

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Study Abroad



MARBURG, GERMANY:
IUSP, FALL 2019

Program Guide

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Congratulations on being accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire exchange with 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:

Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field

Increasing understanding of different cultures

Enhancing personal growth

Developing different perspectives on U.S. 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!

Use this program guide in conjunction with the general Study Abroad Handbook. The Handbook has information that is valid for all UW-Eau Claire study abroad programs. This guide has information to assist in your preparation for participating in the exchange. It complements the Handbook, study abroad orientations, additional information in your UWEC online study abroad account and from your peer advisor, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Although all the information available at the time of publishing has been used, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email additional information throughout the semester. We also encourage you to contact your peer advisor, the Center for International Education (CIE) staff, and past program participants with your specific questions.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common goals of student travelers include advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for 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 to truly be immersed in German language and culture, yet you have the option of taking classes with all international students, how can you ensure that you get out and interact with the local population?

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

This bilateral exchange between UW-Eau Claire and Uni Marburg began in Fall 2017. It grew out of the Hessen-Wisconsin exchange between the University of Wisconsin System and institutions of higher education in the German state of Hessen.

[Philipps-Universität Marburg/IUSP Program:](#)

The IUSP is designed for international students who want to take most or all of their coursework in English alongside German students, while studying German and following the North American Academic Calendar. Marburg's IUSP program is a good bridge for students that wish to study for a semester in Germany, however, may not have a high enough German language skill level.

IUSP students begin six weeks prior to the normal German university start date by taking German language (offered at beginner through advanced levels) and culture. Following the introductory period, IUSP students take courses from the university's regular course catalogue; most courses available through this program are taught in English for two hours per week.

All lectures offered through the IUSP, whether taught in English or in German, are supplemented by an additional four hours per week, which are specifically designed for IUSP students (no German students will be in class during these hours). These

additional hours allow IUSP students to complete their courses within an eight-week period and to have a program end date that is much earlier than the normal German university course end date.

Program Application

The CIE has nominated you for the IUSP. You will receive an email from the IUSP coordinator when the IUSP online application (Mobility International) opens late in the spring.

Academic Calendar

Fall 2019 dates are:

Depart U.S.:	August 19
Arrive in Marburg:	August 20
Orientation/Classes:	August 21-Dec 13
Dorm move-out:	The program officially ends on December 13. You can plan to leave on the 14th or later. The official move-out date is December 20.

You will receive specific arrival and orientation information directly from Uni Marburg. **Do not make any travel arrangements until you have been officially accepted by the IUSP and have confirmed dates.**

ACADEMICS

There is additional information on maintaining program eligibility, as well as

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.

Course Offerings

The IUSP is divided in two sections. During the first six weeks, all IUSP students take an intensive German language course at an appropriate level, along with a German culture class to introduce you to your host country.

During the second half of the program, you will take regular courses supported by the IUSP. [Academic curricula and course lists](#) for past IUSP semesters are here. The specific courses for Fall 2019 will not be published until shortly before the beginning of the term.

Credits and Course Load

Uni Marburg uses the European Credit Transfer System, or ECTS. The conversion of ECTS credits to UW-Eau Claire credits is simple: Two ECTS credits equal one UW-Eau Claire credit. **Therefore, you need to register for at least 24 ECTS credits to be full time.**

How your credits will typically be divided in the IUSP:

REQUIRED CLASSES

Intensive German Language	6 ECTS/3 UWEC
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German Culture Class	6 ECTS/3 UWEC
Regular Semester Class 1	6 ECTS/3 UWEC
Regular Semester Class 2	6 ECTS/3 UWEC
TOTAL CREDITS	24 ECTS/12 UWEC

Taking more than the equivalent of 18 UW-Eau Claire credits will result in additional per-credit charges at UW-Eau Claire.

The Intensive German Language classes and the German Culture Class transfer back as follows:

German A1.1	German 101
German A1.2	German 102
German A2.1	German 201
German A2.2	German 202
German B1/B2/C	German upper division electives
German Culture Class	Geog elective, lower division, LE-K2R2

Course Selection: Regular Classes

Germany has very strict laws related to students and the sharing of data, which leads to significant differences in the administration of education from the U.S. system. Therefore, registering for courses and receiving a transcript is very different in Germany. This process will call for flexibility on your part as you simultaneously manage

both course enrollment and course transfer between two very different systems.

As in the U.S., you may only choose courses for which you meet the course pre-requisites. When reviewing course lists, pay special attention to any pre-requisites based on prior learning requirements or on the number of completed years of university. Students at beginning levels of German are strongly encouraged to take courses offered in English.

In July for Wintersemester or December for Sommersemester, begin checking [IUSP Regular Semester Classes Page](#). If courses are listed, begin researching course options. You can request course equivalencies at this time for courses you are relatively sure you would like to take. Just send the course department, number, title, number of credits, and course description, to [Cheryl Lochner-Wright](#), the Marburg study abroad coordinator, and she will work with the Admissions Office to have equivalencies established. This process can take several weeks.

Once the IUSP class list is complete, you will get an email from the IUSP academic coordinator asking for your **preliminary course choice**.

During your first week in Marburg, you will have an orientation session on choosing classes. **After this session, you will be required to turn in your final class selections.** Because the IUSP works on a shortened semester, there is no drop-add

period at the beginning the regular university semester.

For your regular semester classes, as soon as you turn in your final class selections, **log in to your UW-Eau Claire online study abroad account and complete the Course Descriptions questionnaire.** Found at <https://studyabroad.apps.uwec.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.Home>. Choose LOGIN from the top toolbar and login with your UW-Eau Claire username and password. **If a course you are taking is not already in the UW-Eau Claire Transfer Wizard, you will need to provide the following information:**

- course title
- course number
- course description
- number of ECTS credits
- name of the department you would like credit in

Once equivalencies have been established by all department chairs involved, the courses will be posted to the [Transfer Credit Wizard](#), and you will be able to see them there.

Equivalency timeline: The process of determining an equivalency can take four to six weeks or more. In other words, you will not be able to ask to have equivalencies established for three or four courses so that you can choose which one you wish to take.

The IUSP academic coordinator takes care of the formal registration for IUSP students.

Syllabi and Academic Work

Keep all syllabi and academic work.

Because you will register for your classes after arrival in Germany, remember to **keep your syllabi and the work that you have done while abroad for review by relevant UW - Eau Claire department chairs in case you want to petition to have a course substituted for a specific requirement.** The German faculty, in particular, are reluctant to assign course equivalencies until they see examples of work you have done in the class.

Registration for Exams

In addition to registering for the class itself, **you must also register separately for the final exam for each class.** If you do not, you will not be able to take the exam and you will not get credit for the class.

Exams given in Germany may be written or may be oral exams. If you are concerned about having to produce immediate, grammatically correct, and in-depth verbal answers in the German language, many professors are open to an alternative. Some examples include an oral presentation that you prepare in advance, or a written exam. However, it is up to you to make the request, and ultimately, it is up to the professor to decide how to give the exam.

Grades

Grades will be converted from the Uni Marburg scale as follows:

Point	Percentage	Grade
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	57.9-51	D-
4 to 0	50.9 and below	F

Transcripts

The IUSP academic coordinator will send a transcript to UWEC, typically at the end of January for the fall semester and the end of July for the spring semester.

If you are asked where your transcript should be sent, **request that an original copy of your transcript be directly sent to Cheryl Lochner-Wright, Study Abroad Coordinator**, at the address on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide. The UW-Eau Claire Registrar's Office cannot accept transcripts sent directly to students.

Plan for the future: If the university allows you to request two original transcripts, **request that a second copy be sent to you.** This can be very important if you

decide to go to graduate school, because graduate schools often require original copies of transcripts from each university you have attended. Since there is no centralized transcript system in German universities, it will be virtually impossible to get another original transcript later.

Transcripts & Delayed Graduation

If you are a senior and are studying abroad for your last semester, please note that the different timelines in grade reporting **will require you to delay your graduation.**

The Blugold Central/Registrar's Office must receive grades within 42 days of the last day of the UW-Eau Claire semester in order to confirm your graduation that semester. For example, for May graduation in a UW-Eau Claire semester that ends on May 17, grades must be received by June 28. This is a UW-Eau Claire requirement, and our partners abroad cannot change their usual timelines to accommodate it.

If you hope to receive your transcript before late January (fall) or late July (spring), due to graduation, you can talk with each of your professors and ask that they send your grades to the IUSP academic coordinator earlier than the official grade deadline. You must email the IUSP academic coordinator that you have done so. The IUSP academic coordinator will then watch for these grades to arrive and, if possible, send the transcript earlier. Please note that **it is completely at**

the discretion of the professor as to whether or not to submit the grade early.

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:

<https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/>

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.

German Academic System

Traditional higher education in Germany is very different from that in the U.S. Students are expected to learn independently and often work together outside of class to understand or expand upon the materials presented. Short quizzes and daily or weekly assignments are very uncommon. Grades are largely based on class participation, along with one major exam, paper, or oral report (Referat).

The type of classes you take generally determines the type of assessment that will be used.

- A Vorlesung (lecture) will usually have an oral or written exam.

- An Uebung (lab) grade will be based on in-class performance.
- For a Proseminar (introductory seminar), a Referat or a written term paper is usually expected.
- A Seminar (advanced seminar) may require both a Referat and a paper.

You may also notice that the Germans have a different reinforcement method than we use in the U.S. Instead of pointing out and reinforcing your correct answers and good ideas, your teacher will often point out your mistakes. Do not be surprised or feel offended if your teacher points a finger at you and says, "Das war ganz falsch!" German students are used to this method from grade school on, but it often intimidates American students at first.

Another difference to note is that "student services" are a relatively unknown concept. The university is there to provide access to academic resources. Unlike most U.S. institutions, German universities do not have the mission of "student development." University students are considered adults who will work their way through the system, asking questions when necessary. As a newcomer to the system and the culture, you will find it necessary to ask questions often!

Differences in Terminology

There are differences in English terminology between the U.S. and Germany. Sometimes the same English word is used to describe two different things and other times different English words are used to describe the same thing. Below is a list of terms that have historically caused confusion for U.S. students studying in Germany, even those studying in English.

Faculty vs. Department: In Germany, what you might think of as a "department" or "college" is referred to as a "faculty." For example, in Germany the "Engineering Faculty" is the U.S. equivalent of a "Department of Engineering." Likewise, in Germany, "Faculty" does not refer collectively to the people teaching your courses.

Module: "Module" is another word for "course."

Titles for Professor: Address your professor as "Professor. Dr. (last name)." Yes, use both titles together to err on the side of politeness!

Advising vs. Counseling: What we would call "Advising" in the U.S. is called "Counseling" in Germany.

Campus: In the U.S., a university campus typically has buildings, facilities and outdoor areas all centralized in one place. While some campuses are large and others quite small, there usually exists a "perimeter" and a university structure within which all "campus life" takes place.

German universities are not typically centralized on a campus. Classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, administrative buildings, offices, and student accommodation may be found in various locations throughout the city. You can expect to walk longer distances between campus facilities or between student accommodation and campus facilities; in many cases you may need to rely on public transportation as well.

Students are therefore members of a much larger community than you may be accustomed to on a U.S. campus. Extracurricular activities, intramural sports, gym memberships, and even student accommodation are through city or student organizations, which are not part of the university.

Freemover: A "freemover" is a student who applies directly to an institution for a semester or year but does not apply through a formal exchange. You are NOT a freemover.

Erasmus & Socrates: "Erasmus" is a European exchange program and "Socrates" is an associated program. You are NOT an Erasmus or a Socrates student. However, because you are an exchange student, some information on the Uni Marburg website may apply to both you and Erasmus/Socrates students.

MONEY MATTERS

Information about how payments are made, when they are due, withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting, and how 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 [CIE Marburg website](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term. Remember that the cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to Uni

Marburg, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

Marburg Refund Policy

Please note that if you withdraw from the IUSP any time after Uni Marburg initially accepts you, you are responsible for a 500 Euro fee, in addition to any UW-Eau Claire fees that are non-refundable at that time.

All withdrawals must be in writing.

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. Coins 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 December 27, 2018 was 1 euro = \$1.10453 U.S. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as 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.

German Insurance

In addition to the CISI insurance required by the UW-System, the German government requires that you purchase German Student Health Insurance. It does not include the medical evacuation and repatriation insurance included with the CISI coverage. However, while in Germany, you should not need to worry about paying for medical services upfront. The policy will be explained during orientation in Marburg.

Medical Facilities in Marburg

If you need medical attention in Marburg, the International Office at Uni Marburg 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. <https://studentenwerk-marburg.de/beratung-betreuung/sozialberatung/>

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.

Safety in Germany

Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Germany is available online at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Germany.html>

Emergency Contacts

General emergency procedures are described in the Study Abroad Handbook and Uni Marburg international office staff are available if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card from your peer advisor. The information is also on the *Contact Names & Addresses* section of this guide and will also be posted to the Learning Content of your UWEC online study abroad account closer to departure.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport

General passport information is found in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Visa/Residence Permit

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country. At the time of this writing, U.S. citizens do not need a visa to enter Germany. Once in Marburg, you will need to apply for an Aufenthaltserlaubnis (residence permit) for the length of the program.

IUSP staff will then assist you through application process.

PACKING TIPS

In addition to the general packing information in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Germany:

Clothing & Weather

The climate in Germany is somewhat milder than the climate in Wisconsin, but you will still want clothing for all weather. Attire at the university will be casual, with jeans and sweaters the primary clothing of choice.

General packing suggestions include taking clothing that is washable and does not wrinkle easily. Past students suggest choosing a color scheme and bringing mix-and-match clothing. Bring garments that can be worn interchangeably and that you can layer. Dark colors show less dirt when you travel.

What to Pack

Your peer advisor will provide a suggested packing list at Orientation 2.

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 plug adapters for the various countries.** Travel hair dryers and razors, which are relatively inexpensive, usually are convertible and need only a plug adapter.

ARRIVING IN GERMANY

Travel Arrangements

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Uni Marburg. **You should not do this until you have received your official acceptance from the IUSP.** A list of student-oriented travel agencies and instructions for booking a flight are included in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Plan to arrive at Frankfurt am Main (FRA) international airport. (Note that there is another, much smaller, Frankfurt airport, Frankfurt-Hahn, which is actually three hours from Frankfurt am Main. Be sure you arrive at Frankfurt am Main!)

Getting to Marburg

You are responsible for traveling from the airport to your Marburg on your own. Uni Marburg has information on [getting to Marburg from Frankfurt](#) on their website. From the airport, you can take a train to Marburg. Check rail connections at: http://www.bahn.de/p_en/view/index.shtml

IUSP staff picks students up at the Hauptbahnhof (main train station) in Marburg on the designated arrival day.

SETTLING IN

Checking In

When you arrive, you will need to bring several things to the International Office at Uni Marburg.

- Passport
- Payment for housing deposit (in cash; up to 250 € depending on placement)
- Payment for biometric photo (in cash; 10€)
- Payment for visa fee (in cash, 100 €)

IUSP staff will then help you with the registration and residence permit process.

Once you register, you will receive your student ID card (Studienausweis) and coupons that prove your student status at Uni Marburg (Studienbescheinigungen). The Studienausweis and your passport will be your “ticket” (Semesterticket) for free public transportation and discounts at many stores, restaurants, and bars.

Register every semester: Note that if you are staying for the academic year, you must complete this process at the **beginning of each semester**. If you forget, you may have to pay additional fees.

Orientation

The IUSP conducts its own orientation at the beginning of the IUSP semester.

HOUSING

Your acceptance email from Uni Marburg will include details on how to request student housing via their online form. A few past students have asked to be allowed to find their own apartments in shared living spaces (Wohngemeinschaften, or WGs); however, you should be aware that housing in German university towns is at a premium. If you choose not to live in the

dormitories, you are completely responsible for making all your housing arrangements.

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

German dormitories are not like their U.S. counterparts. Most have single rooms. Some have private showers in the rooms while others have sinks, with a shared bathroom down the hall. Most have a shared kitchen. If they are apartment-style facilities, there may be as many as eight bedrooms sharing the bathroom and kitchen facilities.

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 whatever form of clock/alarm clock you usually use. You will turn in your bedding every few weeks and receive a clean set in return.

When you check in with the dorm secretary, you will receive a key to your room, a mailbox key, and a key for one of the cupboards in the kitchen. Once you have moved in, ask someone which refrigerator compartment (Fach) you should use.

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

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 may 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 one is conveniently near the train station, 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 from 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, do not 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 is not 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.

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. 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, German students who are looking for someone they can practice their English with often post advertisements in the university buildings. The English speaker in turn can practice their German. Partners 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

Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on using your computer for international phone calls (SKYPE) is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Internet

Only about half of the Uni Marburg 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€/month to share their internet with you. Otherwise, the academic buildings all have free Wi-Fi.

E-mail

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

Snail-mail

International airmail takes seven to ten days to cross the Atlantic in either direction.

Calling/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.

From the U.S. to Germany: If you want to call someone in Germany before you arrive, you must first dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you dial 49, the country code for Germany, then the city code, and the rest of the number.

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. One can usually count on a German to 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 at times. (This tendency also exists in parts of the U.S., although not in the Midwest.) Try not to feel insulted or that you are 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 sidewalk until the green person on the traffic light appears before you cross the road, 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.

TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

See additional travel information in your Study Abroad Handbook.

International Office Trips

The Uni Marburg International Office offers a cultural program each semester with several day trips in and around the state of Hessen. They are free, but space is limited, and you must reserve space via email. Details will be provided at orientation in Marburg.

Train Travel in Germany

Check out the Deutsche Bahn web site at;
<https://www.bahn.com/en/view/index.shtml>
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 are 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/>

WEB RESOURCES: GERMANY

<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	Deutsche Bahn AG https://www.bahn.de/p/view/index.shtml
University of Marburg E-mail Access https://home.students.uni-marburg.de/imp/login.php	German Culture https://www.britannica.com/place/Germany/Cultural-life	Bus schedule for Frankfurt-Hahn Airport Bus http://omnibusse.bohr.de/routes/wtc/routes.php?action=detail&route_id=16&language=de
Studentenwerk Marburg http://www.studentenwerk-marburg.de/	German Language http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language	Travel by Train http://www.bahn.com/i/view/GBR/en/prices/germany/germanrailpass.shtml
Der Spiegel (national) (http://www.spiegel.de/international/) :	Dict.cc (www.dict.cc): A German-English dictionary, including phrases. Also available in an app that does not require Wi-Fi.	Jugendherberge Deutschland: Hostels http://www.jugendherberge.de/
Oberhessische Zeitung (Marburg area) http://www.oberhessische-zeitung.de/index.htm	Political Resources: Germany http://www.politicalresources.net/germany.htm	

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* If calling from inside Germany, drop the "011-49", add a "0", and dial the rest of the number.

UW-EAU CLAIRE

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Fax: (715) 836-4948

Email: lochnecb@uwec.edu

After Hours Emergency

(715)577-9045

If you have an after-hours emergency, please call University Police at the number above. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day. You may get an answering machine; however, an officer is alerted as soon as you have left your message. Be sure to give the officer the phone number you can be reached at, as well as what type of assistance you require.

PAST PARTICIPANT VOICES

WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN BEFORE THEY LEFT

- Nothing worth noting- just know that things will go wrong when you travel!

THE BEST PART OF THEIR EXPERIENCE MID-WAY THROUGH

- So far, the best part of the experience has been meeting new people and becoming friends with them. They have become a family to me, and it makes being in a new country that much better.

BIGGEST ADJUSTMENTS THEY HAD TO MAKE

- Stores being closed on Sundays.
- No car; having to use public transportation.

HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP

“This experience is something that I could never take back, nor ever have quite exactly the same again; it is something that is truly special. Aside from the fact of diving into German culture and language, there are so many other connections from all over the world you meet through the Uni. Marburg hosts some of the most interesting and diverse nationalities. I have so many connections that will last forever because of the communication in this day and age. It's such a good opportunity to take, and something that left me with great memories. Machen Sie das!” *Robert O.*

