



Preparation Checklist

Language Prerequisites

The more you know about Germany and the better you know German, the more you will get out of your time there. Take as many German courses as you possibly can before departure and try to read German during the summer so that you do not forget what you learned during the school year.

It will also be to your benefit to know as much as you can about American culture, history and politics. Germans are extremely well informed about European current events and know a great deal more about the U.S. than Americans generally know about Germany. Germans like to discuss contemporary issues and will probably ask you your opinion of NATO, environmental policy or racism in the U.S.

International Student ID

The International Student ID is extremely useful. It gives you discounts on travel, museums, cultural events such as theater tickets, and historical sites. You will find it easily pays for itself during the program. The cost is \$20 and it can be purchased through the Overseas & Off-Campus Programs Office at Lewis and Clark College or through a travel agent.

Banking

The most effective way to transfer funds during your time abroad is through a debit card because you can withdraw funds using ATMs located throughout the world. Funds are issued in local currency, thus avoiding fees for conversion, and can also be withdrawn in appropriate amounts, which eliminates the need to carry large sums of money.

German banks will not accept personal checks, so don't ask your parents to send you money that way. Since you will be in Munich for a year, we recommend opening a personal bank account at the Deutsche Bank. There you can have money sent to you in the form of an international bank draft drawable on a German bank and deposit it in your account. Credit cards are also accepted in Europe, but not as widely as in the U.S. For example, grocery stores and smaller stores (such as bookstores) do not accept credit cards.

Health & Insurance

No immunizations are required for travel in Europe. However, get a tetanus shot if you have not had one in the last 10 years. It is also a good idea to bring a small medicine kit with you. Some suggestions for items are: band-aids, aspirin, vitamins, and any prescription medication. If you wear glasses or contacts, take a back-up pair and a copy of your lens prescription.

Complete health insurance is provided through the program, starting immediately upon arrival in Germany. Insurance covers all necessary medication, hospitalization and treatment. It is, however, recommended that you see your dentist before you leave.

Mail and Phone

You will learn your exact address as soon as you arrive in Munich. Most students choose to purchase a mobile phone once in Munich. If you wish to give friends and family an address before you leave, give them the address of the institute. This address can be used as a mailing address for packages throughout the entire year. Expect airmail to take up to two weeks.

Sending Packages

If you wish to send some of your things ahead of time you may use the address of the Institute. Allow six to eight weeks for surface mail. Unless you are willing to pay heavy customs, do not specify the contents or exact value of the contents. Instead write "Used Clothing" or "Candy," etc. No medicine, not even aspirin, should be specified. The same procedure applies for Christmas or birthday packages sent by your family. The custom formalities at UPS are somewhat complicated, thus regular mail is preferable. Unless the content of the package is extremely valuable, do not insure it. It is very difficult to pick up insured packages and impossible for anyone but yourself to do so.

Passport & VISA

It is important that you have a valid passport when you enter Germany. You do not need to apply for a visa since you will be allowed to enter Germany with just your American passport. After your arrival, the program staff in Munich will process your visa application. If you are not an American citizen and do not belong to a Schengen Country (European Union), you will need to apply for your visa ahead of time.

Contact the local German consulate and submit your passport along with your acceptance to the University of Munich and the "Bestätigung" form, which is available at the Overseas Programs office. You will need to get a "Nationalvisum" not a "Schengenvisum".

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to and from Munich. The program in Munich begins on September 6, 2016. You may arrive between September 3-5. The program director will send you an email in May 2016 to ask for your arrival itinerary. A program assistant will pick you up when you arrive. If you plan to arrive before September 3, you will need to make your own arrangements.

EURAIL YOUTH PASS

Year of Study students travelling by train

If you plan to travel in Europe before or after the program, you may wish to consider the Eurail pass for train travel. You can purchase a Eurail Youth Pass for varying lengths of travel. This pass must be purchased in the U.S. and is available through most travel agencies. Another option within Germany is the DB BahnCard. For €60 you receive a 25% discount on all German trains for one year.

There are German rail passes similar to the American Eurail passes that allow you to travel throughout Europe. The railway system in Europe is a clean and efficient way to get around!

Necessary Equipment & Packing

LUGGAGE

You will be expected to carry your own luggage, sometimes for considerable distances along train platforms, so it is important that you choose lightweight yet sturdy luggage. You may not take more than two pieces of luggage on the airplane. A sleeping bag is not necessary for the

program. A day pack or travel backpack will definitely come in handy for weekend excursions or personal travel.

Some students have brought skis, guitars and bicycles with them. The airlines provide packing for such items, however, it is possible to buy second-hand or new equipment in Munich and sell it after the program. Students often purchase new or used bicycles in specialized stores or flea markets, and you can always rent skis. It is not recommended that you bring a lot of bulky equipment.

CLOTHING

The weather in Munich in the winter is cold. It is sometimes sunny, but winter temperatures are often in the 20s and 30s, so warm clothing is necessary. Germans wear lined boots and heavy coats during the winter, items that you might want to purchase after you have arrived. You can find everything you need in Munich if you should forget or run out of something.

A reminder: Do not bring bedding, lamps, stereos or boomboxes. Travel lightly by packing only what you absolutely need. If you find you can't get along without another sweater, you can buy one in Munich. You do not need to bring a year's supply of medication. Your insurance in Germany covers all medical costs including prescriptions

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What should I bring?

You are having to pack for a year-long trip. Munich has a climate similar to that of Portland (mild and rainy), but it can be very cold in winter. There are enough places to buy clothes and many of our students find winter clothes at good prices. One dressy outfit for operas, etc is recommended. A travel backpack is a good idea to bring for weekend trips and travel during the breaks. There are always radios, etc. to buy here (either from previous students or from a flea market). Some students bring their sports bikes for a small extra fee with most airlines. Medication is free, so you don't need to bring a year's supply unless you feel more comfortable that way. Bring your German dictionary.

2. Will I have enough money?

Your room and your health insurance are paid for. Depending on your lifestyle, you should calculate between €250 and €500 per month. €250 is the minimum you will need; this does

not include: theater tickets, overseas phone calls, etc. Also consider budgeting for weekend trips or travels during the breaks. About one-third of the students have a job (cleaning, babysitting, tutoring etc). This can supplement your allowance.

3. Will I get credit at my home institution?

Yes. Our program is designed to make sure that your credits transfer back to your college. However, it is important to contact your advisor prior to your departure. Our classes are outlined at Academic Program. The Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, the Technische Universität München and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München publish their course offerings and course descriptions in their course catalogues. There are standard courses (i.e. Organic Chemistry or Microeconomics), but about half of the courses change from semester to semester (i.e. The Automobile in the American Society).

4. Is my German good enough?

Two years of college German are usually sufficient. Speaking only German once you are here and participating actively in our German courses will ensure maximum progress. You also have the option of taking a two-month preparatory language course at the University of Munich in July and August.

5. Do I have time for activities?

We encourage our students to participate in the rich cultural life that Munich has to offer, both inside and outside academics, such as the university choir, university sports, concerts, plays or just meeting German people. The academic workload is designed to allow you sufficient free time to take part in these activities.

6. How hard is it to meet German people?

Sometimes Germans seem to be more reserved than Americans. The Studentenstadt is an optimal place for meeting Germans. There are several places to do this within and around the Studentenstadt such as: Cafes, clubs, bars etc. Joining a sports club, going to festivals and participating in community activities are great ways to meet Germans outside of the Studentenstadt.

7. Can I find a job?

Many of our students work throughout the year. Jobs range from working in a bagel shop to translating papers for companies or tutoring English. As long as you reserve enough time for your studies, working in Munich can be an interesting and rewarding experience.

8. Are university courses a lot different?

There are 60,000 students at the University of Munich and class sizes are therefore usually large. Students can take "Seminare," for which they are expected to give a presentation, write a paper and/or take an exam. At the end of the Seminar, you will receive a certificate stating that you have completed the requirements for the course, along with a grade. You may take courses your first semester at the university, and are expected to do so the second semester.

9. How do I get around in Munich?

The public transportation system here is not only extensive (Bus, Tram, U & S-Bahn), but easy to use. Munich is also a flat city, which makes it ideal for bike riding. There are more bike paths in Munich than in any other city in the world. Many of our students choose to ride their bikes in and around town. It is a 15 minute bike ride to the University from the Studentenstadt.

10. Should I bring my laptop?

There are computers available at the University of Munich, however not as many as you are used to. Often students have to wait to use a computer. We also have a computer in our classroom that may be used all the time. There is nothing wrong with bringing your own laptop, and if you chose to do so, just remember to bring an adaptor, since Germany has a different power system.