughout Germany and all of Europe. You must notify the program staff of your travel plans during break and vacation periods. There are forms in the AYF Program Center, as well as online (see "Let's Go" menu button) to leave contact information in case someone needs to reach you.

While the courses offered by the AYF program itself are structured much like U.S. university courses, regular German university courses follow certain patterns that will be new to you. As you adjust to your new academic life in Freiburg, it will be essential to keep in mind the key differences between the German and U.S. academic systems that are sketched out in the following pages. During orientation, colloquia presented by AYF staff will describe in greater detail the German higher education system and how to make the most of it.

Interactions with Professors

In Germany, university professors are generally less available for providing individual student guidance than professors in the U.S. This is partly because of the high student/professor ratio in Germany (higher than the U.S. average), but also partly because German professors teach four courses per semester (more than the U.S. average) in addition to handling various other time-consuming administrative duties. Nonetheless, professors do hold weekly office hours and are generally very approachable. Experience has shown that they are often especially open to foreign students. They do, however, usually limit appointments to at most fifteen minutes per individual student visit, and they typically see students on an appointment-only basis rather than accepting walk-ins. They usually post a weekly sign-up sheet for office hour appointments on their office door.

You should try to make it a point to visit each of your professors during his/her office hours early on in the semester to briefly introduce yourself as an AYF student and to describe your background and interests. You will probably want to visit some or all of your professors a second time to discuss your particular course assignments, oral reports, or term papers as soon as they are set, in order to avoid stress at the end of the semester. This is especially important because quite a few German professors do not provide a printed syllabus and/or the sort of clear week-to-week assignments you are accustomed to in the U.S.

Traditional student-professor interactions in Germany have been shifting in the direction of the American approach over the past few years with the adoption of the bachelor's degree in Germany. But even so, figuring out what a Freiburg professor expects, but leaves unexpressed as a tacit assumption, will almost certainly require close attention and added initiative on your part. Unless you make it a point to seek it out, you may receive little or no feedback until final grades are posted.

Course Information

In mid-October, following the AYF orientation period, the regular *Wintersemester* begins. During the semester you will enroll in a combination of regular university courses and specially designed AYF program courses on German language, literature, and culture. The AYF program courses are taught by experienced local instructors and by the Resident Director. Like regular university courses, AYF program courses are conducted entirely in German. The Resident Director will teach one course during the winter semester.

AYF Language Courses during Orientation and the *Wintersemester*

All students are required to take the intensive language course taught at ESL Freiburg during orientation. Students will be placed into a class that corresponds to their level of German based on a placement test. A second German course at ESL Freiburg during the *Wintersemester* is also required for those AYF students who have not completed the language courses needed for the German major at their home university. The Resident Director will determine whether a student must take this course. All students are encouraged to take the course to improve their language

abilities. They should check with their home advisor to ascertain whether they can count the course as an elective credit for their German major.

The *Wintersemester* course at ESL Freiburg is worth three (3) credits. It is offered at different levels and teaches the speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills appropriate for students at these levels, as assessed by ESL Freiburg teaching staff at the end of the orientation course. The more advanced sections of the course aim to help prepare you for the term papers you will write in your university classes and therefore emphasize writing skills.

AYF Resident Director Course: Die Stadt in der Geschichte: Fokus Freiburg

This course will canvas pivotal moments of European and German history between the Middle Ages and the late twentieth century by focusing on urban history, in particular the history of Freiburg im Breisgau.

Among the themes we will discuss during the course of the semester are urbanization in medieval Europe, cities as centers of religious devotion, the emergence of universities in the context of humanism and reform movements, the fortified city, Freiburg during National Socialism, the aerial war during World War II, and the post-war reconstruction in Germany.

The readings for this class will include a combination of introductory pieces to the course's themes and first-hand documents from the periods under consideration.

In order to gain an understanding of the city as a historically layered space, we will also explore the city's rich treasure trove of monuments and museums.

AYF Courses

The following AYF program courses are planned for 2014-2015:

- Die Stadt in der Geschichte: Fokus Freiburg
- Deutsche Geschichte: Von der Reichsgründung zur Wiedervereinigung (1871-1990)
- Deutsche Literatur (topic to be finalized)
- Language courses
- European Union: History, Institutions, Policy Fields
- Media in Germany
- AYF Internship (seminar on intercultural issues in the workplace)

Please note: These program courses are planned for 2014-2015. Typically, AYF offers a German history survey course and either a German cinema course or an introduction to the study of German literature and culture in the *Wintersemester* and a course on the European Union in the *Sommersemester*. Other courses may be added as needed. Before proceeding to outline the offerings of the university and PH, we like to give you some information about the AYF Internship Program.

ACADEMIC YEAR IN FREIBURG INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (AYF-IP)

The AYF program is proud to offer its participants the opportunity to work as interns during their second term in Freiburg (Sommersemester). AYF-IP provides participants with an opportunity to gain work experience, improve their German, and get to know German work culture first hand. Internships are part time and unpaid.

Participants will be expected to commit to 10-12 hours per week for 10-12 weeks. While an intern, you will continue to be enrolled in classes. The internship includes an academic component, a seminar (AYF 490 – Internship Program Seminar), for which you will earn a grade and 3 credits. In effect, the internship can replace one course during the summer term.

Previous interns have worked in an impressive array of organizations or host companies in and around Freiburg, ranging from government agencies to publishing houses, businesses, environmental organizations, and schools, among other institutions.

AYF will assist you in searching for an internship. But students interested in participating in the AYF-IP are not limited to placements suggested by the AYF roster of contacts. You are, on the contrary, encouraged to take the initiative and search for potential placements on your own. The host companies or organizations will determine specific tasks and responsibilities. German language skills as well as prior work experience play an important role in shaping the internship experience, as does a participant's personality, active engagement, and intercultural awareness.

During orientation week in September, detailed information about this opportunity and the application and placement process will be made available. The AYF-IP is selective; about five to ten students can be accepted into the Internship Program. AYFers interested in the IP will be asked to submit an application by November 1, pay a program fee of 200 euros, and sign an agreement.

University Courses

AYF students have access to virtually all university and Pädagogische Hochschule courses offered in the humanities, social sciences, and certain natural sciences as well as most other disciplines. Not open are, for example, courses in the schools of medicine and pharmacy as well as the psychology department.

You should not count on a particular course being offered in any given semester, even if you know that AYF students have taken it in the past. Professors at German universities offer entirely new course topics each semester. This is a pillar of the German understanding of "academic freedom," and you must therefore be prepared to be flexible in selecting your courses each semester.

If you have the requisite language skills, you may choose to take mostly regular university courses each semester. If you have less advanced skills, you may choose to take up to two AYF program courses per term. The AYF Resident Director will provide group and individual academic advising to guide you toward the combination of courses that is most appropriate for your needs and skills.

AYF strongly discourages students from enrolling in foreign language courses other than German for credit while in Freiburg. Students who want to continue a foreign language they started on their home campus will need written permission from their advisor at their home institution as well as permission from the Resident Director in Freiburg. No credit will be granted for beginning language courses (1st or 2nd semester courses).

Students who wish to complete course work in mathematics or the natural sciences in Freiburg are cautioned that required courses on the home campus may not be available in Freiburg and that advanced course work may be difficult due to differing prerequisites and language problems. Close consultation with appropriate advisors prior to departure is highly recommended.

The Timetable/Schedule of Courses (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*)

Most university courses at Freiburg, as at all German universities, are not repeated year after year but instead are offered only once. As a result, there is no direct counterpart of the standard U.S. college catalog, with its convenient listing of all regularly offered courses.

The *Vorlesungsverzeichnisse* for the university and Pädagogische Hochschule are published several months before each semester begins, so you will have ample time to look them over. They are most conveniently available in an online database format or will be made available as PDF documents.

A *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* is a comprehensive but also somewhat daunting key to making course selections. Therefore, AYF students will also be provided with a list of courses at the university and Pädagogische Hochschule recommended by the Resident Director.

Kommentare

In most cases, the *Vorlesungsverzeichnisse* contain *Kommentare*. They are especially helpful because they go beyond merely listing course titles to providing course descriptions, preliminary reading lists, course requirements and so on. Occasionally, information on courses is posted on departmental homepages. But increasingly, all available information is integrated into the central online database version of the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* (<http://www.studium.uni-freiburg.de/studium/lehrveranstaltungen>). This database is updated continuously and is the most readily accessible source of course information.

In some cases, information on a given course may be incomplete in the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*. The room assignment, for example, may be missing, or the instructor may be designated as "N.N." (i.e., *nomen nominandum*), which means that a professor had not yet been appointed at the time the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* went to print or the entry was added to the data base. Also, courses are subject to last-minute cancellations based on the same factors that could arise in the U.S. such as unexpectedly low enrollments or the illness of a particular instructor. When planning your semester schedule, you should therefore always have a back-up plan with appropriate alternatives in case one or more courses are cancelled.

Updated course listings are posted at the university and (generally) incorporated swiftly into the online *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*. Each department has its own *schwarzes Brett* (bulletin board) located in the hallway near the departmental office or the departmental library. The bulletin board of the Deutsches Seminar, for example, is located on the third floor of Kollegiengebäude III. It pays to consult these departmental bulletin boards when planning your semester schedule, because they are still a good source of completely up-to-date information on any last-minute course cancellations, room changes, and even entirely new courses.

Departments

The *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* is organized by *Fakultäten*, which are roughly comparable to the Divisions, Schools, or Colleges at U.S. universities (for example, the College of Letters & Science at UW-Madison).

Pre-enrollment (*Voranmeldung*) is required for certain courses and in specific departments at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität due to enrollment caps and for capacity planning purposes. If pre-enrollment is required for a particular course, general information about such a policy appears in the online *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*; an entry generally lists the number of maximum participants and the number of expected participants. There are different procedures in place in different departments to enroll in a course. Sometimes, it is sufficient to enter your name on the class (or section) list posted on the instructor's office door, on the official departmental bulletin boards, or with the instructor's secretary. In some departments, a special contact person handles the pre-enrollment for a specific type of course, but increasingly registration procedures are integrated into the university's online course listing and processed electronically. You will receive detailed information about the relevant procedures during orientation.

In the case of strict "*numerus clausus*" ("closed enrollment") disciplines, the AYF program cannot guarantee that you will be allowed to enroll in all or even most courses. *Numerus clausus* fields include most natural sciences (especially those with lab sections). To enroll in *numerus clausus* courses, you must receive the consent of the instructor in advance, and the best approach is to visit the instructor well before the semester begins during his/her office hours. These times are generally posted on the instructor's office door, and you may also inquire by telephone or in person with departmental secretaries. The names, office addresses, and telephone numbers of all university faculty and staff members (including departmental secretaries) appear in the *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*, the university telephone directory, and/or on the homepages of the individual departments. These can be accessed online (www.uni-freiburg.de – then select Schnellzugriff -> Universität -> Fakultäten und Einrichtungen -> Fakultäten).

Tips on Deciphering a Vorlesungsverzeichnis

Course listings in the Freiburg *Vorlesungsverzeichnisse* are organized first by department and secondly, within a given department, by level. Unlike most college courses in the U.S., which may be categorized as elementary, intermediate, or advanced, German university courses are divided into a number of different level categories.

The hierarchy of German university courses, from most elementary to most advanced, is roughly as follows (there is some variation among different disciplines):

<i>Vorlesung</i>	This is a lecture course (the German term for a single lecture held outside a classroom setting is <i>Vortrag</i>). Lecture courses are typically offered only by distinguished senior professors, who usually read aloud (<i>vorlesen</i>) a draft essay or book manuscript to a large audience. Students generally have little or no opportunity for discussion or questions. To get a <i>benoteter Schein</i> for a <i>Vorlesung</i> , you may need to arrange with the professor to write a paper or take a final exam, because the German students in the course may not be taking it for a grade. However, it is becoming much more common these days for professors to give grades based upon final exams (<i>Klausuren</i>) connected to a <i>Vorlesung</i> .
<i>Einführung</i> or <i>Grundkurs</i>	This is an introductory course in which a department acquaints students with the methods, topics, and history of its discipline. In the German department, several parallel sections are typically offered, and reading and writing assignments vary from section to section. Note: an <i>Einführung</i> is not identical with a typical "survey course" in the U.S. and usually has a narrower focus.

<i>Übung</i>	This is a small class devoted to individual or group student assignments, either oral or written. In some cases, an <i>Übung</i> is offered in conjunction with a <i>Vorlesung</i> . In this sense, it is similar to a discussion section at a U.S. university. Participation in <i>Übungen</i> is recommended only when a <i>Schein</i> is offered, such as in the German department. A separate agreement with the instructor and the Resident Director may be necessary for a student to receive a grade and credit for an <i>Übung</i> .
<i>Proseminar</i>	This is the starting level of independent academic study, comparable to an advanced undergraduate course in the U.S. Students (anywhere from 15 to 50 in a class) are generally required to give an oral report (<i>mündliches Referat</i>) and write a term paper (<i>schriftliche Hausarbeit</i>).
<i>Seminar or Hauptseminar</i>	This is one level higher than a <i>Proseminar</i> , comparable to an American graduate seminar. Only a student who is very proficient in German and already has considerable knowledge of the subject matter should enroll in a <i>Hauptseminar</i> . Often, professors require that participants in a <i>Hauptseminar</i> have already passed the <i>Zwischenprüfung</i> or have equivalent qualifications, e.g., an American B.A.
<i>Kolloquium or Forschungskolloquium</i>	This is usually a top-level course that prepares participants for an upcoming comprehensive examination for an advanced degree.

Registration

The sort of central registration procedure you are familiar with from U.S. universities is generally unknown in Germany, as are add/drop deadlines and pass/fail options. German students *belegen* (roughly: “enroll in”) courses, but traditionally this has been far less binding than our registration, for German students may opt to drop courses right up to the very last minute, indeed, even after the semester has ended! With the introduction of the B.A. in Germany, there has been a marked shift in registration and course drop procedures as German universities are moving closer to U.S. registration practices.

In any case, the AYF program operates like a U.S. university by establishing add/drop deadlines each semester. Once the AYF drop deadline has come and gone, you are formally registered for the courses that appear on your schedule sheet, just as you would be at your home university in the U.S.

For planning your coursework each semester, the Resident Director will meet with you and offer as much guidance as possible. But you must accept major responsibility for drawing up a realistic preliminary plan for your coursework. You should not, for example, expect the Resident Director to be completely versed with the course requirements of your particular major at your particular home university. You have to know these requirements. Prior to your individual academic advising session with the Resident Director just before the beginning of each semester, you should prepare a sort of “highly tentative schedule” and bring it along to your appointment. Concretely, this means that you should pre-select as many as ten courses that you find potentially interesting. With the advice of the Resident Director, you will then draw up a preliminary semester schedule. In the following weeks, you may change your schedule by adding or dropping courses up to the respective deadlines. To add a course at a later date, however, you will need to have participated from the beginning; otherwise, you are likely to have missed too much material covered in the course and would run into difficulties obtaining a graded *Schein*. Following the final drop deadline, the AYF

Program Center will prepare a printout of your final schedule and give you an opportunity to check its accuracy.

A typical final schedule comprises 12–18 credit hours, and you must seek the Resident Director's permission to register for fewer or more. This total includes AYF program courses and university courses, as well as courses from the university's Language Teaching Center (*Sprachlehrinstitut*, or SLI) and the Pädagogische Hochschule. To maintain full-time student status, you must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours.

Credits

Credit hours for university courses are based on the number of hours per week that an equivalent course in the U.S. would grant. The great majority of university courses meet just two hours per week, but they generally count for 3 credits. Number of credits varies according to type of course (see descriptions of all courses above in Tips on Deciphering a *Vorlesungsverzeichnis*):

- **Vorlesungen:** 2 credits. A student may receive a third credit for a *Vorlesung* if s/he takes an AYF tutorial offered in conjunction with the *Vorlesung*. Students should discuss this option with the Resident Director. In this case, the tutorial grade will constitute half of the overall course grade.
- **Einführungskurse:** 3 credits (see note under Proseminare)
- **Proseminare:** 3 credits

Note: *Einführungskurse* and *Proseminare* may be taken in conjunction with a *Tutorat*. Students will not receive additional credit for work done in an AYF *Tutorat*. The grade from an AYF *Tutorat* will constitute 1/3 (one third) of the overall course grade. 4 credits can be earned in a course with a *Pflichtttutorat* mandated by the respective university department.

- **Übungen:** 3 credits. Participation in *Übungen* is recommended only when a *Schein* is offered, as not all *Übungen* courses offer one. A separate agreement with the instructor and the Resident Director may be necessary for a student to receive a grade and credit for an *Übung*.

AYF Credits vs. ECTS Credits

At the university you will encounter another credit system called ECTS. In this system, professors give European Credit Transfer System points. ECTS points are only loosely comparable to U.S. credits (a 2:1 ratio of ECTS points to AYF credits generally works as a rule of thumb). Most importantly, however, ECTS points are ultimately irrelevant to you. The only credit number that is important for AYF participants is the number of credits approved by AYF and by the RD for a particular course.

One key aspect of ECTS is that it enables professors to offer variable credit for the same course based on different types of work performed by a student. This can be quite confusing. Please beware of *only* giving an oral presentation in a course, for example, because a faculty member says he or she will issue a *Schein* on that basis – and expecting to receive 3 AYF credits for the course. Most likely, the faculty member who just explained to you that she/he will give you a *Schein* for an oral presentation intends to give you a certificate of participation (*Teilnahmeschein*). As an AYF participant, you need to receive a regular graded certificate (*benoteter Schein*); a *Teilnahmeschein* is not sufficient for getting AYF credit for academic work done in Freiburg. It is only sufficient for an audit that carries zero credits. And even if a faculty member were to provide a graded *Schein* on the

basis of an oral presentation only, this does not meet AYF minimum requirements for certifying 3 credits on the AYF transcript.

Requirements, Explicit and Implicit Expectations

Requirements and expectations are not always spelled out as clearly as they usually would be in a U.S. seminar or course. It is possible, for example, that a Freiburg faculty member will issue a *benoteter Schein* to you for doing two of the three things mentioned in the previous section, e.g., *Referat* plus *Klausur* or *Referat* plus *Hausarbeit* or *Referat* plus *final oral exam*. That is a pedagogical decision on the part of the faculty member, and AYF will accept a *Schein* obtained on that basis – provided it is a *benoteter Schein*.

As a general rule of thumb and if not otherwise specified, it is expected that you produce a minimum of 10-12 pages of written work (plus cover page, TOC, bibliography) in order to receive 3 AYF credits. Often, German faculty members can be very generous when working with international students. On the other hand, German faculty can be very strict regarding attendance and assignments. There will be differences from one professor to the next, but in general you are not permitted more than 2 missed classes per semester and you may need a doctor's note to explain an absence. It can happen that a faculty member refuses to accept a paper from a student who missed more than 2 class sessions, thereby failing the student. Some faculty members regard *all* assignments as mandatory rather than optional components leading toward a cumulative grade. It is possible to do very well in most assignments and still fail a course for not having completed one key requirement. You will always need a doctor's note if you missed a final exam and are asking for a make-up appointment.

These notes want to provide you with an initial orientation about grades and credit. The AYF staff will be more than happy to help you with questions that you might have. In your own interest, you will be asked to submit all *Hausarbeiten* and other written work produced for AYF, university and PH courses to the AYF office.

Tutorials

A *Tutorat* (the Freiburg term for a tutorial) is similar to a TA-taught discussion section for a large class at a U.S. university. Some Freiburg university departments (such as history and German) organize obligatory or elective *Tutorate*. Like discussion sections conducted by teaching assistants in the U.S., *Tutorate* provide an opportunity to review material already covered and to prepare for upcoming class meetings. Tutors (*Tutoren*) also provide assistance with the German language, library research strategies, and the correct form of written assignments; a *Tutorat* aims to acquaint you with the fundamental tools of a particular academic field. *Tutorate* often require brief written or oral reports by students. You will not receive credit for attending a university-organized *Tutorat* unless it is a *Pflichtttutorat* (required for passing the course) and places substantial demands on participants, as is the case in history department *Proseminare*. Speak with the Resident Director about the possibility of receiving credit for academically demanding *Pflichtttutorate* in other departments.

The AYF program also organizes its own *Tutorate* for university courses if five or more students registered for the course indicate a strong interest in attending a *Tutorat*. Your work in an AYF *Tutorat* will count for one-third of your course grade if it accompanies a *Proseminar* and one-half of the grade, if it accompanies a *Vorlesung*.

Courses for International Students

The Sprachlehrinstitut (SLI) is a special institute at the university that offers a range of foreign language and culture courses for international students, among them courses in German as a Foreign Language. These courses focus on different aspects of language acquisition - speaking, listening, writing, grammar, and culture. Some of the courses are designed to prepare international students for the formal language exam (DSH) required for admission to the university. The DSH exam is waived for AYF students.

AYF students may register for no more than 3 SLI courses per semester. The AYF Program does not arrange *Tutorate* for SLI courses. The credit system for SLI courses differs somewhat from the one described above for regular university courses:

- **Übungen in pronunciation and intonation carry no credit.**
- **Übungen in other areas of language acquisition carry 1 credit.**
- **Landeskunde / Culture courses carry 2 credits.**

Please note that the *Deutsches Seminar* occasionally offers German literature courses "*für ausländische Studierende*" and "*vornehmlich für ausländische Studierende*" that are also aimed primarily at international students. The AYF program regards these as regular university courses, and they are therefore not subject to the limitation of 3 SLI courses per semester. Also, AYF *Tutorate* may be organized for these courses, given sufficient student interest. You will earn 3 credits for these German literature courses "*für ausländische Studierende*."

Courses at the Pädagogische Hochschule (PH)

AYF students are welcome to enroll in PH courses – as guests. Therefore, access depends on faculty members' approval and space availability. Seminars at the PH, especially those covering an academic area of study (as distinct from didactics courses which are also offered), can be a very good fit for AYF students.

The following outlines the AYF policy on courses at the PH: AYF students may enroll at the PH for no more than 9 AYF credits during the academic year and for no more than 6 credits in either semester. Courses taken at the PH must be approved by the RD. On the basis of descriptions and reading lists, the RD will determine whether PH course content and work load seem suitable for AYF students. Generally, courses in the German Department at the PH will be considered appropriate. Education majors may be exempted from the policy with RD approval. Home university adviser approval may also be needed for education majors.

Limits and Load

Students must be registered for **a minimum of 12 credits per semester and a maximum of 18**. These 12 credits DO NOT include the 3 credits of the orientation course. Thus, your transcript will indicate a minimum of 15 credits for the fall. However, a maximum of 18 credits per semester is allowed including the 3 credits from the orientation course.

Grades and Grade Conversions

German universities do not issue either transcripts or semester grade reports. Instead, the work you do in each course is recorded on an individual *Schein* (certificate), which is signed by the instructor and stamped (*gestempelt*) by the instructor's department. Some instructors helpfully collect the *Scheine* of all their students and take them to be stamped, but in other cases you will have to take your signed *Schein* to the department's *Sekretariat* or *Geschäftsführung* yourself to get it stamped.

While German students assemble their *Scheine* in a *Studienbuch* throughout their university years, AYF students will deliver their *Scheine* to the Program Center, which in turn will use them to prepare official transcripts. After the transcripts for the *Sommersemester* are completed, the AYF Program Center will send your *Studienbuch* with all your *Scheine* to your home university to pass on to you. If you should decide to attend a German university in the future (perhaps to get a *Magister*, or master's degree), your Freiburg *Scheine* will provide valuable degree credits, so be sure to keep your *Studienbuch* in a safe place. Your Freiburg *Studienbuch* is also an important document in itself, and you will need to present it if you want to register at a German university in the future.

The AYF program does not grant any course credit at all for an ungraded *Teilnahmeschein*. A *Teilnahmeschein* is only sufficient for a course taken as an "audit" with zero credit. **You must receive a graded certificate (*benoteter Schein*) for each university course for which you register and expect to receive credit, even if you only take it on a pass/fail basis.** Receiving only an ungraded *Teilnahmeschein* or not receiving any *Schein* at all in a course, other than a course taken as an "audit," is equivalent to receiving a failing grade.

If you are enrolled in a university-organized *Tutorat* that accompanies a regular course, your grade will be entirely based on the *benoteter Schein* for the course itself. You do not need a *Schein* for an AYF *Tutorat*. The AYF *Tutor* will provide a grade list to the AYF Program Center, and as described above, your work in an AYF *Tutorat* will count for one-third of your *Proseminar* grade or one-half of your *Vorlesung* grade.

You must receive a grade in each regular university course you enroll in for credit. It is important to keep in mind that receiving a grade is not always the standard operating procedure at German universities, although it is becoming more common. Most German students may take most of their coursework on an ungraded or pass/fail basis. In general, German students never receive a *Schein* for attending a *Vorlesung* in the humanities. If you plan to take a *Vorlesung* for credit, you may have to make individual arrangements with the professor to obtain a *benoteter Schein* at the end of the semester.

You will be happy to hear that virtually all Freiburg university instructors are not only quite familiar with the need of U.S. students to receive a course grade but are sensitive to your situation as a newcomer to the German university system. In order to give you a grade, they may choose to give you an oral or a written exam, or agree to assign and grade a term paper.

Establishing American equivalents for the German grading system is somewhat challenging. In principle, the following grade translation scale is applied to those courses that AYF students take at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, the Pädagogische Hochschule, and ESL Freiburg, although the Resident Director may consider modifications under certain exceptional circumstances:

German number with + and -	German number with decimals	German descriptive grade	UW Grade
1, 1-, 1 - 2, 2+	1.0 - 1.75	sehr gut, mit sehr gutem Erfolg	A
2	1.76 - 2.0	gut, mit gutem Erfolg	AB
2-	2.01 - 2.25	-	AB
2 - 3, 3+	2.26 - 2.5	noch gut	B
3	2.51 - 3.0	befriedigend, mit Erfolg	B
3-	3.01 - 3.25	-	BC
3 - 4, 4+	3.26 - 3.75	noch befriedigend	C
4	3.76 - 4.0	ausreichend	C
4-	4.01 - 4.25	-	C
4 - 5, 5+	4.26 - 4.75	noch ausreichend	D
5	4.76 - 5.0	ungenügend, mangelhaft	D
5-, 6	5.01 - 6.0	-	F
<i>Ungraded Teilnahmeschein, or not receiving any Schein</i>			F

Though some professors do not take attendance, many others do, and class participation does have an influence on course grades. Regular and active participation is also increasingly deemed a requirement for obtaining any *Schein* at all, and Professors may refuse to give you a *Schein* if your attendance has been irregular. **Generally, you will need to be more self-motivated and should expect to receive less regular feedback from professors than you are accustomed to in the U.S.** Thus, you may have to make some adjustments in your study habits to be successful.

Academic Dishonesty

The most important rule about academic dishonesty and plagiarism is: "Don't do it!" The academic code of conduct that applies at your home university also applies in Freiburg, and plagiarism is just as serious a violation during your year abroad as it is at home.

But what constitutes plagiarism? Plagiarism is if you present the ideas of others as your own ideas, be it in writing or during an oral presentation. Plagiarism also extends to presenting your own work from one course as original work in another course. In other words, you may not submit the same paper (or any part thereof) in different classes.

The key to avoiding plagiarism, therefore, is to consistently identify your sources. Whether you are using printed books, articles, online resources, lecture materials, etc., your sources of information must be cited. Direct quotations should be set off by "the appropriate marks." If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to identify and document your sources, do not hesitate to approach the Resident Director or the Associate Director.

Here are some online resources to help you clarify your questions:

http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/docs/Plagiarism_Avoiding_Unintentional_Plagiarism.pdf;

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/shapiro-undergraduate-library/understanding-plagiarism-and-academic-integrity>; <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>.

However, it is *not* plagiarism if you write a paper in German and ask a friend to help you correct grammar mistakes. It is *not* plagiarism to adopt idiomatically or stylistically more appropriate formulations from your friend. It may be plagiarism, however, if your helpful friend rewrites a paper for you, even if you did not request it, and it is obviously plagiarism if you supply a friend with an outline and he or she writes the paper for you.

If you are suspected to have violated rules of academic honesty, the AYF directors are bound to pursue the matter. The directors will gather all relevant information and invite you to respond to the allegation of academic misconduct. If the findings confirm that you have plagiarized, you will be penalized. Penalties will be closely coordinated with your home campus. Should a suspected infraction come to our attention after your departure from Freiburg, it will be necessary to refer the matter to the appropriate office on your home campus.

End-of-Semester Deadlines

- Copies of *all* term papers, including those for AYF courses, must be turned in to the AYF Program Center no later than 15 days after the end of the semester. Please submit your papers in electronic form (Word.doc, Word.docx, PDF, RTF, or Open Office documents are accepted).
- At the end of the academic year, you must complete all coursework before leaving Freiburg. Any extensions beyond this date or Incompletes require approval in writing by the Resident Director before you leave Freiburg. Should you find yourself unable to adhere to the aforementioned deadlines and end up with an INC (= Incomplete) on your AYF transcript, you must get an extension in writing from your Resident Director to submit your work or your grade(s) to AYF at a later time. If you do not obtain an extension, all INCs on the AYF transcript will be converted to an "F" at your home university at the end of the semester that follows your return to the United States, whatever the exact date may be at your home institution.

Living Abroad

Germany

Considering the limited space 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. Germany lies in the heart of Europe and acts as a bridge between the east and west. With its 81 million citizens, Germany is the most populous European nation. Germany is affected by a number of unique features – for example, it is bordered by nine countries (compared to the two neighbors of the U.S.) that the government has to consider when making political decisions.

It is also important to learn about Germany's past to gain a deeper insight into the country and its people. You may wonder, for example, why so many of the major streets in Freiburg – such as the "main drag," the Kaiser-Joseph-Straße – are named after Austrian (rather than German) royalty. In fact, Freiburg and the entire surrounding region of the Breisgau were Austrian territory until 1803. And why does one of the university dorm complexes have a French name? The Studentendorf Vauban was originally built as housing for French NATO troops. Indeed, Freiburg was occupied by

France not just following World War II, but also from 1677–1699, and again from 1744–1748. The NATO garrison was named after Sébastien de Vauban, an engineer who in the 17th century redesigned the entire city of Freiburg as a giant French fort. Running through the university just one block north of the AYF Program Center is Rempartstraße, which marks the original ramparts laid out by Vauban. The more you learn about German political and cultural history and its continuing impact on everyday life today, the more rewarding your stay abroad will be.

Freiburg

Freiburg is located in the Upper Rhine Valley at the foot of the Black Forest in southwestern Germany, and its residents enjoy the sunniest and warmest climate in the entire country. They are proud that their commitment to environmental protection has led to Freiburg being declared an “*Öko-Hauptstadt*.” The city is internationally regarded as a center of “green” politics. Auto traffic is banned in the historic inner city section, which is entirely given over to pedestrians and streetcars. Bicycles are allowed in some parts of the inner city.

During World War II, the city suffered extensive damage from Allied air raids. Through careful effort, much of the town has been rebuilt in a way that restored the scenic medieval character Freiburg has possessed since it was founded in 1120. As in the Middle Ages, Freiburg’s distinctive *Bächle* (small streams diverted from the Dreisam River) still course alongside all streets in the historic city center.

With roughly 240,000 inhabitants, Freiburg is home to a variety of cultural activities including concerts, exhibitions, and theater. The musical scene ranges from classical to jazz and rock. The city is only 40 miles from the Swiss border and 14 miles from the French border, and it offers convenient access to Basel and Strasbourg. On the outskirts of Freiburg, you enter the Black Forest, one of Germany’s most famous and picturesque regions. The combination of valleys, pastures, forests, and mountains has made the area a prime vacation spot since the very invention of tourism. In the Black Forest, you will find many recreational opportunities, including biking, hiking, and skiing – both downhill and cross-country.

Freiburg became an official “sister city” (*Partnerstadt*) of Madison, Wisconsin, in 1985, and you are welcome to participate in the monthly meetings of the Freiburg-Madison-Gesellschaft at the Greifenegg-Schlössle (www.freiburg-madison.de).

For more information on the city, you may want to look at the following websites:

www.freiburg.de

www.bergwelt-schauinsland.de

www.badische-zeitung.de

www.fudder.de

www.virtuelles-freiburg.de

www.freiburg-im-netz.de

Housing

The AYF program arranges housing, which is in university dormitories located a short streetcar, bus, or bike ride from the campus. **Dormitory rooms will be assigned based on the information you provide on the Housing Preference Form. There is no guarantee, however, that you will receive your preferred assignment. Should your choices be oversubscribed, a lottery will be used to determine assignments.**

In past years, students living in the university dormitories have indicated that they made many friends through extracurricular activities, such as music groups and sports, so be sure to bring along your musical instrument, sports equipment, etc. If you begin right away to take advantage of

every opportunity to speak German, your language skills will improve rapidly – and you'll enjoy everything much more, and much more quickly.

Each dorm resident occupies a single room (11–12.5 square meters, approximately 120–140 square feet) with basic furnishings (desk, desk chair, desk lamp, closet, bed, mattress, pillow, and bookshelf) and bedding (sheet, pillow case, comforter, and comforter cover). Many students nonetheless choose to buy their own bedding shortly after they arrive (or from the AYF flea market), partly to add color to their lodgings, partly to have new items.

All dorm units are co-ed. Depending on the configuration of the particular building, bathroom and kitchen facilities are shared by as few as three and as many as sixteen residents. All dorm units have showers, but no bathtubs. Towels and washcloths are not provided.

In most dorm units, 30–40% of the residents are international (i.e., non-German) students. This is higher than the overall percentage of foreign students enrolled in the university (12%). Many international students are in Freiburg for only a year or two and find it more challenging than continuing students to find housing on the private rental market.

The dorms are subsidized by the government, and rents are therefore substantially lower than for comparable units on the private market. Rent prices, which range from €232 to €320, are based on two factors: room dimensions and the date of construction or renovation. Internet access is included as part of the rental contract for all units.

Please be aware that you will be signing a room lease with the *Studentenwerk* (dorm administration) for an entire year. Your lease will run from September 1, 2014, to August 31, 2015. Consequently, you are liable for twelve full months of rent.

You are not allowed to sublet or share your dorm room at any time during the program, and you do not have the option of moving out of the dorms and into private (rental) housing. Moving out of the assigned dorm room is only possible under exceptional circumstances. Once you are in Freiburg, please do not hesitate to contact the Resident Director or Associate Director to discuss any problems with your housing situation.

If you wish to leave Freiburg soon after the summer semester ends in July, AYF can arrange on your behalf to sublet your room to a student enrolled in the university's International Summer Language Course held in August. In late May or early June 2014, you will receive a letter from the *Studentenwerk* asking whether you intend to keep your room through August or would prefer to sublet it. There will be an AYF group meeting at that time to explain the subletting procedures to you.

The first rent payment is scheduled to be withdrawn on or shortly after September 15, 2014. In addition, a €21 processing fee is levied by the *Studentenwerk* when you move in. In addition to paying rent, dorm residents are required to make a €400 security deposit. The security deposit is due at the end of September and will be collected in a separate withdrawal from your Volksbank account. This will be followed a few days later by the withdrawal of your rent payment for the month of October. In other words, there will be three separate withdrawals within about two and a half weeks totaling anywhere from €885 to €1,061 for expenses related to your dorm room rental. Please keep this in mind when planning how and when to transfer funds into your Volksbank Freiburg account. When you move out, there will be another €10 fee for processing the return of your security deposit, minus any possible deductions for damages.

When you move in, you should immediately check the contents and condition of your room against the inventory list you will find on your desk. If there are any discrepancies or damages not listed, report them at once to the *Hausmeister* responsible for your dorm. If you do not report missing furniture or other types of damage, you may be held responsible for them when you vacate the room, and charges may be deducted from your security deposit. Be sure to save the inventory list until you move out; there is a fine for losing it.

If you lock yourself out of your room, you should contact your *Hausmeister* during his office hours. (You will receive information on your *Hausmeister's* – rather limited – office hours after your arrival in Freiburg.) At other times, you can call an emergency service to be let in. The charge for the emergency service is €50. There is no lock-out service after midnight. If you should lose or damage your room key, and a cylinder lock has to be replaced, the charge can be substantial (up to approximately €100 to €120). For a lost or damaged key without a lock change, the charge is approximately €30 to €50. In any case, it is wise to have room numbers and phone numbers of other AYF students or of your newly minted German friends at your disposal in the event that you do lock yourself out of your room on a weekend or in the middle of the night.

All dorms are wired for Internet access, and plug-and-play Internet service is included in your rent. You may be able to sign up for additional services, if you wish, such as phone service on a landline using VoIP. Freiburg dorms are served by two different providers: Hotzone offers service in the Studentensiedlung and Vauban (www.hotzone.de), and MyWire offers service in Händelstraße, Oikos, and Stühlinger (www.my-wire.de). Internet access is available as a “plug-and-play” service. Please simply follow the instructions for registering that appear automatically after connecting your laptop with a network (also known as a patch or Ethernet) cable. Using a router cable can result in damage to the Internet wall jack.

A summary of housing options is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You can take a virtual tour of the dorms as part of the more detailed PowerPoint presentation introducing AYF and the various housing options. In each case, please note that the ground floor (*Erdgeschoss*) equals 0 in German parlance while it is called 1st floor in U.S. usage, the German floor 1 is the 2nd floor in the U.S., etc.

The Studentenwerk and some of the individual dorms have websites as well.

Studentenwerk: www.swfr.de

Studentensiedlung: www.studentensiedlung.de

Studentendorf Vauban: <http://www.vauban.de> (about events and resources in the Vauban, albeit not specifically about the Studentendorf Vauban)

Wohnheim Händelstraße: www.haendel.uni-freiburg.de

Student Life

Apart from the many performance possibilities at the Musikhochschule, the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität has twelve student orchestras and bands and twelve student choral groups; all in all, there are some 50 musical groups, as well as student theater groups. Auditions for these are held at the beginning of each semester. Contact information is available through the *Studium Generale*, which also organizes a wide range of lectures, workshops, and mini courses: www.studiumgenerale.uni-freiburg.de

If you are a musician but do not wish to bring your own instrument for the year, you will be able to rent more common instruments at a reasonable rate (a trumpet for about €20 per month, for

example). Other instruments such as a French horn with a double register may not be available for rent at all, since they are just too expensive to insure.

AYF students may also participate in a broad range of intramural men's and women's sports activities (*Allgemeiner Hochschulsport*) jointly organized each semester by the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität and Pädagogische Hochschule. These include acrobatics, aerobic dancing, basketball, boxing, canoeing, cycling, fencing, field hockey, ultimate Frisbee, gymnastics, handball, horseback riding, ice hockey, martial arts, mountain climbing, ping-pong, rugby, soccer, softball, sailing, skiing, swimming, tennis, trampoline, triathlon training, volleyball, etc. Participation in some of these sports requires payment of an additional fee. A listing of all the activities is available online at www.hochschulsport.uni-freiburg.de

The entry fees for municipal indoor swimming pools are very modest, particularly for students. The Westbad is located near the Studentensiedlung, and the Faulerbad is just around the corner from the AYF Program Center. In addition, Freiburg has numerous sports clubs devoted to track and field, soccer, bicycle racing, and so on. The city is also home to an American football team (www.sacristans.com), a baseball (www.freiburg-knights.de), and a softball team (omnibus.uni-freiburg.de/~pw19/index.html), and an ice hockey team (www.vikings-freiburg.de) that are eager to recruit new players.

Shopping

Because of a strong tradition of German labor laws written to prevent abuse of workers, German stores have rather limited hours in comparison with those in the U.S. But opening hours are slowly changing in Germany.

Generally, stores in Baden-Württemberg close by 8 p.m. on workdays (Monday through Saturday). Outside the city center or in smaller towns, many stores close even earlier, typically at 6 p.m. on weekdays and at 1 or 2 p.m. on Saturdays. However, some grocery stores now stay open until 10 p.m. or even until midnight (Mo-Sat).

Some local and small shops even close during the lunch hour for one to two hours. With the exception of restaurants and a few pharmacies, bakeries, and flower shops, all businesses are closed on Sunday. Gas stations are open late in the evenings and during weekends, however, and larger ones are open 24/7 and carry a wide assortment of groceries and snacks. Predictably, the prices there are higher than in regular grocery stores. There is a grocery store in the basement of the Freiburg Hauptbahnhof where you can buy items from 5 a.m. to midnight each day, 7 days a week. A drugstore on the train station's main level is also open 7 days a week.

When shopping for groceries, it is advisable to follow the German practice of taking along your own shopping bag, since practically all stores charge for bags. At grocery stores, you are often expected to weigh fruit and vegetables yourself and always expected to bag your own groceries at the checkout. You will receive information on grocery stores near the dorms during orientation.

Eating Out

The *Mensa* (university cafeteria) offers inexpensive and substantial meals throughout the week except on Sundays. To pay for the meals, you can use the debit UniCard or the MensaCard available at the Studentenwerk for a moderate deposit. You can choose between *Schneller Teller* (a dish that can be served on a single plate or in a bowl, e.g., Ravioli), *Tagesgericht* (consisting of one main component and 2 – 3 sides), *Menü* (main course with soup and dessert), *Salattablett* (a large plate

you can fill yourself at the salad bar), snacks, and French fries. A (small) food-court style section has been added recently. It boasts, among others, a serving station where food is freshly prepared in a wok and an organic food line. Visit the Studentenwerk homepage at www.swfr.de and click on the link "Essen & Trinken."

Restaurants in the downtown area range from relatively inexpensive to frankly overpriced. In Germany, restaurants post their menus outside, next to the front door, so it's easy to check out prices before you enter.

Meeting Germans

Getting out into the German community will require a concerted effort on your part. This is particularly pronounced during the first few weeks and months, when so much of your time is spent with other AYF program participants. But there are many opportunities available, and the effort pays off.

To begin with, talk to your roommates! They can be your best source of daily conversational German practice, in addition to personal connections within the city. The AYF orientation tutors and mentors are also wonderful contacts to have and ask questions in the beginning of your time in Freiburg.

Participating in the tandem partner program (where you are paired up with a German student who wants to improve their English) is another way to meet someone who understands your situation and can help you improve your German. Signup lists will be available during orientation.

In university classes, sign up for a Referat group with Germans. Working with other Americans may be comfortable, but working with native speakers will not only help your presentation, but is also a great way to make new friends. Once classes at the university begin, so do intramural sports and other activities, including the international student club excursions, which is another good way to get out into a new realm of student life. Information about the club is online on the Studentenwerk web site; see "Veranstaltungen" in the menu at the top of www.swfr.de.

Transportation

Public Transportation

Like most German cities, Freiburg has an excellent system of streetcars and buses. For the month of September, the AYF program will purchase a *RegioKarte* on your behalf, which allows you to use all public transportation, including local trains, not just in Freiburg but in the surrounding region.

After September, you can purchase a semester ticket valid from October to March (April to September for the second semester) for a very modest €89. You will receive additional information about the public transportation system upon arrival.

Bicycles

Traveling by bike is quick and easy and is often the most practical means of transportation. Keep in mind, though, that bicycles sometimes need repairs and are also prone to theft. Used bikes (*Gebrauchträder*) are best bought from other students (see notices hung on bulletin boards, the classifieds, or the AYF flea market). There are also a number of used bike stores in Freiburg, and

some will actually make an agreement with you to buy your bike back at a set price when you leave. You should check the bikes' condition carefully before buying. With some luck, you may be able to bargain down the price a bit. Make sure that you get a receipt and a *Fahrradpass* for any bike you buy. This bike pass is proof that the bike was not stolen. If you do not have a bike pass, you may have problems when you try to sell your bike at the end of the year. Bike helmets are highly recommended, but they are quite expensive in Germany, so if you plan to bike, bring your helmet from home.

It is German law that all bikes have working dynamo- or battery-powered front and back lights. Also, bicyclists are held responsible for obeying the same traffic laws as motorists. You can be ticketed for running red lights, not stopping at stop signs, going the wrong way on one-way streets, riding without lights at night, etc., or taken to court in case of an accident. Get acquainted with German traffic laws before riding your bike on public streets. Right-of-way and passing, for example, are handled differently than in the U.S.! See this website to learn more about traffic rules in Germany: www.adfc.de.

Trains

For national train transportation, any student under 26 years of age can buy a *BahnCard*, which entitles you to a 25% or 50% discount on all regular fares, depending on the type of *BahnCard* you purchase. The *BahnCard* is valid for one year and is automatically renewed for a second year unless cancelled on time. You may want to visit the Internet homepage of the Deutsche Bahn (German Rail) for conditions, routes, times, connections, and special offers: www.bahn.de. Generally, a *BahnCard* pays for itself quickly and is a good investment; many former AYF participants have noted that a *BahnCard 50* worked out quite well for them. However, the *BahnCard 25* can be combined with other reduced prices (*Sparpreise*); if you are the kind of person who likes to finalize plans early (which will give you the broadest selection of *Sparpreistickets*), then you might be better off with the *BahnCard 25* in combination with *Sparpreise*. In either case, you can start saving with it right after your arrival in Germany. If you wish to purchase a *BahnCard* upon arrival in Frankfurt, be sure to have a passport-sized picture and the address of the AYF Program Center handy. It is best not to use the dorm address as your mailing address (too much mail gets lost there!), but have the *BahnCard* sent to you c/o Academic Year in Freiburg / Albert-Ludwigs-Universität / Poststelle / Platz der Universität 3 / 79098 Freiburg. You can also purchase the *BahnCard* online and print out a temporary *BahnCard* before setting foot on German soil. As with all online purchases from the DB, however, it is important to make sure to bring the exact same credit card along that was used to pay for it. The credit card used in the transaction is the required form of ID on board the train.

Begin exploring your transportation options well before you leave for Germany. A Eurail pass is not necessarily the cheapest mode of transportation, but it may be the most convenient and suitable for your plans. Remember that you cannot buy a Eurail pass in Freiburg. Instead, Eurail passes are available in the U.S. and at certain major German train stations, such as Frankfurt. Travel must be initiated within six months of purchase.

Other transportation options include the InterRail, the equivalent of Eurail for German students. The rules for eligibility require that students have been resident in Germany for six months, so for you this will become an option in March, in time for the semester break. The AYF Associate Director will be able to provide you with an official proof of residency required to purchase the InterRail pass.

In general, the InterRail ticket works just like the Eurail Pass. However, much like the RegioKarte, it is very important to pay attention to what type of train you are boarding. To give just a few examples, in France and Italy there are trains that require reservations, regardless of what class you are sitting in. Riding on night trains and high-speed trains will also require a reservation as well as an extra charge. The InterRail Ticket also provides a discount for certain ferries, such as between Greece and Italy (assuming both countries are included in the Pass you have purchased).

Ride sharing

You can also look into *Mitfahrgelegenheit*, ride-sharing. This is quite popular and inexpensive, and it is generally reliable when booked through a ride-sharing agency. A number of websites also provide listings – just do a search for “Mitfahrgelegenheit” or consult <http://www.blablacar.de> or <http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de/>. How safe it is depends, of course, on the skill and experience of the driver offering the ride – and no one can give any guarantees.

Long-Distance Bus Service

For many decades, the Deutsche Bahn enjoyed a legally guaranteed, virtual monopoly on long-distance passenger travel. Wherever DB offered service, no-one was granted a license to operate a long-distance bus line. This is now changing. Several companies have started offering long-distance bus service. Especially when booked early, prices can be very competitive. A one-way ticket from Freiburg to Munich can be had for €15, if booked well in advance. For more information, see: <http://meinfernbus.de/>, <http://www.deinbus.de/>, or specialized search engines such as <http://www.busliniensuche.de/>.

European Budget Airlines

A number of budget airlines offer affordable flights through many European destinations. For more distant destinations, a flight can be a meaningful option as well. There are a number of meta-search engines for air travel, but some of the cheaper airlines do not participate in these searches such as Ryan Air which operates out of Baden-Baden. Possible starting places for locating cheap flights are: www.billiger-fliegen.de, www.billigfluege.de, www.expedia.de/p/billigfluege, or www.airline-direct.de/flug.html. Among the most relevant company websites are www.ryanair.com/de, www.germanwings.com, and www.airberlin.com. As always, make sure to read the fine print to avoid surprise charges.

Safety While Traveling

You are strongly discouraged from traveling to areas both in the country and in the surrounding areas that the U.S. State Department has designated as hazardous or for which it has issued an advisory against traveling there. Make sure to check the U.S. State Department website for Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheets for any country you are considering traveling to or through before you make any travel plans (<http://travel.state.gov/index.html>). Or, if you do not have access to the Internet, check with the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest you. Major notices will be forwarded by AYF program and/or study abroad office staff. In addition, make sure to leave your travel itinerary with the AYF Program Center and with your family or a friend in the U.S. in case someone needs to contact you in an emergency as well as for your own protection. Travel forms are available at the AYF Program Center, or you can submit your information online through the travel form on the AYF homepage: <http://www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de/travelform.html>.

Illegal Drugs

Existing legislation in most foreign countries, including Germany, regarding the use or possession of marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal drugs imposes very severe penalties. Neither the U.S.

Embassy nor the AYF Program Center is able to exercise effective pressure to moderate these penalties. Association with illegal drug users or possessors is considered the same as personal use or possession by authorities in some countries. Students are responsible for obeying all laws dealing with the use or possession of illegal drugs, and liability rests entirely with each student. The program reserves the power to require a student to withdraw without refund if there is any evidence of drug use by that student.

Note that German law is NOT substantially different than American law regarding the personal use, possession, and distribution of marijuana.

Insurance

Medical Insurance

By German law, all students are required to carry German health insurance while they are enrolled as regular students at a German university. AYF students are required to enroll through Dr. Walter GmbH in an *Educare24 (L)* insurance for the month of September and in *Techniker Krankenkasse* (TK) starting October 2014. You will therefore generally have two different insurance policies as an AYF participant, one for September and another one for the remainder of the academic year. If you intend to travel to Germany prior to September 1, you may wish to obtain a separate short-term travel medical insurance for your trip. Students should contact their study abroad office for important additional insurance information.)

Dr. Walter's *Educare24 (L)* policy is a so-called *private Krankenversicherung*. The coverage is not as broad as the coverage the TK can offer (see below). Most importantly, pre-existing conditions are not covered. Acute care, however, is covered. Coverage is not provided for certain kinds of dental work, pregnancy-related care, or mental health issues. Please note also that coverage of the treatment of injuries related to alcohol use may be refused altogether. A summary description of the coverage is available at <http://www.educare24.de/leistungen/ueberblick.html>.

TK is a so-called *gesetzliche Krankenkasse*, a statutory health insurance, because it is for people who are required by German law to have this type of insurance. Most of the necessary steps will have been taken care of by the time you arrive, and you will have full TK coverage as of October 1, 2014. Payment for both *Educare24* and TK coverage will be arranged by AYF staff on your behalf.

The TK medical insurance policy covers all doctor office visits, hospital care, prescriptions, x-rays, and dental care. Eyeglasses (lenses and frames) and birth control are not covered. Dental crown work and prescriptions involve co-payment which may be waived or reduced by the insurance upon application depending on personal financial need. Whenever you see a dentist, be sure to ask whether all or only part of the bill will be paid by your insurance before authorizing treatment. Co-pays are required for hospital stays (€10 per day for up to 28 days maximum per year, an amount that may be reduced for students) and for transportation by ambulance (€10 per medical transport). After your arrival in Freiburg, you will receive a TK insurance card (*Versichertenkarte*) to present at the doctor's office any time you have an appointment. You will receive more detailed information about TK coverage during orientation.

Your TK medical insurance policy is valid in all European Union countries, but not in Eastern European countries nor in the United States. For travels to countries that are not covered by your TK medical insurance policy, you will be enrolled in a supplementary health insurance policy offered by Envivas, a TK partner specializing in travel health insurances. This policy will cover you

during short-term travel to the U.S. as well as to other destinations. You will receive more information about this insurance during orientation.

All UW-Madison students will be enrolled in CISI Insurance. This insurance provides medical coverage during your program, evacuation, and emergency services. You can read more about this policy in your MyStudyAbroad portal. You are enrolled in the CISI as the German insurance does not cover emergency evacuation services.

Information on Freiburg doctors, including feedback and recommendations from past AYFers, is available at the AYF Program Center. The AYF staff will also assist you if you want to find a doctor or make an appointment.

It should be noted as well that it is not permitted to import medication to Germany from outside the European Union. Accordingly, customs returns or destroys packages found to contain medications to the sender which makes shipping medications by mail an unreliable option. **If you are managing a chronic illness, it would be highly advisable to bring at least three months worth of medication with you in person (if possible with a formal doctor's note on letterhead that the medication is for your use and no one else; naturally, you would be well advised to adhere to this doctor's order and not share medication with another person to whom it has not been prescribed).** This will give you enough time to establish a working relationship with a Freiburg physician and obtain German prescriptions. Most medications will be available on the German market. In the end, your medication costs could very well be lower than in the U.S. due to the generous TK coverage, but you will need some time to set it all up to your satisfaction. **Please do not hesitate to contact the AYF Associate Director in advance for assistance in researching the availability of specific medications in Germany,** and to discuss any related questions.

Liability Insurance

AYF students are required to carry personal liability insurance. All necessary arrangements for enrollment in a group policy will have been made prior to your arrival in Germany. This insurance will save you substantial expenses if you should cause an accident, damage another person's property inadvertently, etc. In the past, students who did not have liability insurance and were involved in accidents that resulted in personal injury or property damage had to cover all the costs out of their own pocket. Please note: Items that you borrow from someone else, regardless of whether the lender is a private person or a business, are not covered by this personal liability insurance.

Computers

You would be well advised to bring along a laptop computer, if at all possible. This will make writing papers easier and the Internet more accessible. For those without laptops, there is free access to e-mail and the Internet at the AYF Program Center and through computer labs at both the university library and the university computing center (*Rechenzentrum*), where you can also print documents. However, the labs are often crowded, hours are limited, only a few printers are available, and there are usually long lines in front of the e-mail stations.

If you intend to bring your own computer, make sure that it can run on 230V/50Hz. Almost all newer laptops will be able to meet the power requirement. Nonetheless, so-called "step-down transformers" may be a good investment as well. For appliances up to 500 watts, such transformers run around €25 and actually regulate the voltage down from 220/240 to 110/120. In the past, AYF students' laptops have failed on occasion because the converters built into the laptops were not

able to handle power spikes as efficiently as a transformer. Basically, using a transformer offers an added level of protection.

Printers are very sensitive when used with a converter. If you bring a printer from home, make sure it has an integrated converter. Past AYF participants have suggested that students should pool their resources in groups of three or four, buy one printer in Freiburg, and share it. (Last year's students will offer items for sale in an informal flea market. During the summer, AYF staff will contact you via e-mail with specific information about the flea market.) When it comes to software, Microsoft Word is used widely and Open Office is also commonly used.

It is highly advisable to carry your laptop along with you on the plane (in your carry-on luggage) when coming to Freiburg. PCs shipped from the U.S have often been held up by German customs authorities, who have then required students to pay a stiff customs duty to "import" the equipment, particularly if it is brand new equipment. Moreover, equipment shipped by mail has sometimes arrived in damaged condition. (See "Packages" below.)

As part of the enrollment process at Universität Freiburg, you will be assigned a user ID and a password for the university server, with which you can log on at the university computer labs. This Freiburg user ID and password will be very important for course registration in some departments and for accessing course assignments posted online. In general, German university facilities have less generous opening hours than U.S. counterparts. Internet cafés and hotspots are available almost everywhere. During orientation, you will be provided with information on accessing the university's wireless network, which operates as a highly secure virtual private network (VPN), as well as the AYF office's wireless network. If you would like to get a head start on preparing your laptop for use in the Uni Freiburg network, you will find instructions online at <https://wiki.uni-freiburg.de/rz/doku.php?id=tag:wlan>.

Communication

Internet Access

All dorms are wired for Internet access, and Internet service is included in your rent. You may be able to sign up for additional services, if you wish, such as phone service on a landline using VoIP. Freiburg dorms are served by two different providers: Hotzone offers service in the Studenten-siedlung and Vauban (www.hotzone.de), and MyWire offers service in Händelstraße, Oikos, and Stühlinger (www.my-wire.de). Internet access is available as a "plug-and-play" service. Please simply follow the instructions for registering that appear automatically after connecting your laptop with a network (also known as a patch or Ethernet) cable. Using a router cable can result in damage to the Internet wall jack. The connection speed is generally sufficient for using Skype.

Telephone

To call Freiburg from the U.S., first dial 011 (the international code). Then dial 49, which is the code for Germany, and then 761, the code for Freiburg.

To telephone the U.S. from Germany, first dial 00 (the international code). Then dial 1, which is the code for the U.S. Then dial the area code and the regular number.

Like the U.S., Germany uses daylight savings time in the spring and summer, but the dates on which clocks are adjusted differ: daylight savings time begins one week earlier and ends two weeks later.

With the exception of these three weeks, Freiburg's time is 7 hours later than the Central Standard Time zone and 6 hours later than EST. At 5 p.m. in Iowa or Wisconsin and at 6 p.m. in Michigan, it is midnight in Germany. Make sure your friends and family are aware of the time difference so they call at reasonable hours.

It can be cheaper for a call to originate in the States rather than in Germany, but many German calling cards and access codes are quite competitive since the German telecommunications industry, long a monopoly enterprise, has been opened for competition among providers about a decade ago. Rates vary considerably, depending on time of day or destination of phone calls, and on the provider chosen. Visit the following Internet sites for price comparisons: www.teltarif.de, www.billiger-telefonieren.de. If you are planning to get your own landline phone (*Festnetz*), you might want to check out the webpage of the Deutsche Telekom at www.telekom.de.

Cellular Phones

AYF participants are required to adhere to the following policy on cellular phones: first, to ensure easy communication and accessibility in case of an emergency, all AYF participants are required to have a cell phone at their disposal at all times during their study abroad experience. AYF participants may either bring a cell phone from the U.S. that works in Germany with a German SIM card or purchase a cell phone during their first week in Freiburg. Participants must keep the AYF Program Center staff informed of their cell phone number and any subsequent changes of their number.

Second, AYF participants opting to purchase a German cell phone are required to purchase a so-called "pre-paid" cell phone. You are not permitted, in other words, to purchase cell phones with 2-year contracts; while standard in Germany, 2-year contracts are not suitable for one year of study abroad. Nowadays, there are very reasonable pre-paid options available with moderate text messaging costs. And if you factor in the complications of being stuck with a 2-year contract you cannot fully utilize and have to buy out in the end, then the pre-paid options become very competitive. AYF staff will assist you during orientation in setting up your cell phone, and some pre-paid cell phones will be available through the AYF e-mail flea market.

You are most welcome to bring your U.S. hardware, i.e., the cell phone you normally use, provided it is compatible with a German SIM card. Your cell phone needs to be an unbranded/unlocked cell phone. Depending on your U.S. plan, it may be possible to maintain your U.S. cell phone contract but put it into an "extended absence" mode; for a fee, you may thus be able to retain your U.S. cell phone number – while using your hardware in Germany with a German SIM card. Check with your U.S. provider on the availability of such an option.

Letters

Airmail between the U.S. and Germany generally takes 4-7 days, while surface mail takes four to six weeks. German postal regulations forbid the mailing of cash in letters. It is recommended that checks be sent via registered airmail.

Packages

You may wish to have all packages from the U.S. sent to you c/o the AYF Program Center mailing address which is through the central Freiburg University mail drop (*Poststelle*). The advantage is that such packages can be delivered during regular office hours, Monday through Friday. If the German postal service attempts to deliver a package to you at your dorm room and you are not home, you will receive a notice directing you to pick up your package at the post office, which may

be less conveniently located than the AYF Program Center or the *Uni Poststelle*. The administration at the dorms does not accept packages on behalf of students.

If you opt to receive your packages at the AYF Program Center, please use the following mailing address and always include your name and the tag “AYF” or “Academic Year in Freiburg”. This may seem obvious, but occasionally parcels have arrived at the AYF office without a student’s name. And if parcels are sent without AYF mentioned in the address, the carrier may not be permitted to deliver it to our address, especially if a package contains some kind of merchandise. For mailings sent through courier services such as DHL, FedEx, UPS you will need to use an address that includes a street name and house number. This may also occasionally be required by online merchants! Please note the differing ZIP codes and addresses for mailings sent via U.S.Mail and by courier service.

<u>Mailing Address (for regular U.S. Mail):</u> [Your Name] Academic Year in Freiburg Albert-Ludwigs-Universität D- <u>79085</u> Freiburg Germany	<u>Mailing Address (for courier services):</u> [Your Name] Academic Year in Freiburg Albert-Ludwigs-Universität - Poststelle Universitätsstraße 3 D- <u>79098</u> Freiburg / Germany
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Customs

Please read the following information about customs regulations and charges carefully and share it with your family and friends. Paying close attention to this information can potentially save you a significant amount of money and needless hassle.

Parcels mailed from the U.S. to Germany require a customs declaration form, and what gets written on this form often has serious consequences for the terms and conditions of delivery in Germany. The customs declaration form needs to list the contents, the dollar value of the contents, and whether the contents are a gift or merchandise. It is advisable always to declare some (low-balled) dollar value; packages without any declared value often get flagged by customs and need to be collected in person on the opposite side of town. In general, if the content of a package is worth more than €45, the content of the package exceeding €45 is subject to a German customs duty (*Zoll*) of 19% (7% for books) – even if the package has been declared a gift. Please note: items are only considered to be merchandise when you are purchasing them from someone. If a family member buys you a new sweater and sends it to you, it is no longer considered merchandise by customs. It should be declared a gift on the customs declaration form. But a sub-contractor, the German Logistics Services or GLS, now advances customs payment to the government, processes delivery of the package, and then – days or even weeks later – invoices you to recover the money that it has advanced. For this service, GLS charges an additional administrative fee of up to €17 per package. Even a very modest customs charge of, say, €5 therefore automatically turns into an invoice of €22. Some – avoidable – customs invoices received by AYF students in recent years were as high as €55 or, in one case, almost €70.

There are no absolutely sure-fire ways to prevent having to pay customs. In some cases, you simply will have to pay the customs or import duty invoice. But the good news is that (a) your family members and friends can minimize the chance of having your package subjected to customs, and (b) if you have received a customs invoice that seems out of line, you can apply for a waiver to have the charges rescinded.

To minimize customs charges, it is essential to keep the following in mind when preparing a shipment from the U.S. to Germany:

Parcels declared “Gifts” are only allowed to have a maximum value of €45 per package. Therefore, if the total value of a parcel is higher than €45, it can be more economical to send two packages if they are shipped by boat. For airmail, customs is usually cheaper than postage on two airmail packages; obviously, this ultimately depends on the exact nature and value of the shipment. To determine the dollar equivalent of €45, check a currency converter (e.g., www.xe.com/ucc) or ask at a local bank.

Parcels declared “Merchandise” are usually subject to customs, even if their value is under €45. This tends to be true especially for DVDs and other entertainment electronics. Packages with content of minor value have sometimes not been assessed at all. An example would be a CD bought at an online auction for 4 dollars.

Two additional categories of shipment are free of customs charges for full-time study abroad students, provided the goods are exclusively for the personal use of the student, i.e., not intended for resale. Exempt goods are defined as “items of daily use” (household items, bedding, clothing, etc.) or “back-to-school” items (calculators, books, etc.). In either case, your family or friends should note the category on the customs form and then list the specific items.

The “back-to-school” exemption notwithstanding, you should be careful about laptop computers and expensive electronics in general. You would be much wiser to carry a computer with you on the plane (in your carry-on) rather than submit it to the vagaries of shipping and potential customs charges.

It is also helpful to note on the customs form if an item is used rather than new, for example “used clothing,” “used books,” while giving a low-ball estimate of its resale value (for instance on a flea market), not its replacement value.

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 Freiburg starting in late October and early November.

It is also very helpful to write especially clearly on customs declaration forms lest a shipment of a \$4 box of cheerios turns into an unidentified object “worth” \$400 in the eyes of a dutiful customs officer.

Even after you have received a customs invoice from GLS, all is not lost if certain conditions are met. A process is in place through which you can appeal a customs assessment. The AYF Associate Director will be glad to assist you in filing an appeal. But in order to appeal, you must have a letter from the sender that includes a packing list and confirms that the goods fall into one of the exempt categories. Of course such a letter can be supplied after the fact, but it is simplest to ask your family and friends to include it with the shipment itself as a routine matter. The following sample letter can be readily adapted for specific shipments. It is perfectly fine to write such a letter to customs in English.

<p><i>Sample Letter</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Sender's full name and address</i></p> <p><i>Addressee's full name and address</i></p> <p><i>Date</i></p> <p><i>Re: Customs assessment for this package</i></p> <p><i>Dear Madam or Sir:</i></p> <p>This is to certify that I am sending the following items to my son/daughter/friend <addressee's name>:</p> <p><include short packing list></p> <p><i>These items are</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>* gifts for the exclusive personal use of my son/daughter/friend <name> and the total value of gifts is \$ <dollar; best not to list more than 60 per mailing>; and/or</i> <i>* items needed for his/her daily use ("Ausstattung," clothing etc.) or for studying ("Schulmaterial," books etc.)</i> <p><i>When determining the customs due for this mailing, please be advised that my son/daughter/friend is currently an enrolled student at the University of Freiburg and, to the best of my knowledge, should be able to receive items needed for his/her daily use and for studying without having to pay customs charges.</i></p> <p><i>Sincerely yours,</i></p> <p><i><signature of sender></i></p>	<p><i>A "filled in" Sample Letter</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Jane Doe</i> <i>Main Street 11</i> <i>Big Town, CA 95404</i> <i>USA</i></p> <p><i>Robbie Doe</i> <i>c/o Academic Year in Freiburg</i> <i>Albert-Ludwigs-Universität</i> <i>D-79085 Freiburg</i> <i>Germany</i></p> <p><i>November 20, 2014</i></p> <p><i>Re: Customs assessment for this package</i></p> <p><i>Dear Madam or Sir:</i></p> <p><i>This is to certify that I am sending the following items to my son Robbie:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>* cookies (gift)</i> <i>* CD (gift)</i> <i>* winter coat – used</i> <i>* hiking boots – used</i> <i>* dictionary</i> <p><i>These items are</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>* gifts for the exclusive personal use of my son Robbie, and the total value of gifts is \$ 16; and</i> <i>* items needed for his daily use ("Ausstattung," clothing etc.) and for studying ("Schulmaterial," books etc.)</i> <p><i>When determining the customs due for this mailing, please be advised that my son is currently an enrolled student at the University of Freiburg and, to the best of my knowledge, should be able to receive items needed for his daily use and for studying without having to pay customs charges.</i></p> <p><i>Sincerely yours,</i></p> <p><i>Jane Doe</i></p>
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A word of advice about insuring packages sent by regular mail: 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. The labels are read by many eyes along the way. For packages that do not contain anything particularly valuable, it is best to avoid using insurance or, if desired, to take out relatively low insurance. Customs officers, too, will use the "insured amount" listed on the customs declaration form as one benchmark for making a customs assessment. A package insured for 200 dollars will very likely

generate a customs charge, unless the content clearly qualifies as *Umzugsgut*, items of daily use, or supplies for study, as discussed above.

Packages sent with express mail service or by courier, such as FedEx, UPS or DHL, are in a separate category regarding customs. These carriers have to clear customs before delivering packages to the recipient. Consequently, these mailings arrive in Freiburg with some delay (up to two weeks) and the carrier has often already advanced the customs charges. You will be required to repay any customs charges immediately upon delivery plus the carrier's fees. FedEx, for example, charges EUR 13 for each package where customs had been advanced.

This is not cheap by any means, but UPS has been known to charge an astonishing EUR 32 in fees in addition to customs charges. We recommend, therefore, not using UPS for any shipment that might generate a customs charge (especially electronics). You should also know that German customs regulations stipulate that the cost of transportation (the mailing or shipping cost) is deemed part of the base cost used to calculate customs or import duty. A more expensive express shipment will therefore generate a higher customs charge than a package with the same content sent by regular U.S. mail. Sometimes it is possible to avoid customs by providing additional documentation to a courier service. For all such courier and delivery services it holds true that there is no possibility of negotiating a customs waiver after the fact for which, in principle, you are eligible.

When ordering goods through the Internet, you should be aware that if you have things sent directly from a company outside the European Union, these goods are "merchandise" and therefore subject to customs. And even though the product information on the web may state that your desired book or CD is available within two days, it will not reach Freiburg that quickly. Delays are the rule rather than the exception.

Preparing to Leave Freiburg

During the *Sommersemester*, AYF will hold a group meeting at which all the steps you need to carry out to prepare for departure will be explained. All necessary forms will be filled out jointly during that meeting.

The AYF Program Center will take care of the following things on your behalf:

- Working together with the Studentenwerk to sublet your dorm room for August;
- Terminating your enrollment at the university;
- Closing out your medical and liability insurance policy;
- Notifying the local police authorities of your departure, as required by law.

In addition, you will be responsible for the following:

- **Completing all coursework before leaving Freiburg and by August 7, 2015**, at the latest; any Incompletes and extensions beyond this date must be approved in writing by the Resident Director before you leave Freiburg. Should you find yourself unable to adhere to the aforementioned deadlines and end up with an INC (Incomplete) on your AYF transcript, you must get an extension in writing from your Resident Director to submit your work or your grade(s) to AYF at a later time. If you do not obtain an extension, all INCs on the AYF transcript will be converted to an "F" at your home university at the end of the semester

that follows your return to the United States, whatever the exact date may be at your home institution;

- Turning in copies of all your *Hausarbeiten* to the AYF Program Center prior to your departure, and in no case later than August 7, 2015;
- Collecting all your course *Scheine* from your university instructors, making sure they are signed and stamped, and turning them in at the AYF Program Center;
- In case your instructor has not yet graded your work, asking him/her to send your *Schein* to the AYF Program Center via *Hauspost* (campus mail, free of charge);
- Returning all checked-out books to the university library, then getting your *Antrag auf Exmatrikulation* stamped at the library information desk, and turning the form in to the AYF Program Center;
- At least two weeks prior to your departure, making an appointment with the *Hausmeister* at your dorm to do a check-out inventory (*Zimmerabnahme*) of your room (please note: check out is not possible on Saturdays or Sundays).
- Making arrangements for closing your bank account and transferring any balance to your U.S. account after bills have been settled.

***The AYF staff wishes you a successful
study abroad year and a safe journey home!***

Student Testimonials

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.

Preparations Before Leaving

- Make sure that you have enough Euros on you to pay for a taxi. By the time you arrive in Freiburg you'll probably be so exhausted that you will happily pay to sink into the seats of a taxi instead of figuring out the streetcar system and having to carry your suitcases for another block. No matter how light you pack – by the time you get to Freiburg, you'll wish you had packed lighter.
- Use power converters - not *just* adapters! Adapters won't necessarily change the electric current, and your stuff may get fried. It's probably easier to find adapters and converters in the U.S. than in Germany.
- Don't leave sports equipment (hiking/climbing things, softball/baseball gloves, tennis rackets, etc.) at home thinking you won't find the time or the people to do it with! When your new German best friend wants to go climbing with you, it can be expensive to ship your equipment over.
- A bathrobe might be nice in some dorms – it's not a big necessity, but when it's cold in the winter, it's not so bad to run from the shower to your room when you have a comfy robe.
- Although one German grammar book is helpful, there are a variety of basic language books available at any of the bookstores, so bringing all of your past textbooks is unnecessary.
- Pack light! Don't bring more than you can carry yourself, particularly when you are traveling alone. Keep in mind that you will not only be dragging your luggage along flat sidewalks, but also up and down stairs and escalators, and heaving it onto trains.
- If you use a face wash with the active ingredient benzyl peroxide to keep your skin clear – such as Neutrogena Clear Pore Cleanser/Mask or something like it – bring a supply with you! I could never find it in Germany, not even in a pharmacy. And international shipping can get pretty expensive quickly.
- Because the internet in the Stusie is kind of fickle, and it's sometimes difficult to use Skype, I recommend the following method. Before you leave for Germany, download and teach your parents and/or friends how to use Skype. Load money onto an account and give them your dorm room phone number. It's only 2 cents a minute to call from the U.S. to a land line in Germany using Skype. Have them call your dorm room from Skype instead of calling your own house using Skype because chances are the connection / internet speed is better on their end and makes for a clearer call.
- Bring a calling card. Keep it around just for emergencies, or for whenever you really need to get a hold of someone. It works from your dorm room phone and is very nice to have when you need it.

- If you have a lot of electronics that you want to bring with you, bring an American surge protector or power strip. THEN when you arrive, buy a high-capacity converter that you plug your American power strip into and then you have plenty of American outlets. It's cheaper and nicer than having to deal with a million tiny converters.
- It's a good idea to back up your information from your computer before you go / bring an external HD. You never know what could happen to your computer while you are over here, and it's hard to find an English version of Windows if you need to reformat.
- You can't always find your favorite deodorant/soap/shampoo here. I recommend bringing a few extra just to start off with until you find something that you like here.
- It is possible to suspend your American cell phone contract for a set amount of months while you're abroad. You can do this instead of canceling it so that you don't lose your number, nor do you have to pay for a full contract that you're not going to use. Call your cell phone company. They do it for military personnel going abroad, too.
- When you call your banks to tell them that you are going abroad and approve out-of-country transactions, give your parents the authority to access your banking accounts on your behalf. It's much easier to e-mail your parents and have them call your bank for you if necessary instead of you paying a lot / e-mailing / trying to call your bank through Skype.
- Have a clear idea of what credits you hope to accomplish (especially for majors besides German) before you come here, as it makes the course equivalency process easier. Talk to your advisors before you leave.
- Think about your next year's living arrangements before you leave. It can be hard to negotiate / deal with leases abroad.

Travel and Arrival Information

- Don't go home during breaks! Instead, buy a rail pass and go everywhere, even if it's on your own.
- Freiburg has tons of things to see and do. Make sure you plan to spend a great deal of time in Freiburg.
- Be sure to check out Vienna.
- Buy a BahnCard (discounted train pass) as soon as possible – it may seem like a lot of money, but it will save you a lot of money, especially if you can start getting the discounts right away. If you're flying into Frankfurt, get it at the train station even before your train ride to Freiburg – that way it starts paying for itself on your very first day!
- Hamburg was one of the coolest places I went, and I would recommend it alongside Berlin and Munich. Also, Oktoberfest was overrated. If you go, spend the night.

- Before you buy a Eurail pass, check out the various other options in Germany and the countries you want to visit; for instance, an InterRail pass can be bought in Europe and is much cheaper.
- I would strongly advise anyone purchasing an InterRail Pass to read carefully the “fine print” as to what the ticket does and does not cover. In my own personal experience, ticket checkers (especially on night trains) tried to charge me an additional 10, 15, or even 20 Euro while citing vague reasons or regulations on which they refused to elaborate. I paid one of these “fees” once, and after that I would fold my arms and simply refuse to open my wallet until someone explained – either in English or German – specifically what the charges were for. At the same time, it is important not to be paranoid that every ticket checker is out to rob you; they may not have encountered an InterRail Ticket before, or may simply be misinformed about the details themselves.
- Check out Orbitz and Travelocity for intercontinental flights and RyanAir, EasyJet, fly.de, and many other websites for cheaper flights within Europe.
- BahnCard 50 is well worth it if you choose to travel. Even if you are traveling outside of Germany, it gives you the option to get to the Frankfurt Airport 50% cheaper, as flights out of there tend to be less expensive and more abundant.

Academic Program

- Professors are more than willing to meet with students after class or during office hours, so take advantage of this time! Discuss what is expected by the professor and by AYF and what you want to achieve by taking the class. Do this as soon as possible! The longer you wait, the more daunting your term papers will seem.
- Seriously ... get started on your Hausarbeiten (final papers) as soon as possible! You do not have too much other schoolwork to do during the semester, so treat parts of each Hausarbeit as assignments throughout the semester. You will be so much happier during the semester break if you're already done with your papers. (Although if you go home for winter break, it may be helpful to do some research at home.)
- Don't be afraid to take SLI and AYF courses. I learned a lot from them and sometimes enjoyed them more.

Living Abroad in Freiburg

- There's a 24-hour vending machine that has pretty much everything a convenience store would have near the Händelstraße dorm. If you're hungry at 3 a.m. and short on food, it's just a short walk to Tante Emma.
- Climb to the top of the Schauinsland, Schönberg, and Schlossberg mountains and enjoy the amazing views. If you're in Freiburg for New Year's Eve, spend it on Schlossberg – you'll be able to see the fireworks all over the city.
- Take advantage of the Schwarzwald being your backyard – go hiking, or rent one of the mountain huts and spend a night or weekend there with your newfound German, American, and international friends – it's a great way to get to know everyone.

- Swim, go down the slide, and hang out at Strandbad.
- Get a bike (from the AYF flea market, city flea markets, or bike shops in the area)! It's a lot of fun to ride around town and in the hills around Freiburg – even all the way to France – and although the public transportation is great, it's nice to be able to get around its schedule.
- Watch German TV – American shows dubbed into German *and* actual German shows. It'll help your comprehension a lot, and you'll be even more in tune with the popular culture.
- Posters around town display many concert opportunities, as well as special events at clubs and discos. One of my favorite musicians came to the area, and I only knew about it because I happened to look at a poster on a door on some side street. Keep your eyes open.
- Roller blades aren't useful downtown because of all the cobblestones, but there are plenty of paths around the Stusie Seepark and Stühlinger.
- My German roommate introduced me to the different phone providers, and I was therefore able to choose one for only 6 cents per minute, which made it cheaper for me to call my family and friends. But be aware of the amount of time you are on the phone. Keep a phone log with your roommates and write down every call, or else your phone bill becomes a nightmare to figure out and pay!
- Some recommended restaurants: Brennessel has a low-priced and copious spaghetti special in the late afternoon and early evening; Euphrat or Otantik have great falafel or kebab sandwiches; Mekong has fast, hot, and cheap Chinese food; Firenze has the cheapest pizza; Laubfrosch has a better quality pizza that is not cheap but worth it; Martinsbräu offers tasty but rather pricey German food; the Wiehre Bahnhof has expensive but delicious German food; and the very elegant Greiffenegg-Schlössle offers a *Studentenmenü* and a great view of the Münster and the city (need to show student ID). The Markthalle is also a good option for a variety of foods and could be compared to a mall food court, only a little tastier. Mexican food is available at El Paso, El Gallo, and Enchilada – but don't expect it to be up to par with the Mexican food you're used to. In Germany, all restaurants are listed in the phone book under "Gaststätten."
- Don't wear sweats, especially to class – students don't dress as casually in Germany.
- Always be able to take yourself home from the bar. I know you've heard it a million times, but – be responsible about drinking.

Meeting People

- The other AYFers are good people, great friends, and important parts of your support network, but you will definitely regret it if you don't make enough German friends. Spending so much time with other program participants from the very first day can make it difficult to break away, but it's worth it! At the same time don't completely shun all other Americans – try to figure out a healthy balance.
- Talk to your roommates! They can be your best source of daily conversational German practice, in addition to personal connections within the city. The AYF orientation tutors and mentors are also wonderful contacts to have and ask questions in the beginning of your time in Freiburg.

- Get a tandem partner (someone who wants to practice their English and will also speak German with you) as soon as possible – you could become good friends, and they can introduce you to more of their friends.
- Read the e-mails from the Studentenwerk and the International Club; go on their excursions and respond to interesting opportunities.
- *Always* try to speak German. A lot of people will try to practice their English with you – don't let them [more than is necessary to be nice, anyway]! You're there to learn German.
- Join the softball team – the Freiburg Warthogs – even if you're not exactly professional. They're really friendly and laid-back and they let everyone play. It's a great way to meet Germans and to see a little more of Germany, since they travel for tournaments. If softball really isn't your thing, check out ultimate Frisbee or any other sport you're interested in.
- My German roommate invited me to sing along in the choir for a Christmas play. I was able to meet so many people outside of the American bubble, from little kids to grandparents! If you're even slightly interested in something that comes up, go for it!
- In university classes, sign up for a *Referat* (presentation) group with Germans. Working with other Americans may be comfortable, but working with native speakers will help your presentation and is a great way to make new friends.
- Some of the dorms will have activities – soccer, hiking, wine tasting, and more. Some are geared toward international students, and some are for all residents.
- We organized a weekly dinner group – every week someone different cooked a dinner for the whole group. This was really cheap for everyone and a great time to use my speaking skills and catch up with friends. It was also reassuring to know I'd only have to cook once every 10-12 weeks!