

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Study Abroad



IGSP, MARBURG, GERMANY
SPRING 2019

Program Guide

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CONGRATULATIONS on your acceptance by UW-Eau Claire to the Intensive German Studies Program (IGSP) at Philipps-Universität Marburg. Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

- Building upon foreign language skills***
- Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field***
- Increasing understanding of different cultures***
- Enhancing personal development***
- Developing different perspectives on US culture***
- Gaining self-confidence and independence***
- Learning skills for the future international job market***

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

Although this guide contains information specific to the Marburg IGSP program, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Use it together with the general Study Abroad Handbook. The Handbook has information that is valid for all study abroad programs. You will receive additional information through the required study abroad orientations, your peer advisor, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common objectives of student travelers include advancement in a future profession, desire to gain fluency in a second language, wish to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up; how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in German culture, yet you are going with a group of UW-Eau Claire students, how can you ensure that you do not spend too much time with other U.S Americans?

The information in this guide was current at the time of printing, though changes may occur at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

Welcome to the Intensive German Studies Program (IGSP) offered through Philipps-Universität Marburg. In Marburg, you will take German language and culture classes with international students from a wide variety of countries. Because these courses are for German language learners, there are no German students in the classes.

Courses are taught in German by instructors from Marburg. You will also take one literature course taught specifically for UW-Eau Claire and UW- Stevens Point students. You will live in student residence halls and walk, bike, or take public transportation to IGSP classes. You can check out the official website here:

<https://www.uni-marburg.de/de>

In addition to academics, the program includes two-day trips in the area, and one weekend excursion to Berlin.

The Location

Located in the heart of Germany, Marburg an der Lahn is a small and lively medieval town with a long university tradition. It is a romantic and picturesque old city with its castle, cafés, pubs, boutiques, movie theatres, museums, and theatres all within walking distance.

The Language Institute

The Philipps-Universität in Marburg was founded in 1527. The IGSP is offered through the university language institute and is staffed by professionals who specialize in teaching German language and culture to students from all over the world. You will complete a short placement test before you leave for Germany and will be individually placed in courses in Marburg that match your abilities. There are

five possible placement levels (Stufen 1-4, DHS- Stufe).

IGSP Academic Calendar

This spring semester program is designed to fit the US academic calendar. You need to arrive at the Frankfurt am Main (FRA) airport on January 3, 2019, between 7 am and 11 am.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Depart US: | Jan 2, 2019 |
| Arrive Germany: | Jan 3 |
| Orientation: | Jan 4-7 |
| Language Course 1: | Jan 8-Feb 19 |
| Break: | Feb 20-Feb 25 |
| Language Course 2: | Feb 26-April 16 |
| Berlin Field Trip | May 4-May 7 |
| Literature Course: | The first possible start date is April 23, the last possible end date is May 29. The exact dates of the literature course will be announced in March 2019; the class will most likely meet two times/week. |
| Final Housing Move Out Date | May 29 or May 31. (Note that May 30 is a public holiday in Germany; it will not be possible to check out of your housing on that day.) |
| Departure from Frankfurt * | Because the end date for the literature course is not yet known you should book your flight home for late afternoon/evening of May 29 or later . Please see the "Housing Check-Out" paragraph |

| |
|--|
| for important info on booking your flight If the course finishes earlier, you are free to depart earlier, so look for a ticket with a low change fee! |
|--|

Housing Check-Out:

You must officially check out with a Housing employee. Check-out is generally from 9:30-10:00 am. If you plan to fly home from Frankfurt on May 29, and the literature course is still meeting, you will need to check-out, finish the course, take the train to Frankfurt and arrive at the airport with the required amount of time before an international flight (usually 2-3 hours). **Unless you have a late afternoon/early evening flight, you will not be able to check out, finish the course and catch a plane, in which case, you should plan to fly out on May 30 or later.**

If you do not check out on May 29, you will need to wait until May 31, as **May 30 is a holiday!**

*Departure from Frankfurt: May 29 or later

Please make your own transportation arrangements to/lodging arrangements in Frankfurt at the end of the program.

Depending on your flight times, it may be necessary to go to Frankfurt, stay overnight, and fly out the next day. Any lodging costs you incur after you leave the dorm are your own.

Public Holidays

In addition to the academic calendar above, the following days are public holidays in Germany, and no classes will be held. You also cannot check out of the dorms.

German Academic Calendar

This program is specifically for international students learning German and **does not run on the German academic calendar**. You will arrive at the end of the German "Wintersemester"; German students will be taking exams. Then they will be on break from early February through early April, when "Sommersemester" begins.

ACADEMICS

There is additional information on program eligibility, as well as academic topics such as registration, class attendance, credits and course load, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-Eau Claire library while abroad in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Orientation/Placement Exam

In addition to the required CIE orientation, there will be three additional required one-hour sessions during the fall semester organized by the German faculty just for your group, to help you get prepared for your study abroad experience. The faculty mentor for Spring 2019 is Dr. Martina Lindseth, lindsemu@uwec.edu.

These REQUIRED sessions will be held on these three Mondays, at 6:15 pm:

September 24,
October 22
December 3

During the December session, you will take a placement test that will determine which class level (Stufe) you are placed in for the first language course in Marburg.

Program Structure

The program is divided into three distinct academic sections: two are focused on language and one on literature.

There are five possible levels (Stufen) of language courses. **Please note that even Stufe 1 assumes the equivalent of about 400 previous hours of language study, it is NOT a beginning level.** In the past, most UW-Eau Claire students have placed into either Stufe 1 or 2.

Classes will be quite small, usually between 10 and 16 people. Your classmates will be other international students who are at the same proficiency level. Some will be traditional college age; others will be much older. In many cases, German will be your only common language.

Block 1: The first language course will meet for approximately six weeks. Language classes generally meet from 9 am to 1 pm, Monday-Friday. During this block, you will also take a three-credit German Culture course that will meet three afternoons each week. Unless you have tested into the highest language level (Stufen 5/6), you will have a week of vacation at the end of this first block.

Block 2: During the second block, you take another comprehensive language course for a second period of six weeks, then have another short vacation. Each of these first two courses culminates in four graded examinations that test listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Block 3: During the third section of the program, you will have a German literature course taught just for UW students. You will be divided up based on your Stufe levels, so that you are in classes appropriate for your German

language skills. You will read different German literature pieces, discuss them in class, take notes on a lecture, and write short essays on them. This course will only meet two-three days a week for a couple of hours at a time, but you will have more homework to do outside of class. Class meeting times may vary; you will receive a schedule shortly before the beginning of the class because your placement will depend on your performance on the last Stufe examination.

You will also be expected to complete a series of tasks that are designed to facilitate and guide your contact with the host culture and to write short reflective papers about your experiences. Details will be explained during one of the sessions with your UWEC German faculty mentor during the fall semester.

Classes and Credits

Upon successful completion of the program, students who have taken German 201 receive credit for:

German 202 (3 credits)
German 313 (3 credits)
German 314 (3 credits)
German 340 (3 credits)
German UD elective-language courses (3 credits)

Students who have taken German 202 receive credit for:

German 313*
German 314*
German 340
German UD elective-language courses (3 credits)
German UD elective-language courses (3 credits)

For a small additional fee, you also have the option of taking a 3 credit German culture course, taught in English, that transfers back as

a geography lower division elective, GE 3 and Foreign Culture or LE-K2 & R2, and counts as the additional course that all German Liberal Arts & Education majors are required to take outside of the major.

You are strongly encouraged to meet with your German faculty adviser (if declared German minors or majors) or a faculty member in the German section to discuss your degree plan, course equivalencies and potential substitutions. The 15-18 credits that you earn by successfully completing the program can count as required courses and/or electives in fulfillment of a German minor or major. Specifics will depend on individual degree plans and will be determined in pre-program advising sessions with German faculty.

***Students who have already taken 313 and/or 314 on campus** will earn credit for a second 313 or 314 course. Credit in those courses may be earned twice.

Credits and Course Load

Upon successful completion of the program, you will earn 15-18 credits. The program also fulfills the UW-Eau Claire foreign culture requirement for students in catalog years 2015-2016 or earlier.

Students in catalog years beginning 2016-2017 and going forward can fulfill one I1 experience through study abroad, upon completion of the I1 assignments. See the Study Abroad Handbook for details.

Students have occasionally wanted to take an independent study in Germany in addition to their program classes. Independent study credits are not included in the program cost or registration. You must register for them separately from the program and will incur additional per-credit and overload charges.

Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved by the UW-Eau Claire Center for International Education.

Service Learning

Past students have used both the Tandem Language program and community volunteering in Marburg to fulfill part or all of their UW-Eau Claire service-learning requirement. See the "Getting Involved" section of this guide for details.

If you want to fulfill service-learning in Marburg, you will complete the service-learning forms online once you have your volunteer assignment. To do so, go to the following website:

<http://www.uwec.edu/SL/students/index.htm>

Cheryl Lochner-Wright, the UWEC Marburg coordinator, is happy to act as your UWEC mentor for service-learning. If you volunteer through Freiwilligenagentur, someone there will act as the community partner.

Academic System in Germany

In Marburg you will be taking classes THROUGH the Phillips Universität Marburg, but you won't actually be considered a traditional "student" there. You will be part of a program called the "Studienkolleg" which provides German language courses for non-native German speakers who want to improve their German or who eventually want to study at a German university.

Classroom Expectations

Although you are going to a program for international students, cultural differences are not confined to life outside of the classroom. You are preparing to learn for a semester not only in a different language, but within a completely different university system,

constructed on very different cultural assumptions.

Your courses are taught by German instructors educated within the German academic system. Within this system, **teachers are expected to present ideas and information; it is the students' responsibility to make sense of the information.** You need to ask questions in class, as well as to learn independently and often work together outside of class to understand or expand upon the materials presented in class.

This is a very different approach to education than that of the U.S. system, where the teacher presents the exact information, in an orderly fashion, that students "need" to know in order to pass an exam. Your approach to this new situation is up to you!

Classes at the Studienkolleg

Because this is an intensive language program, you will be in class for 4-5 hours/day. Studienkolleg classes are more casual than regular German university courses, because they are conversation rather than lecture-based. Instead of calling your teacher "professor" or "Herr/Frau ..." you will be on a first-name basis with them. On the first day of class, they will discuss whether you all want to call one another "du" or "Sie." The teachers are very helpful, and some are immigrants themselves, so they know what it's like to learn German as a second language.

The classes are very interactive! It will NOT be a lecture where the teacher speaks the entire time while you take notes. You will work in groups a lot of the time to discuss themes and practice dialogue.

Homework and Exams

There is relatively little homework, given the length of time you are in class, but it is expected that you will do it: you will be asked to speak/read aloud in every single class, based on the previous night's homework.

You will receive multiple worksheets most nights and are expected to have them finished before class the next day because you will go over them together in class. Sometimes you will have to write short, 100-word essays and hand them in.

The exams for the language courses are divided into four parts: Speaking (Mündliche Prüfung), Listening (Hörübung), Writing (Aufsatz), and Reading (Lesung.) You will complete the listening, writing, and reading in one class period. Then you will come in on the appointed day to go over the written exam and to make an appointment for the speaking exam. **Please note: even if you do not pass the written exam, you must register for and take the speaking exam.**

When you come in for the speaking exam, you will have 15 minutes to prepare based on the prompt you are given (you may bring a dictionary). Then, you will meet with two teachers, and they will ask you questions that you have to answer while they grade you on how well you use your German language skills. Immediately when you are done you will receive your grade.

The exam for the Literature Course is on the readings and the notes you took in class. You may also have a final essay to write, depending on your course level.

Grades

Your language course grades will be based solely on participation and your exams. All

three parts of the written exam, including the listening and reading comprehension, include sections where your ability to formulate structurally accurate German is being evaluated. It is important to come to class and practice your German every chance you have, even if some of the material might seem to be review. The literature course grades will be based on your attendance, essays/homework assignments, and final test.

The system used to calculate the UW-Eau Claire grades that appear on your transcript, taking into account the various levels of the German courses, will be explained to you during the fall semester meetings with your UW-Eau Claire German faculty mentor.

For students who take the optional German culture course, that course grade is transferred back using the regular University of Marburg equivalency scale:

| Point | Percentage | Grade |
|---------|----------------|-------|
| Marburg | Marburg | UWC |
| 15 | 98-100 | A |
| 14 | 95-97.9 | A |
| 13 | 90-94.9 | A- |
| 12 | 88-89.9 | B+ |
| 11 | 83-87.9 | B |
| 10 | 80-82.9 | B- |
| 9 | 78-79.9 | C+ |
| 8 | 74-77.9 | C |
| 7 | 65-73.9 | C- |
| 6 | 58-64.9 | D |
| 5 to 0 | 57.9 and below | F |

UW- Eau Claire students abroad are not allowed to take classes pass/fail, and that

grades from Germany are figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.

Transcripts

See additional information on transcripts in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Learning a Language

Some past students have expressed that they felt they had already covered much of the content of their language course in previous courses.

Remember that language learning spirals-- you may have been introduced to the dative case in high school, for example, but you will revisit it over and over again, and be expected to use it in more sophisticated ways as you gain command of the language.

MONEY MATTERS

Information about how payments are made, when they are due, the UW-Eau Claire withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cost Estimate

You can find the most current Cost Estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [Cost Estimates](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term and the IGSP program. The cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to Marburg, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

Please note that the University of Marburg has alerted us to some potential changes in the immigration system that may require all international students to carry a specific German government insurance, in addition to

CISI. **If this change is implemented, the program cost will increase by the cost of the German insurance, estimated at €500.** The CIE will send you an update once this is determined.

Costs are estimated based on the exchange rate when the estimate was created and may change at any time.

Currency Exchange

The currency of Germany is the Euro. One Euro has 100 cents. There are 8 Euro coins, ranging in amount from 1 cent to 2 Euros and have different designs in the various countries that use the Euro. Bills range from €5 to €500 and have a standard design across countries.

The exchange rate as of June 7, 2018 was 1 € = \$ 1.14039 US. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>.

Money Needed on Arrival

When you arrive in Marburg, you will need to pay a €250 room deposit, a €5 meal card deposit, a €100 for your electronic residence permit, and €10 for the biometric photo required for the residence permit.

Personal Travel

This varies greatly from student to student. It depends on your budget and your priorities. Students who want to be involved in their host community generally spend less time (and money) traveling. Others travel every weekend with correspondingly high costs and fewer close connections in their new home.

Past students who responded to our survey reported spending between \$500 and \$3,000 on personal travel. Those spending the higher amount noted that they traveled during almost all breaks and many weekends.

Money Abroad

You can find extensive information on how to bring money abroad, as well as financial aid and scholarships for study abroad, in your Study Abroad Handbook.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Before You Go

In addition to the general health precautions listed in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should consult your physician to see if you should receive any other vaccinations, depending upon the type of travel you plan to do.

Medical Facilities in Marburg

If you need medical attention in Marburg, the International Office there can help you make arrangements.

Counseling Services

There are English-speaking psychologists in Marburg, and students can contact them directly or ask for assistance at the International Office.

<http://www.studentenwerk-marburg.de/en/counselling/pa.html>

Services for Students with Disabilities

Uni Marburg's [Servicestelle für behinderte Studierende \(SBS\)](#) can provide assistance and accommodations to exchange students.

It is also important to look at the level of accessibility in Germany. To find more information on this topic, please see the [State Department Country Specific Information page](#).

If you have questions or concerns about this, please contact your UWEC study abroad coordinator.

Emergency Contacts

General emergency procedures are described in the Study Abroad Handbook, and the IGSP staff are available if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card at orientation; be sure to keep it in your wallet at all times. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

Safety in Germany

Safety in and around Marburg will be discussed during orientation in Germany.

Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Germany is included in the State Department Consular Information Sheet found at this link:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/germany.html>

If you are traveling independent of the program and are the victim of a crime or if you are arrested abroad, get in touch with the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy. U.S. consular offices will do what they can to help U.S. citizens in serious legal, medical, or financial difficulties, such as direct you to a reliable doctor or clinic, help you contact family, or re-issue your passport.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Visa

A visa is official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. If you are a U.S. citizen, **you do not**

need a visa to enter Germany. Once in Marburg, you will need to apply for an Aufenthaltserlaubnis (electronic residence permit) for the length of the program. The International Office in Marburg will go with you to get the required photo taken (this must be done in Germany), help you complete the required forms, and make an appointment to go as a group to city hall and the immigration office to complete the process. You will bring your passport and the required fee (100 Euro in 2018). All other documents will be provided in Marburg.

PACKING TIPS

There is general packing information in the Study Abroad Handbook, and you will receive a packing list at orientation. In addition, you should know the following about Germany.

Climate/Clothing

The weather in Marburg is unpredictable. It usually doesn't snow much, but cold rain is common for much of the winter. And it may get quite warm as early as mid-April.

What to Pack

You will receive a suggested packing during the pre-departure orientation program.

Appliances

The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volts. U.S. appliances such as hair dryers and razors run on 110 volts. If you plan to bring these appliances, you will need to buy **both a converter and a plug adapter**. You may also choose to buy the appliances abroad. Travel hair dryers and razors, which are relatively inexpensive, usually are convertible and come with a plug adapter.

GETTING TO GERMANY

Travel Arrangements to Marburg

It is your responsibility to make your travel arrangements to the Frankfurt am Main (FRA) airport* on the specified arrival date and time. See the "Academic Calendar" section for details. A representative of the IGSP will meet the group at an arranged time and place at the Frankfurt airport to assist you in making train connections to Marburg.

If you arrive on any other day, or after the specified time on the arrival day, you will need to make your own way to Marburg. Instructions will be provided.

There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the online Study Abroad Handbook.

*Note that there is another, much smaller, Frankfurt airport, Frankfurt-Hahn, which is actually three hours away from Frankfurt. **There is no pick-up from this airport.** Be sure you arrive at Frankfurt am Main (FRA)!

If Your Luggage Does Not Arrive

Request that it be delivered to the International Office at Uni Marburg: Philipps-Universität Marburg, International Office, Deutschhausstr. 11+13, 35037 Marburg.

Orientation

You will have orientation to Marburg and the program when you first arrive in Marburg. Orientation is also on-going in the form of the local/regional trips you take.

HOUSING

You will live in a student residence. Housing for German universities is generally managed by a private Studentenwerk. Studentenwerk Marburg has more than 2,000 rooms in larger and smaller residences, scattered throughout Marburg. You will not find out exactly where you will be living until shortly before the program begins; however, you can look at the various locations on the Studentenwerk website:

<http://www.studentenwerk-marburg.de/wohnen.html>. Students in 2019 lived in several different dorms, all within a few blocks of each other.

Remember that German students will be on break for much of the time you are there. Therefore, most of the students in the residences during the program will be international students.

Location

Most dorms are a 15+ minute bus ride to the city and various academic buildings. Be aware that you will be riding the bus a lot!

Room Types

In most residences, you will have a small, single room equipped with a sink. Take note: each floor has common bathrooms, showers, and a kitchen, **all shared with both sexes**. But don't worry, the shower is a separate room with a locking door, and the toilets are individual private stalls.

What's Provided/What to Bring or Buy

Sheets, blankets, and a pillow are provided, but you should bring your own towels and alarm clock. You will turn in your bedding every few weeks and receive a clean set in return.

When you check in with the dorm housekeeper, s/he will give you a key to your room, a mailbox key, and a key for one of the cupboards in the kitchen. Once you've moved in, ask someone which refrigerator compartment (Fach) you should use.

Internet

Not all dormitories have Internet access!

This is equally true for German students and for you. See the "Communications" section of this guide for details.

Laundry

Most dormitories have their own (limited) coin-operated laundry facilities. A past student suggests, *"Make sure to hang on to those annoying little 10 and 20 cent coins for laundry!"*

Most people do not use the dryers; instead, they tend to hang their clothes on the community drying racks in the dorm bathrooms. You may want to buy your own rack after you arrive.

Checking Out

Remember that you must officially check out with an employee of the dorm, and this cannot be done on a holiday or on the weekend. After checking out of the dorm, you have to take the "Laufzettel" to the Studentenwerk to get your room deposit back.

Given the distance from Marburg to Frankfurt, unless you have an early evening flight, you will not be able to check out of your residence hall in time to catch a train to Frankfurt and fly out that same day. You will need to make your own arrangements for accommodation in Frankfurt after checking out of the dorm. **Any lodging costs you incur after you leave the dorm are your own.**

FOOD

University Cafeterias

There are no meal plans at Uni Marburg. There are two university cafeterias (Mensen). Mensa meals are fairly inexpensive (€2 – 4). You will need a U-key to pay for meals at the Mensen. The red key is available at the cafeteria, where you have to pay a €5 security deposit to get it. The key is electronically loaded with money which is deducted by computer-based cash registers every time you buy a meal.

Student Residence Kitchens

The Mensen are open very limited hours, so you also do quite a bit of cooking in your dorm. You will be assigned a locking cupboard where you may store your food and dishes. Some kitchens are equipped with everything (pots, pans, utensils, mugs, etc.), and you pay a small fee to share them with your floormates. Others have little to nothing, in which case you'll need to buy some basic dishes.

It is not uncommon for people sharing a kitchen to do some grocery shopping and cooking together. Cooking your own meals is a great way to save money and also a great opportunity to meet and make friends with the students that live on your floor. You may want to bring a few American recipes (with metric conversions!) to make for new friends.

Where to Buy Food

The major supermarkets in Marburg are:
Rewe: this is a big and reasonably priced supermarket not far from the university.

Lidl: this one's located near Rudolphsplatz, and it's the dollar store of grocery stores, if eating cheap is your thing.

Pennymarkt: also, a very cheap food store. This is one is also very near the train station,

conveniently, but on the street heading away from the city center.

Edeka: just off Bahnhofstraße (the street that leads from the train station). It's kind of hidden but look down side streets **to the right** as you're walking away the station and you'll find it. Edeka is one of the better stores to find *Bio* (organic) products.

Don't forget your REUSABLE BAGS! You can purchase a reusable bag from the store, otherwise they will charge you for a paper bag.

In addition, most drink receptacles have "Pfand," or return deposits. This means most bottles and cans can be returned for cash. If the bottle has the "Pfand" logo, don't recycle them. Bring them back to the grocery store, put them in the Pfand machine, and cash in your receipt at the register!

Restaurants

You'll also want to eat out, at least occasionally. Things to keep in mind:

Water: Germans love their sparkling water. When you go to a restaurant and ask for water, that's what you'll get, and **it isn't free**. If you want tap water, ask for "Leitungswasser."

Silverware: Fork in the left hand, knife in the right, and try to not put them down between bites! You'll get used to it.

Special Diets: If you're vegetarian, or have diet restrictions, German restaurants have vegetarian and sometimes gluten free dishes and will often accommodate you by making a dish without meat or with a wheat alternative.

When you're done: put your fork and knife parallel across your plate to signal the **waiter**/waitress that you're done eating.

Etiquette: Europeans enjoy sitting for long periods of time to enjoy a meal or drink, and the staff in their restaurants typically won't be in a rush to get you out (unless they're closing for the night).

Getting the bill: You'll need to ask for your check ("Zahlen, bitte") and you normally pay the waiter directly at your table. People often split the bill, so be able to tell the waiter what you ordered.

Tips: in Austria and Germany, waiters and waitresses don't depend on tips to complete their salary, but it's still important! It should reflect the quality of the service. A good general rule is to round up to the nearest euro or two with good service, and maybe a few more if the service was excellent. **For example:** if you have a bill of 11,30€ just give the waitress 12€ and say "Stimmt so," which means you don't want change.

BUT: if you have a bill of say, 15,80€ and want to give 17€ but only have a 20€ note, give the waiter/waitress 20€ and say "Drei zurück, bitte." They will then keep the 1,20€ tip.

GETTING INVOLVED

There are many opportunities to get involved in Marburg. Advance planning is key! Here are some suggestions from Uni Marburg and from past students.

Tandem Language Partners

A "tandem" partner is a German student who is looking for a German/English language exchange. Because German students will be on semester break during your first few months in Marburg, it is **strongly recommended that you try to connect with someone in advance**. To do so, visit this website:

http://www.uni-marburg.de/sprachenzentrum/sprachen-tandem/index.html-en?set_language=en

Volunteer

Uni Marburg has begun to work with a community volunteer organization, Freiwilligen Agentur-Marburg. This is a relatively new opportunity, and you need to do the legwork if you are interested in getting involved. It is a great way to get involved with Germans in the community. One UWEC student volunteered through the organization in 2017. You can find more information here:

<http://www.freiwilligenagentur-marburg.de/>

Posted Announcements

If you look around while in Marburg, there are often advertisements posted in the university buildings by German students who are looking for someone that they can practice their English with, and the English speaker can practice their German. They can arrange meetings around their own schedule as they please.

Church Services

For those who are interested, past students have also attended church services and had a lot of success getting involved with activities through people they met there.

University & Community Organizations

A few other examples of activities that past students have been involved with include the university band, intramural lacrosse, and dance lessons at a local dance school. University students are constantly standing outside of the Mensa handing out flyers for upcoming events. You just have to keep your eyes open and not be afraid to try new things.

Going Out

Note that the culture surrounding going to a bar is very different in Germany than it is in the U.S. The primary purpose is to talk with friends and meet new people. You may have a drink while you are there, non-alcoholic is always an option, but the focus is not on the drinking. It is rare for a German student to be drunk in a public venue.

COMMUNICATION

General information on platforms for keeping in touch with people at home is in the Study Abroad Handbook, along with information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address.

Time Difference

Germany is seven hours ahead of Eau Claire. For example, when it is 1:00pm on a Thursday in Eau Claire, it is 8:00pm on Thursday in Marburg.

Internet

Only about half of the dorms provide Internet access. **Plan on NOT having it and be pleasantly surprised if you do.** If your dorm is connected, you will have to pay a fee for service. If it is not, it is very common that students on your floor will have a Wi-Fi router. Past students recommend that you ask around your floor or post a sign in the lobby, asking if anyone has Internet. If you find someone, you just pay them 5-10 Euro each month to share their internet with you. Otherwise, the academic buildings all have Wi-Fi you can use for free.

E-mail

There are computer labs in the library and in various other departments. You must use your Uni Marburg account to log in.

You won't have a land-line phone in your dorm, but you can still make traditional phone calls from a cell phone (Handy), international calling center, or pay phone. (Note that U.S. cell phones will generally not work in Europe. If you wish to have one, you will need to buy one upon arrival.)

Snail-mail

International airmail takes 7-10 days to cross the Atlantic in either direction.

Telephone Information

From the US to Germany: First dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you dial 49, the country code for Germany, then 6421, the city code for Marburg, and the rest of the number.

From Germany to the U.S.: To "phone home" while you are abroad using a calling card or calling collect, you must dial an access code to get an American operator.

Cell Phones

Past students recommend buying an inexpensive, pay-as-you-go cell phone once in Marburg to use to text friends in country. There are plans that receive free incoming texts/calls, and within Germany rates are cheap, but calling or texting internationally is expensive. The recommendation is to use an app like TextPlus or WhatsApp. See details in the Study Abroad Handbook. Another alternative is to buy prepaid SIM cards for your smart phone.

CULTURAL NOTES

Greetings & Good-byes

Germans are used to greeting and taking leave of one another. When you meet someone on the street or at a meeting, first you shake hands, greet the person and make polite

inquiry about the person's everyday life. (Did you have a good trip to school? Did your test go well yesterday?) Then you can get on to business.

When you take leave, you again shake hands and say a few words of departure. (Have a good evening. Have a good trip home. My regards to your parents.)

Punctuality

This is a stereotype, but Germans, in general, are punctual. Most Germans will arrive on time or a little early to an appointment or date. If you have an appointment for a certain time, be there a few minutes early. If you are late, even by a few minutes, apologize and give the reason for your tardiness. Being late shows a lack of respect for the other person.

Tell It Like It Is

Some German customs may take you some time to get used to. One common trait is the tendency to be quite direct. (This tendency also exists in parts of the U.S., although not in the Midwest.) Try not to feel insulted, or that you're not liked, if someone tells you something you wouldn't have mentioned to them. To many Germans, it is just an observation to say that you look like you've gotten fatter, or that they think you're lazy because you don't spend enough time on homework.

Crossing the Street

Learn to wait at the crosswalk until the green man on the traffic light appears, regardless of traffic. Otherwise, you may find yourself in a situation where you have to test your German with the police.

Store Hours

Unlike in the U.S., retail employees in Germany are entitled to working hours similar to everyone else. Some stores and banks are

closed from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. for lunch. They may also close as early as 4:00 or 6:00 p.m. Some offices close at noon every day except one or two days a week. Stores and offices are usually closed Saturday afternoons and Sundays. This requires you to plan ahead for your shopping.

Speaking German

You are going to Germany to practice your German, but many Germans will see an opportunity to practice their English. As one former student observed, "People would constantly speak broken English with us, even when we would consistently attempt German." Here's your turn to "tell it like it is." Explain that you've come to Germany for four months to learn German, and you would appreciate it if they would help by speaking German to you. Most people will be happy to do so. It is also a fact that you will be taking classes with English-speakers. Speaking German with them, too, is key to successful language learning.

TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

See additional travel information in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Field trips

Uni Marburg includes 3 fieldtrips in the program costs. Past destinations have included a weekend trip to Berlin, and daytrips to Cologne, Eisenach or Weimar.

Train Travel in Germany

Check out the Deutsche Bahn web site at https://www.bahn.de/p/view/bahncard/index.shtml?d_bkanal_007=L01_S01_D001_KIN0004_top-navi-bahncard_LZ01 for the best train deals within Germany.

If you plan to travel within Germany, you can buy a "Junior Bahncard." It gives you 50% off the ticket price in Germany and is valid for a year from date of purchase. The "Schoenes Wochenende" ticket is another money-saving option. Details on the web site!

Bus Travel in Germany

Long distance, or coach, buses, are not as quick and accessible as the train but do tend to be less expensive. Details here:

<https://www.flixbus.com/>

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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WEB RESOURCES: MARBURG

| <i>Marburg</i> | <i>Germany</i> | <i>Travel</i> |
|---|--|---|
| University of Marburg Homepage http://www.uni-marburg.de/ | Map of Germany http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/germany.html | Bus schedule for Frankfurt-Hahn Airport Bus http://omnibusse.bohr.de/routes/wtc/routes.php?action=detail&route_id=16&language=de |
| MARBURG: Studienkolleg Mittelhessen http://www.uni-marburg.de/studienkolleg/ | About Germany http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany | Deutsche Bahn AG http://www.bahn.de/home/index.shtml |
| University of Marburg E-mail Access https://home.students.uni-marburg.de/imp/login.php | German Culture http://www.medknowledge.de/germany/general/german_culture.htm | Travel by Train http://www.bahn.com/i/view/GBR/en/prices/germany/germanrailpass.shtml |
| Studentenwerk Marburg http://www.studentenwerk-marburg.de/ | German Language http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language | Jugendherberge Deutschland: Hostels http://www.jugendherberge.de/ |
| Marburg Homepage http://www.marburg.de/ | Newspapers http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/germany.htm | |
| Marburg Bus Routes & Schedules http://www.stadtwerke-marburg.de/de/78597 | Political Resources: Germany http://www.politicalresources.net/germany.htm | |
| | | |

PAST PARTICIPANT VOICES

WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN BEFORE THEY LEFT

- More about the layout of the city.
- Nothing—the program helps you take care of the important, confusing things.

THE BEST PART OF THEIR EXPERIENCE MID-WAY THROUGH

- Meeting new people from around the world—Europe, the Middle East, Africa, even others from the United States!
 - The city.
- Everything! Time to travel in Europe.

BIGGEST ADJUSTMENTS THEY HAD TO MAKE

- The school schedule. Classes are at the same time every day and earlier than what I usually take back home.
 - Learning public transportation.
- Very unreliable Wi-Fi—but not a big deal.

HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP

"A time of my life that I will never forget! I achieved everything I set out for and then some. The opportunity to not only visit, but live in, an entirely different culture is one of the most valuable experiences one can ever have. I cannot say how glad I am that I studied abroad." Kanu S.

"I would sum up my study abroad experience as the most challenging, exciting, difficult, and yet amazing experience of my life so far. I met so many interesting, new people, was pushed way out of my comfort zone, got more frustrated than almost any time before, but experienced so many amazing things I will never forget that made it all SO worth it." - Rebecca T.

"My study abroad experience wasn't just learning more German, it was learning about the differences between people from other countries, while celebrating their culture at the same time. Seeing the United States from a different viewpoint has opened my eyes to so much that I hadn't considered. Listening to the stories people have to tell has humbled me and made me appreciate where I am, while hoping for peace for those who remain affected by war. I now have friends from more than 15 countries including Colombia, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Holland, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Japan, Hong Kong, and many others. Study abroad for me was learning, living, laughing, and loving, and I will never forget it." Emilie Z.

