Brown in Germany
Program Handbook
Spring 2018

Brown University
Office of International Programs
Brown in Germany

Berlin Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to assist you in the process of preparing for your journey to Berlin and participation in the Brown in Germany program. It will answer questions about what to expect of the program. A guidebook to Berlin or Germany will offer more specific information about the area and country.

Studying abroad requires enormous flexibility, openness to change, and willingness to expect the unexpected. We emphasize this because past students have read these same words and reiterated upon their return that these qualities were important to a successful sojourn in Germany.

Students who opt for this program must understand that they are enrolling as a foreign student in a foreign university; this is by no stretch of the imagination the home campus transplanted in Berlin. The experience differs from the university experience in the U.S. in many ways – academically, socially, and emotionally.

As you read this handbook, we urge you to ask yourself if you have taken the necessary steps to prepare for this challenge. Are you excited about the opportunity to develop an awareness of a different culture? An intercultural experience is always an emotionally intense and profoundly challenging experience for the participant.

If you have any questions or concerns now or while away, please contact our office immediately.

Enjoy your time in Berlin!
Program Contacts

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*A staff-on-duty number and emergency contact card will be given to you during orientation in Berlin. In case of an emergency, a member of the CIEE Berlin site staff is always on-call.

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Dismissal Policy
The Office of International Programs—in consultation with the site personnel and the program faculty directors at Brown—reserves the right to dismiss any student and require that the student leave immediately, if in our judgment said student behaves in a manner that endangers themselves, others on the program, or the program’s continued operations. Illegal drug use is grounds for immediate dismissal.
Pre-Departure Checklist

1. **Prepare yourself.** Read this handbook, the FAQs of Study Abroad, the General OIP Study Abroad Handbook *Take It With You* and a guidebook on Germany and/or Berlin.

2. **Check with the OIP** to make sure you have completed all necessary paperwork.

3. **Meet with your concentration advisor** to discuss any credit that you want to count for your concentration and get pre-approval. Arrange a way to contact concentration advisors if changes are necessary once in Berlin. (General credit for graduation transfers automatically for Brown students, if you earn the equivalent of a grade of C or higher.)

4. **Make copies and scans of important documents**—your passport, Brown student ID card, driver's license, health insurance card, and acceptance letter from Humboldt—and put them in a separate place from the original documents. Have your health insurance information at hand: your policy number, reimbursement procedures and forms, and a list of medical procedures covered.

5. **Have medical, dental and vision check-ups** as recommended. Get a supply of prescription medication, if you are taking any.

6. **Email your flight itinerary** to the OIP and Berlin site staff.

7. **Determine your needs for adapters and voltage converters** for your electronic devices, and consider buying small appliances (e.g. hair dryers, etc.) on site. Purchase electrical adapters for your appliances; they can be found at any hardware or electronics store in the U.S., but may be difficult to find in Germany. Don’t use a cheap adapter, as they have been known to burn out and damage appliances and electronics. Ask a reputable computer store for good quality adapters and think about bringing back-up storage devices.

8. **Plan to have financial backup for your entire stay.** Credit cards and ATM cards are options. See the “Money Matters” chapter for more information.
Necessities for Travel to Germany

1. **Passport and Visa.** A valid passport is necessary for entrance to Germany. Check that it is valid for at least six months after your planned date to depart from Berlin. U.S. citizens do not need to obtain a visa or residence permit in advance; non-U.S. or non-EU citizens should check with their nearest German consulate for additional visa requirements.

2. **Financial Guarantee Form,** which is necessary for entrance to Germany and to obtain a residence permit. Bring a copy of a photo ID (passport is preferable) of the person who completed and signed the form.

3. **Medication and prescription documentation.** Remember to keep all medication in their original packaging so that customs officials know what they are.

4. **Approximately 200-300 euros in cash** for the first few days.
Academic Program

Orientation and Intensive Language Course
The orientation program is designed to help you find your way around your new environment. Within the first few weeks, you will complete the registration processes listed below with various authorities inside and outside the university. All program participants participate in the orientation program and an intensive German language course prior to the start of the regular university session.

Besides helping you through these registration processes, the orientation program will assist you in navigating Berlin’s cultural and academic life. During orientation and throughout the semester, several events will take place, such as visits to museums, walking tours through parts of the city, and visits to a theater performance and exhibitions of interest. Past cultural excursions have included Weimar, Lutherstadt Wittenberg, Meißen, and Dresden. All events are used to explain how people live in Germany and what you need to know to make your stay pleasant and fulfilling. A main goal of the orientation program is to prepare you for your time in Berlin, including dealing with German administration, renting an apartment, and tackling coursework at Humboldt University.

Intensive German Language Course
All students are required to take an intensive German language course during the orientation period. The language course is offered through Humboldt University’s Language Center and is designed for international students participating in a university exchange program at the Humboldt. This course meets before the semester starts.

Language Tutoring
A language tutor is available to students throughout the semester to assist with essays and for students preparing to give oral presentations in German.

University Courses
General Information
Humboldt University is a large public university which is divided into nine large faculties (law, medicine, humanities, etc.) and several smaller academic centers. German students complete most of their general education requirements in high school, and seldom take classes outside the academic departments in which they are enrolled. Most German students who major in the humanities or natural sciences are required to have a double major. Unlike in the U.S., B.A. programs are generally six semesters long, while most M.A. programs take four semesters. Please be aware that most courses at the B.A. level are legally required to be taught in German.
Departments

Please note: As an exchange student, you can enroll in one or two Humboldt departments. Please be aware that even though you can take classes in additional departments, university systems are geared towards German students, who follow a rigidly prescribed course of study. You may find that it is not always possible to get credit for a course in a different department. For this reason, it is very important to discuss your status with your professors at the beginning of the semester. We will discuss this matter in greater detail during orientation.

Choosing Courses

Humboldt’s general course catalog (Vorlesungsverzeichnis) can be found online at https://agnes.hu-berlin.de (navigate to Vorlesungsverzeichnis using the bar on the left and click on the faculties and departments that you are interested in - keep clicking until you reach the course descriptions!). Courses are bundled into units called "modules". A module typically consists of two or three related courses. German students (and European exchange students in the Erasmus program) attend several courses within a single module and complete the related coursework, but only take one final exam/write one final paper. Some departments, such as German Studies, will require you to take full modules. If you are taking an individual course in a different department, you will need to ask your professors whether they can assign appropriate work, e.g. an exam or a term paper, for you to receive a Leistungsnachweis (certificate of completion, previously called a Schein).

Participants in the advanced level track (with fifth-semester college-level German) are expected to take all of their courses in German at Humboldt University. Because there’s always room for improvement with language skills, advanced level students are also encouraged to enroll in a German as a Foreign Language course (DaF) course at the Sprachenzentrum during their regular semester. These courses also offer an opportunity to meet other exchange students from all over the world who are in a similar situation at Humboldt. You may take one DaF course for credit.

Students in the intermediate track (third-semester college-level German) may take advanced level courses in English at Humboldt University. Intermediate level students are required to enroll in a DaF course at the Sprachenzentrum during their regular semester, in addition to the intensive language course during orientation.

For a full semester’s credit at Brown, you are expected to complete at least four courses for evaluation each semester. In general, exchange students are advised to take between four and six courses decided in consultation with the site staff during orientation. This number approximates the normal load of a German student while still allowing for your adjustment to a new culture and language. Courses at Humboldt generally meet once a week for either 45, 90, or 180 minutes.

The type of course can vary from seminar to lecture. You should choose from the following types of courses: Proseminar, Seminar, Vorlesung, and Übung. Vorlesungen (lecture courses) usually do not involve any evaluation for German students. Brown students may take a maximum of two Vorlesungen for Brown credit per semester and must be especially careful to ensure that the instructor is willing to provide an evaluation on which a grade and credit can be based. Seminare and Proseminare are similar to junior/senior level courses. Übungen
are usually lab courses, or include field trips and internships. Einführungskurse (introductory courses) can be very helpful; in these courses you learn about academic expectations as well as the format of papers in your field of studies, which will likely differ from what you have done at Brown.

**Before leaving Brown**
- Select six to eight courses and complete the *Course Pre-Approval Form* as part of your application to the OIP. Course descriptions for the upcoming semester may not be available yet, in which case you can search for analogous courses from previous semesters. Many courses are only offered once a year, so if you will be in Berlin for the Spring semester, look at the previous year's Sommersemester (summer semester) catalog.
- Meet with your concentration advisor to determine which courses will count toward concentration credit and to obtain their signature on the *Course Pre-Approval Form*.
- Discuss selected courses with the faculty advisor for Brown in Germany.
- Speak to the study abroad advisor at the OIP if you have any questions.
- Your *Course Pre-Approval Form* will be forwarded to the site staff in Berlin.

*Leistungsnachweise* (formerly called *Scheine*)
The maximum number of Brown course units you can transfer from study abroad is four per semester or eight per year. For each course taken for credit, you will need to receive a *Leistungsnachweis* – a document confirming that you have completed the course and received a number grade. Please note that certain departments at Humboldt University, including German Studies, have special procedures in place for foreign students.

When registering for a course, it is your responsibility to go to each professor and ensure they can give you a *Leistungsnachweis/Schein*, especially since it may not be assumed that you will receive one (German professors do not evaluate each student in a course, especially not in Vorlesungen).

The requirements for *Leistungsnachweise/Scheine* may differ from course to course, much like at Brown. In general, students are required to do coursework which counts towards their Anwesenheit (attendance). This often takes the form of response papers or Referate (oral presentations). In addition, to receive a grade, you are generally required to write a term paper of about 10 to 20 pages or take a Klausur (a written exam).

**Before leaving Berlin**
**VERY IMPORTANT:** Make sure that you receive all your *Leistungsnachweise/Scheine* before you leave Berlin! This means that you will need to hand in all papers or other coursework before the last day of classes. This will give the professor a chance to evaluate you and fill out the *Leistungsnachweis* before departing for the semester break.

Make sure you arrange a deadline with the professor about four weeks before you leave Berlin to turn in your work, so that you can personally pick up the *Leistungsnachweis*
before you leave. For German students, papers are often due on the first day of the next semester, but you are strongly advised to complete all requirements by the end of the course, otherwise you will have trouble obtaining the *Leistungsnachweis*.

**You are responsible for collecting your Leistungsnachweise, submitting copies to the site staff in Berlin, and for bringing the signed originals back with you to the U.S.**

When you return to Brown, you must bring your *Leistungsnachweise* to Maria Snead in Room 420 of the OIP (J. Walter Wilson) to have your transfer credits processed.

**Humboldt University**

Humboldt University was founded in Berlin in 1810. Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III donated the former palace of Prince Heinrich of Prussia to serve as the university’s first building. The university was named ”Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität” from 1828 to 1949, when it was renamed after the two brothers Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt.

Wilhelm von Humboldt’s founding concept was for a "Universitas litterarum" which would achieve a unity of teaching and research and provide students with an all-round humanist education. This concept spread throughout the world and gave rise to the foundation of many universities of the same type over the next century and a half.

From the outset, the university in Berlin had the four classical faculties: law, medicine, philosophy, and theology. Its first academic term began with 256 students and 52 teaching staff. Early and distinguished professors, such as Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (philosophy), Karl Friedrich von Savigny (law), and Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland (medicine), shaped the profile of the individual faculties in accordance with Humboldt's concept.

Partly due to the influence of the natural scientist Alexander von Humboldt, the university pioneered the introduction of many new disciplines. Later, a total of 29 Nobel Prize winners did some of their scientific work at the university in Berlin, including Albert Einstein, Max Planck, and Fritz Haber. The university was Alma Mater to many famous people such as Heinrich Heine, Adelbert von Chamisso, Ludwig Feuerbach, Otto von Bismarck, Karl Liebknecht, Alice Salomon, Karl Marx, and Kurt Tucholsky. Heinrich Mann was the first honorary doctor of the university after the end of the Second World War.

The early decades of the 20th century were characterized by great academic achievements. In 1901, Jacobus Henricus von Hoff from the Netherlands received the university's first Nobel Prize for Chemistry for his research into the laws of chemical dynamics. The antiquity expert Theodor Mommsen published trend-setting work on Roman History, and in 1902 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature. Emil von Behring received the first Nobel Prize for Medicine
for the development of an effective cure for diphtheria, and some years later Robert Koch, who discovered the tuberculosis and cholera bacteria, also obtained the Nobel Prize.

In the thirties and forties, the university went through a dark chapter of German history: the expulsion of Jewish academics and students and political opponents of National Socialism, and the extermination of some, did great damage to the university in the period from 1933 to 1945. It was a shameful moment for the university when students and lecturers took part in the burning of books on May 10, 1933. In the subsequent war years, many academics left the university, which had once been renowned as the home of humanitarian thought.

Weakened by this great loss of scientific potential, teaching was resumed in January 1946 with seven faculties in partly war-damaged buildings. The political turmoil of the post-war period and the protest of students and lecturing staff against the increasing Communist influence on the university led to a division among the staff and students. As a result, the Free University of Berlin was founded in December 1948 in the U.S.-controlled sector of the city.

The university reforms of 1950/51 and 1967/68 caused the university to develop in a way that ran counter to its former academic traditions and changed the academic content, study procedures, and research conditions in obedience to the ruling ideology.

The reunification of the two German states in 1990 made Berlin a city with three universities. Despite the problems associated with unification, Humboldt University went through an extraordinary process of reorganization and succeeded in gaining outstanding scholars from former East and West Germany and abroad.

Following the internal restructuring process, Humboldt University is now made up of nine faculties and three central institutes. It has 32,553 students (excluding the Charité School of Medicine). Its faculty is composed of 419 professors and 1,984 lecturers and researchers. The university offers 189 degree courses. Despite its unsteady and turbulent history over the years, Humboldt University has remained true to its principles concerning the unity of research and teaching.
Health and Safety

Before You Go…
Consult your physician, dentist, or other health care provider for a checkup to make sure there are no current health issues. If you have specific concerns about your own personal health situation, please discuss your plans to study abroad with your health care provider.

There are no special immunizations required for travel to Germany. The same holds true for Western Europe. If you plan to travel outside Western Europe during your stay, please check with the Center for Disease Control (http://www.cdc.gov/), a reputable travel clinic, and the consulate of that country for required entry documents and immunizations.

Prescription Medication
Medication cannot be mailed to you in Germany. If you take prescription medicine regularly, including contraceptives, take enough with you for the entire time you are away. Medicines differ from country to country and might be difficult to obtain in the exact formula you need. You might be asked for the original prescription by custom and border control officers, so you should take it with you. It’s also good to have the doctor give you the generic names of medications, in case you need to consult a local doctor or get an equivalent prescription while abroad. If you wear contact lenses, consider taking a spare set of lenses or glasses. Remember to take a copy of your lens prescription as well, in case you lose a contact or break your glasses.

If you need prescription medication regularly and do not intend to bring a semester’s supply, bring a copy of your prescription along. Make sure it is clearly written and indicates the generic name of the drug. In most cases, a physician in Germany will not fill the prescription provided by your U.S. doctor without first doing an examination and confirming the diagnosis of your condition.

Be aware that some drugs commonly prescribed in the United States are considered “narcotics” and highly regulated in Europe (e.g. Ritalin). It is best to bring the full amount necessary for your stay.

When you travel in Europe, make sure to label all medication clearly and to keep it in the original containers, which show the prescription number. You should also carry a copy of the prescription from your doctor with you, as customs officials have the right to confiscate medications as illegal drugs if you cannot prove proof that the medication is associated with a valid prescription.

Health Care
Our site staff have lists of physicians and counseling services in the Berlin area. Please contact them if you need any assistance to make appointments or deal with health issues. If you are accustomed to taking a specific brand of over-the-counter medication, such as Tylenol or Sudafed, it is best to bring some with you, as certain U.S. brands are not available in Germany.
Health Insurance

U.S. Health Insurance
Be certain to consult your current insurance provider for coverage overseas. Please remember that health care providers in Germany and other countries in Europe will ask for payment up front with the expectation that you will get reimbursed after you submit forms and receipts to your insurance provider. Make sure you bring your private insurance policy number and other relevant documents, including information on all medical procedures covered by your policy and the process for reimbursement. Contact your health insurance provider for reimbursement forms, and please take these forms with you when you go, to save you time if you need medical assistance.

If you are enrolled in Brown University's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP), reimbursement forms are available from the Office of Insurance and Purchasing Services. If you have any questions regarding Brown student health insurance, call or write:

Cheryl Moan
Brown University, Office of Insurance and Purchasing Services
Box 1848
Providence, RI 02912
Telephone: 401 863 9481
Email: Cheryl_Moan@brown.edu

Note: Do not suspend any existing coverage in the U.S. or elsewhere, since if you become ill, then this may be considered a pre-existing condition when you attempt to re-enroll in coverage at home; in addition, coverage through a German health insurance plan (see below) does not start right away.

German Health Insurance
To enroll at any German university, you are required to have health insurance coverage from a recognized mandatory health insurance provider (Krankenkasse) in Germany— even if you already have a health insurance provider in another country.* The cost of coverage is already included in your program fee.

German health insurance will cover you from the first day of the regular semester at Humboldt (beginning of October or April) until the program ends (mid-August). The cost of coverage is already included in your program fee.

Brown in Germany students typically enroll with Techniker Krankenkasse, one of the leading insurers in Germany. Be sure that you have insurance in place that will cover you during the first weeks of orientation until the German health insurance coverage begins

*EU citizens in possession of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) are exempt from the requirement to be insured with a recognized mandatory health insurance provider in Germany.
Travel Assistance & Emergency Insurance

All students studying abroad through Brown’s Office of International Programs are provided with a Brown travel assistance plan, which covers evacuation and repatriation as well as some other services. This plan is provided by International SOS (www.internationalsos.com).

In case of emergency, contact the Brown in Germany site staff as well, first, if possible! We recommend that students not use International SOS when they are in Berlin or elsewhere in Germany and instead to contact our Berlin staff first, as they can be much more efficient and helpful in these cases. In an emergency situation outside of Germany, please contact the OIP as well as your nearest International SOS Alarm Center. The Paris International SOS Office is the regional center for continental Europe and the northwest region of Africa.

International SOS Office
International SOS
1, rue du Parc
92593 Levallois-Perret Cedex
Paris, France
Admin Tel: +33 155 633 232
Admin Fax: +33 155 633 234

Assistance center - Paris
Open 24 hours a day
International SOS (Assistance) S.A.
Tel: +33 155 633 155
Fax: +33 155 633 156

When you contact International SOS, you must reference your Group Membership Number: 11BSGC000031

The services provided by International SOS range from telephone advice and referrals to full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. The SOS network of multilingual specialists operates 24 hour a day, 365 days a year from SOS Alarm Centers around the world.

However, International SOS is not health insurance. Requests for reimbursement for medical care received while abroad should be submitted to your health insurance provider. You will also be given a wallet-size card with important information on how to access International SOS services. Please carry this with you at all times, in case you need emergency assistance.

IMPORTANT: Remember that your first contact should always be the local site staff. If you are traveling and/or in a situation where you are not able to reach the Berlin staff, you should contact the Office of International Programs at +1 401-863-3555 or, if after regular office hours, the Brown University Public Safety Office at +1 401-863-3322, or International SOS, who will work to meet your needs immediately and will contact the Brown’s on-call staff in the United States to coordinate services.
Please be aware that some of International SOS’s services carry additional charges. Should you request a service which has an additional charge, International SOS will inform you in advance and will require a credit card number to activate the service. If, in the event of an emergency, Brown provides the financial guarantee to International SOS on your behalf, the university will bill you for this charge upon receipt of the actual amount by ISOS. Please know that such charges may not be billed until after you return from the trip abroad.

Should you have any questions about the coverage, please call the Office of Insurance and Purchasing Services at 401-863-9481 or visit the International SOS website: http://www.internationalsos.com/private/Brownu/. For reference purposes, Brown’s group membership number is 11BSGC000031.

**U.S. Embassy**

The U.S. Embassy in Berlin provides services for U.S. citizens. If you are a U.S. citizen with an after-hours emergency, such as the hospitalization, arrest, or death of a U.S. citizen, please call (030) 8305-0 from within Germany. For calls from the U.S., please call 011-49-30-8305-0.

*NOTE*: Lost, stolen, or expired passports can only be replaced during normal business hours and do not constitute after-hours emergencies.

Embassy of the United States Berlin  
Clayallee 170  
14191 Berlin  

Telephone: +49-30-8305-0  
http://germany.usembassy.gov/acs/berlinacs/
Arrival in Germany

Passport and Visa
Your passport must be up to date and valid for at least six months past the date of your final return to the United States. To enter Germany as a U.S. citizen, you do not need a visa. However, a financial verification entry document written in both languages is required (see below), and customs officials may ask to see your original letter of admission from the German university. Students who are citizens of the European Union may enter Germany with just their passport.

For students who are not U.S. citizens, make sure your necessary U.S. visa documents are up to date for your re-entry to the United States. Students who are neither U.S. citizens nor citizens of the European Union must check the German regulations pertaining to their nationalities and secure any special entry documents that may be required. Do this early, since considerable time may be necessary for clearance to be obtained for citizens of certain countries. Consult the OIP at Brown if you have questions about the information you receive from the German Consulate.

Financial Guarantee Form for a Residence Permit
This document must be completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and notarized. You must prove that you have sufficient funds to support yourself while in Germany (access to at least 850 euros per month). You must bring this form when you enter Germany, along with the appropriate documentation (original bank statement and two copies). Also, pack a copy of a photo-ID (passport preferred) of the person who completed and signed the form.

Arrival Day
Upon arrival in Berlin, you can be met at the airport by the site staff, if you have opted to join the group pickup on the first day of the program. Please inform OIP and the site staff as early as possible of your itinerary.

Shops usually close at 8 P.M., supermarkets between 8 and 10 P.M. Many department stores close at 8 P.M. on Saturdays and do not re-open until Monday. If you arrive on a Saturday, please plan to dine in restaurants until shops open again. Alternatively, you can find grocery stores which are open late at night and on Sundays at Ostbahnhof (Berlin-Friedrichshain), Hauptbahnhof (Mitte), Gesundbrunnen (Wedding) and Bahnhof Friedrichstrasse (Mitte).

Delayed Arrivals
If you are delayed en route to orientation, please inform the site staff in Berlin by dialing +49 30 69 80 78 866 and let your OIP study abroad advisor know as well.
**Housing**

Students arrange for their own housing for the duration of the program with the assistance of the Berlin site staff. Housing is typically university housing (which you must apply for online several months in advance of your arrival) or in shared apartments, arranged once you are in Berlin.

Please note that the housing market in Berlin is very tight, and it is getting increasingly difficult to find housing in a shared apartment for just a semester; you must be flexible about housing arrangements, if you pursue this option. If you are considering university housing, please note that most of the residence halls are about a 40-minute train ride away from the university.

**Student University Housing**

Humboldt University tries to assist study abroad students in finding accommodations by placing them in student residence halls in Berlin. Students can choose from a limited number of accommodation options.

Keep in mind that you must register to request university housing through UniExchange when you complete your online student registration with Humboldt. After the registration deadline, you will be contacted by ERG to apply for and confirm university housing.

Please note that all ERG housing contracts are for a duration of 6 months (September 1 to February 28 or March 1 to August 31); a shorter rental period is not possible. Spaces are very limited. You will need to pay a housing deposit along with your application by the deadline established by ERG.

**Apartment Living: Overview**

Students who choose the apartment option will use local housing resources to find accommodation, which ranges from a room in a person’s home to a furnished shared apartment (Wohngemeinschaft, WG). Depending on availability, you may be living with local professionals, local students, or by yourself.

The advantage of this housing option is that you will find an apartment that suits you in the neighborhood you want and with the people you choose. You will also benefit from the additional language practice with your German housemates.

**Apartment Living: Housing Search**

During orientation, students work with the site staff to find a room in a shared apartment, where they will live with locals for the remainder of the program. Typically, groups of two to three will visit apartments you are interested in. The site staff will also talk about “Stadtbezirke” (parts of the city) attractive to students and projected costs so that you will get an understanding of what to expect.

In the past, students have had good experiences with finding apartments, but remember that each semester is unique depending on your preferences and the availability in Berlin. Don’t
forget: you are looking for a room in apartment for only three to four months, NOT a lifetime – adjust your expectations accordingly! Once you have decided on a place, you will sign the rental contract with the other people living in the apartment.

Finding housing is a very valuable cross-cultural experience, and you will enjoy the apartment even more because of the sense of accomplishment that comes with success in a new language and country.

Rental Insurance
Students renting a room may sometimes be required to also have insurance covering property within the home or apartment (Hausratversicherung), which can be extremely helpful in case of theft, fire, or water damage.
Money Matters

The Euro
On January 1, 2002, the euro became Germany's official currency. The following coins are available: 1 cent, 2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, 1 euro, and 2 euros. The following notes are available: 5 euros, 10 euros, 20 euros, 50 euros, 100 euros, 200 euros and 500 euros. EU member countries mint their own coins.

Starting Out
You should plan to have between 200 and 300 euros available in cash for the first few days. These are always the most expensive days until you get used to Berlin and learn where to shop and eat out at reasonable prices. You can change money at the airport upon arrival.

Several options for handling money while in Germany are described below. Whatever you decide, the best advice is to come with at least two ways to obtain money so that if one method fails or is inconvenient, a back-up option is available. In Berlin, you will probably make most of your purchases with cash.

During the program, our recommended approach is to plan to use an ATM card as your primary source for cash. It is good to bring some cash or travelers checks as back up, though the latter are often expensive to cash.

It’s also a good idea to have a credit card (MasterCard and Visa are the most common in Germany), in case of emergencies.

German Bank Accounts
Site staff in Berlin will assist you with opening an account during orientation. Most German banks offer student accounts, some with no fees or a reduced monthly fee—including Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank. Banks usually offer a checking account including a Girocard, which functions as a debit card and can be used at virtually all German ATMs and banks. Girocards are usually co-branded with MasterCard's Maestro/Cirrus or VISA's V PAY logo, allowing cardholders to use them in other European countries.

Some accounts may offer a credit card (MasterCard or VISA) as well. Fees usually apply to all types of cards (for a Girocard, expect to pay around 5 euros per year; for a credit card, around 25 euros per year). A savings account is often free of charge and earns a small amount of interest.

Since a Deutsche Bank branch is right across from the main building of Humboldt University, you may want to consider opening an account there.

Deutsche Bank
Unter den Linden 13-15
(across from Humboldt University’s main building)
10117 Berlin
Telephone: +49 30 34 07 0
Common Payment Methods
In Germany, you usually pay in cash (although the situation is beginning to change and credit cards are becoming more widely accepted). You can use your bank account’s Girocard to pay at most supermarkets and an ever-increasing number of stores and restaurants. Please note that some restaurants, and most cafés and bars, only accept cash. Credit cards are widely accepted in department stores, gas stations, bookstores and by the Deutsche Bahn. Unfortunately, most pharmacies do not accept credit cards, but some smaller shops do take them. Keep in mind that department stores usually have a grocery section that accepts credit cards as well.

Traveler’s Checks
Unlike in the U.S., it is not possible to pay with traveler’s checks in restaurants, shops, or supermarkets. You can exchange them into cash at an exchange office, bank, travel agency or post office. We suggest buying American Express Traveler’s Checks in euros (then you don't pay an exchange fee when cashing them), although checks in U.S. dollars are easily exchanged. Research and be mindful of the fees associated with cashing traveler’s checks.

International Transactions
You or your family can transfer money from an international account to your bank account in Germany. For transferring money, consider using an online service (good, reputable options include xoom.com, transferwise.com, and currencyfair.com) to exchange money at competitive rates and avoid many of the higher fees associated with a traditional wire transfer.

A wire transfer into a checking account will typically cost 25 euros (minimum) and takes a few days to process. You also pay at least 25 euros to get a personal check deposited into your account, but it usually takes up to six weeks to be credited. You can withdraw money from a U.S. account using an ATM card with a chip.

Request information from your home bank about in which cities in Europe their ATM system is active and how much each transaction costs. It is common for banks in the U.S. to charge $5-10 for each ATM transaction, in addition to a currency conversion fee. Therefore, you might want to plan less frequent withdrawals – maybe once a month and then deposit the money in your German account.
Refund Policy
Withdrawal Prior to the Start of the Program: Any expenses that have been incurred by Brown on behalf of the student once the student has made a commitment to the program (in writing and/or by submitting the program deposit), will be the responsibility of the student (i.e., host institution fees, pre-payment of orientation housing, etc.) and charged to the student account.

Withdrawal After the Start of the Program: If a student withdraws from a study abroad program during the first five weeks of the program, the student is eligible for a refund of Brown tuition payments based on the schedule below. Brown is not responsible for indirect costs paid directly by the student, including, but not limited to, passport fees, vaccinations, and transportation costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Refund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prior to program start</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the first 14 days</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in days 15-21</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in days 22-28</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in days 29-35</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after day 35</td>
<td>no refund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For students who leave because of a medical or family emergency, the same refund policy applies. A student who is suspended, dismissed, or withdraws while under investigation for misconduct, will not have tuition payments refunded.

Students who choose to withdraw from a program abroad and, subsequently, enroll at Brown during the semester that corresponds to their semester abroad will be responsible for all costs incurred by Brown up to the time they withdrew from the program.

If a student withdraws from a program, the deposit paid to confirm his or her place on the program is not refundable.
Life in Berlin

Besides the important academic nature of the exchange, the second, no less important part of studying abroad is living in and understanding a different culture. In your classes about Germany you might have learned about the country and its people, but living in a German city brings the culture to life.

Berlin is Germany’s biggest, most densely populated and diverse city. 20% of its approximately 3.7 million inhabitants are of foreign heritage. Parts of the city, like Friedrichshain or Kreuzberg, are famous for their social as well as ethnic diversity. Areas like Grunewald and Charlottenburg represent the posh part of the city, whereas Wedding is a traditional working class neighborhood. Mahrzahn and Ahrensfelde are characterized by the East German prefab architecture of the late 70’s and 80’s. Grünau, Pankow, and Lichtenrade are known as some of the greenest parts of the city.

The city has a very diverse cultural scene. Thanks to liberal regulations, cultural events take place around the clock. Berlin has four opera houses, 60 theaters, 141 cinemas, 130 museums, and countless art galleries, restaurants, bars, cafes, pubs and traditional Berliner Kneipen.

The city has 258 libraries, which includes the libraries of three universities (Humboldt-Universität, Freie Universität, and Technische Universität) and some 30 colleges, as well as the public library network. Notable libraries include the Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek (over 1.5 million circulating items), the Berliner Stadtbibliothek (1,297,000 books, magazines, CDs, maps and more), and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (the city's superb research library).

Cultural Events

Fall Semester
In September, Berlin has its Berlin Festival Weeks (Berliner Festwochen) which have a focus every year. You will be in the capital when Germany celebrates its national holiday, Reunification Day, on October 3rd. In November, Berlin hosts its top-rated Jazz Festival Jazz Fest Berlin with performances held in venues throughout the city. Christmas season in Germany and the traditions around it are famous world-round, so be sure to be in Berlin when this season starts. There are Christmas markets in literally every part of the city! Check out the different markets throughout Berlin and their offers - Pfefferkuchen, Christstollen, and Glühwein. Also, make sure to be in the city for New Year's Eve and experience how Berliners celebrate the turn of the year.

Spring Semester
If you are on the program for the full academic year, you won’t want to miss the International Film Festival Berlin (Berlinale) in February, but be aware that it is difficult to get tickets. During the second half of March, the Festival Days start in Berlin. This is a series of concerts and operas under the auspices of the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, right across from Humboldt University. May brings the Theatertreffen and Karneval der Kulturen, June Christopher Street Day, and July the Classic Open Air.
Transportation

Within Berlin
Berlin has an excellent system of public transportation. It is operated by BVG (Berliner Verkehrsgemeinschaft) and DB (Deutsche Bahn). You can use the U-Bahn (subway), S-Bahn (a hybrid urban and suburban railway), buses, and trams (light rail) 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. The BVG has an app which may be of interest to students who purchase a German data plan for their phones.

Student Transportation Pass
Your Humboldt University student ID will include a student pass for all public transportation, called a “Semester Ticket.” The fee for the ticket is paid for by the program. The ticket is valid for one semester (fall: October 1 to March 31; Spring: April 1 to September 30) and allows you to ride free on all trains and buses. It also gives you discount admission to all student clubs and some movie theaters.

During the month of orientation and the intensive language program, a monthly pass will be provided. In case you forget your ticket at home, make sure to have 2.80 euros in exact change to buy a ticket at the vending machines.

By Bike
Traveling by bike is a good alternative to public transportation. Renting or buying a second-hand bike are inexpensive alternatives.

Outside Berlin
You can purchase a BahnCard 50 for the train, which entitles you to 50% off all second-class rail fares in Germany. The Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket is also a great deal and allows you and up to four friends to ride on regional trains for one whole day on Saturday or Sunday. It costs 40 euros for one passenger, and each additional passenger pays 4 euros.

While in Germany, please remember that public transportation is the way most locals get around their town and country, and so it should be a part of your experience as well. We strongly discourage students from renting cars or other motor vehicles while abroad. Site staff will not assist students with any personal motor vehicle-related issues, including problems resulting from the use of vehicles or accidents before, during, or after the program. Please understand that if you rent or drive a vehicle, that you do so at your own risk.

Student Life at Humboldt
The International Office at Humboldt University provides extensive information for incoming study abroad/international students through its online Guide for International Students: https://www.international.hu-berlin.de/en/studierende/aus-dem-land/wegweiser
Communications

Mobile Phone
We ask that all students have a working phone for the duration of the program so that you can be reached in case of an emergency.

Many past program participants purchased an inexpensive cell phone and pay-as-you-go minutes after arrival in Germany. Site staff can help you with any questions you have about this process during orientation. The site staff will also assist you with establishing a local German number, and it is strongly recommended that you do so. A local number will help you to stay in contact with friends at the university and the site staff, especially in emergency situations. All emergency procedures will be explained and discussed in detail on the first day of orientation.

Telephone: Calling Germany from the U.S.
There are a lot of telephone companies in the U.S. that offer reasonable rates to call Germany. The best way to find out about rates is to have a look on the Internet. When calling Germany from the U.S., use the following country and area codes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Area Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>011 - 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>30 (from outside Germany) or 030 (from inside Germany)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Telephone: Calling the U.S. from Germany

For international calls, dial the country code for the U.S. (001) followed by the area code and the local number.

Please note that local calls are not free in Germany nor is there a flat fee for local calls. You pay for each call at a rate based on the time of day you call. However, it does not cost money to receive calls or texts.

Computers & Email
We recommend that, if possible, you bring a laptop with you. The big computer clusters at Humboldt are as busy and remain open for fewer hours than the labs at Brown.

Remember that, although you might not need a voltage converter, you should ideally bring appropriate adapters for German outlets. You can get these at a hardware or electronics store.

Make sure that your computer is insured under your family’s general household policy or a specialized student insurance policy.

You will get an email account when you have completed your Humboldt registration process. The account will remain active until the last day of the academic year (September 30). You will be able to use the eduroam wireless internet connection at all university campuses in Berlin (TU and FU, as well as Humboldt).
Appliances
Leave most electrical appliances at home. You can buy an inexpensive hairdryer or straightener in Germany without having to worry about voltage converters/transformers. Expect to have to purchase some kitchen supplies.
Metric Conversion Factors (Approximate)

Temperature

\[ \frac{5}{9} (\text{after subtracting } 32) \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>°C</th>
<th>-40</th>
<th>-10</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>100 (Wasser siedet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>°F</td>
<td>-40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>212 (water boils)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shoes and Clothing Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Women’s Europe</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>37</th>
<th>38</th>
<th>39</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>41</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s U.S.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Europe</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s U.S.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Women’s Europe</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>38</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>42</th>
<th>44</th>
<th>46</th>
<th>48</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s U.S.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Europe (pants)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s U.S. (pants)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Europe (shirts)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s U.S. (shirts)</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.75</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Checklist: Before Leaving Berlin

One month before you leave:

1. Three months before you leave Berlin, you’ll receive a letter template from the site staff to use when canceling your rental contract. Pass this on to your Hausverwaltung or your landlord.

Two weeks before you leave:

1. Hand in all your papers and coursework before the end of the semester.
2. Close your phone account, if you are not using a pay-as-you go plan.
3. Notify friends and family of your return itinerary.

One week before you leave:

1. Attend your professors’ office hours to personally obtain the Leistungsnachweise (Scheine) for your courses. Of course, the professor will need to have graded your final papers and exams for you to obtain the Leistungsnachweis.
2. Visit your bank and close your account.
3. Fill out the form stating that you are leaving the country (polizeiliches Abmeldeformular), which will be provided by the site staff.
4. Set your e-mail account at Humboldt to forward messages to your permanent account. Your account will remain active until the last day of that semester.

Last day before you leave:

1. Clean your apartment and leave it in the condition you found it in.
2. Have excess luggage shipped home!