

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE DURDEN PROGRAM IN BREMEN

Important Contact Information

PROGRAM PREPARATIONS

Program Fees/Financial Aid

TRAVEL PREPARATIONS

Passport/Residence Permit
Information for International Students
Packing and Travel Information
Flight and Arrival Information

THE PROGRAM

The City of Bremen/University of Bremen

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Intensive Language Course/Use of German Language
Academic Standards/Academic Culture
Course Selection/Credit Transfer/Grades/Transcripts
Grade Equivalency/Physical Education/Internships
German Language Proficiency Test
Books/Library/Accessing the College Library Resources from Off-campus

LIFESTYLE ABROAD

Living Accommodations
Cultural Activities
Food and Shopping
Entertainment and Recreation

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Stipends/Bank Account/ATMs/Credit Cards/Fees
Spending Money/Part Time Work

COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Mail
Cell Phone/Telephone/Skype
Computers and Internet Access/E-mail

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVELING WHILE ABROAD

Bremen Public Transportation/Travel Transportation
Travel Guides/Hostels/Backpacks/International Student Identity Card
Safety while Traveling

HEALTH, INSURANCE & SAFETY

Health Care
Insurance FAQs
Health Matters

- Medical Check-ups/Immunizations/Inoculations/Medications
- Mental Health, Stability, and Stress/Special Accommodations
- Health and Safety in Flight/Health Tips

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Being Informed about the Host Country and World Affairs

Local Customs

Racial/Gender/Sexuality Issues

Suggested Readings/Websites

Welcome to the Durden Program in Bremen!

Dear Durden Program Participant:

This **Bremen Orientation Handbook** has been prepared to make your transition to Bremen a little smoother and provide you with important information on the German educational system and the social and academic foundations for a successful year studying at the University of Bremen.

If you have any questions, contact the Center for Global Study and Engagement (CGSE) at (717) 245-1341 or global@dickinson.edu. The Center for Global Study and Engagement is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (EST).

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IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Dialing telephone numbers abroad and in Bremen:

To dial directly from the U.S., dial (011-49) and then the area code minus "0" followed by the local number; to call a number from within Bremen from a cell phone, then dial "0" as well as the area code and the local number.

Examples

Contacting the Director from the US: 011-49-421-21869652

Contacting the Director from a cell phone in Bremen: 0421-21869652

Academic Director

Janine Ludwig

Akademische Direktorin - Dickinson-in-Bremen Program

Contributing Faculty Member of the German Dpt. at Dickinson

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Program Coordinator

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On-Campus Coordinator:

Professor Sarah McGaughey

German Department- Dickinson College

P.O. Box 1773

Carlisle, PA 17013

Tel: 717-245-1279

E-mail: mcsaugh@s@dickinson.edu

The Center for Global Study and Engagement:

Samantha Brandauer, Director of Study Abroad

E-mail: brandaus@dickinson.edu

Moira Kelley, Coordinator/Study Abroad Advisor

Email: kelleymo@dickinson.edu

The Center for Global Study and Engagement
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013-2896
Tel: 717-245-1341
FAX: 717-245-1688

Major Emergency Protocol:

If you need to contact the Center for Global Study and Engagement after hours for emergency assistance in a very serious situation, call the Dickinson College Public Safety 24-Hour Hotline **001-717-245-1111**, identify yourself and the program, describe the emergency briefly, and give a number for call back. The operator will locate the proper CGSE staff member, who will return the call.

CGSE's College Travel Agency:

Advantage Travel
313 East Willow Street
Syracuse, NY 13203
Tel: 1-800-788-1980
FAX: 315-471-6264
E-mail: Mary Anne Clark
maclark@advantagecny.com

German Embassy in the U.S.:

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
4645 Reservoir Road NW
Washington, DC 20007
Phone (202) 298-4000

http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/01_Embassy/Washington/00/Home.html

(There are German Consulates in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and San Francisco.)

Embassy of the United States - Berlin

Pariser Platz 2
10117 Berlin Germany
Tel: +49 (0) 30-8305-0
<http://germany.usembassy.gov>

Embassy of the United States Berlin (postal address):
Clayallee 170
14191 Berlin
GERMANY

U.S. Consulate in Hamburg:

Alsterufer 27/28
20354 Hamburg
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: (040) 411 71-415
After-hours emergencies only: (040) 411 71-300
Fax: (040) 41 32 79 33
<http://hamburg.usconsulate.gov/>

PROGRAM PREPARATIONS

Program Fees/Financial Aid

Program Fees:

The program fee for the 2015-2016 academic year is \$61,376; for a single semester the fee is \$30,688. Please find more details about this in the section below.

Students at Dickinson College will receive invoices from the Student Accounts Office that show credit for the \$300 confirmation fee and any applicable amounts from your financial aid package.

Arrangements for any type of monthly payment plan options should be made as soon as possible through Tuition Management Systems (1-800-722-4867, x 775, or www.afford.com). If the balance due on your account is not paid by the deadline noted on the billing, or if special arrangements have not been made with Student Accounts (Tel. 717-245-1953 or email: stuaccts@dickinson.edu), you will not be allowed to participate in the program.

For Academic Year students: The program fee includes the following: tuition and fees, housing, board, German health and accident insurance (*gesetzliche Krankenversicherung*) starting on October 1, local transportation allowance, cultural reimbursements, and scheduled group excursions. **Not included in the program fee are:** roundtrip airfare to/from Germany, required primary health and accident insurance purchased in the U.S., vacation travel, and personal expenses.

Academic-year students will pay directly for their enrollment in the summer intensive language course and for living and travel expenses until 1 October; therefore, their student account will be *credited* for \$3,000 of the program fee, bringing the final billing amount to \$58,376 for the Academic Year; \$27,688 for the Fall Semester. Students will need \$3,000 of their own funds up front to pay the expenses. Financial aid will eventually cover the \$3,000 amount for students who are eligible. Please inquire directly with your summer language institution about how you can pay your bill. Either ask if U.S. checks are accepted, or if you can transfer money to them.

For Spring Semester students: The program fee of \$30,688 includes: the spring intensive language program, tuition and fees, housing, board, German health and accident insurance (*gesetzliche Krankenversicherung*) starting on April 1, local transportation allowance, cultural reimbursements, and scheduled group excursions. **Not included in the program fee are:** roundtrip airfare to/from Germany, required primary health and accident insurance purchased in the U.S., vacation travel, and personal expenses.

From October 1 (for academic year and fall students)/arrival in February (for spring students) to the end of the academic program, students on the program receive a monthly living allowance to pay for food, books, and living expenses in Bremen.

Financial Aid Information:

Dickinson grant money and endowed scholarships are available only to Dickinson College students on Dickinson programs. Students from other colleges and universities should check with their own financial aid office to determine eligibility.

TRAVEL PREPARATIONS

Passport and Residence Permit

The responsibility for ensuring that you have a valid passport and visa in time for your program is ultimately your responsibility.

Passport Information:

A valid passport that **does not expire for 6 months beyond the end date of the program** is required to enter any country. If your passport expires before the required validity, you will have to acquire a new passport before departure and/or before applying for a visa. **If you have not applied for your passport, you must do so immediately.** For more information and the passport application, contact the Carlisle United States Post Office at 66 West Louther Street.

Also, you should make a few photocopies of your passport for your records and to carry with you when traveling within Germany.

Residence Permit:

Please note that a visa is not required for U.S. citizens to enter Germany. You must obtain a residence permit for the duration of your time in Bremen within the first three months of your stay in Germany. For more information, see the “Registering with the Authorities” section. Also, upon departure from Bremen, you will need to de-register from the country (“Meldebestätigung – Abmeldung”).

Information for International Students

If you are not a U.S. citizen, it is your responsibility to research your status, and whether or not you need to obtain a visa, obtain any special entry papers, or other documentation that may be required for entry. Contact the host country embassy in your country of citizenship for assistance. Depending on the country’s requirements, you may have to apply in person at that Embassy/Consulate.

SEVIS Information for International Students at Dickinson:

Since you will still be a Dickinson Student while abroad, you are required to pursue a course of study that is considered a full course load at your abroad institution in order to maintain your F-1 status. You will be registered in SEVIS each semester, just as you are while on-campus at Dickinson.

Also, please remember to have your I-20 endorsed for travel prior to your departure from campus.

Packing and Travel Information

Packing Tips:

When planning what to take with you, the first rule is to take the minimum amount of clothes possible. You will accumulate things while abroad, so pack accordingly. When in doubt—leave it at home! Be practical and focus on the essentials of a wardrobe. The weather in Bremen stays mild most of the year, rains a fair amount, and snows occasionally in winter. However, there can be a few very cold days in winter (down to 10/15 degrees Fahrenheit) as well as hot day in summer (up to 90 degrees Fahrenheit). Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve different seasons and temperatures.

Travel with no more baggage than you can carry! Keep in mind as well that airlines have cut back on the number of checked baggage allowed and the weight limit. Check with your airline to confirm luggage allowances in order to avoid extra charges. See more details below on TSA and airline requirements.

Here are some wardrobe suggestions:

- work around a basic scheme of coordinated colors to minimize the number of clothing items (black is always appropriate)
- a sturdy, comfortable pair of walking shoes that are WELL BROKEN IN; a nice pair of dressier shoes; hiking boots
- 1-3 nice outfits (ties for men) – for special occasions, official and formal events
- warm gloves, hat, and scarf
- slippers/house shoes
- a rain and windproof coat with either a zip-in lining OR an additional warm coat or winter jacket
- a sturdy folding umbrella
- swim suit (and a beach towel, if you feel the need) and sandals
- **extra pair of contact lenses, eyeglasses and prescription**

Other Useful Suggestions:

- If you already have one, a laptop with wireless capabilities. Most recent laptops come with converters built in the AC adaptor, but make sure you check this. If you do not have the proper converter (i.e. one that can convert 230 volt current), then you will ruin your hard drive.
- a USB/memory stick for transferring work between computers
- a converter/adaptor plugs that can be used for electric shavers, etc. Wall outlets provide 230 volts, which will ruin your U.S. appliances if you do not use the appropriate converter. (Tip for women: buy a hairdryer in Germany)
- Space/Vacuum bags (can be found at Wal-Mart or Target and condense the amount of space your clothing uses in your luggage)
- luggage ID tags inside and out of your luggage
- international phone numbers for computer and credit cards
- a money belt or neck pouch to secure valuables
- backpack for traveling and hostelling purposes
- shower sandals
- a small first aid kit
- all medications (both non-prescription and prescription) need to be in their original, labeled containers. Take copies of all prescriptions with you.
- Sunglasses
- favorite photos of family and friends are nice to have for decorating your room or showing to your new friends/family
- a few token gifts, something typically American or representative of the area in which you live in the U.S., or from Dickinson College.

Dickinson provides students with bedding. You do not need to bring blankets or linens. One towel per person will be provided. For the first few days, pack a bar of soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, and a washcloth. Most toiletries will be available, although brands are frequently different. **If you have a particular type of toiletry that you like to use, you may want to bring it with you.**

Packing tips from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA):

- Do not pack oversized electronics (laptops, full-size video game consoles, DVD players and video cameras that use cassettes) in your checked baggage when possible. However, please be advised that you will be required to remove these items from your carry-on bag and submit them separately for x-ray screening. Small electronics, such as iPods, can remain in your carry-on.
- Prepare your 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag of liquids before arriving at the airport, following the 3-1-1 guideline (place liquids into 3.4 ounce bottle or less (by volume); all bottles should be carried in one 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag)

- Pack all your coats and jackets in your checked baggage when possible. All coats and jackets must go through the X-ray machine for inspection.
- Do not wrap gifts. If a security officer needs to inspect a package, they may have to unwrap your gift. Please wait until you've reached your final destination to wrap gifts.
- Undeveloped film should go in your carry-on bag. You will be able to declare film that is faster than 800-speed to a transportation security officer for physical inspection to avoid being X-rayed.
- You are required to remove footwear for X-ray screening so wear shoes that are easy to take off and put back on.
- Double check the contents of your pockets, bags, and carry-on luggage to ensure no prohibited items were inadvertently packed.
- When in doubt, leave it out. If you're not sure about whether you can bring an item through the checkpoint, put it in your checked bag or leave it at home.
- For more information, visit www.tsa.gov.

Carry-on and Checked Luggage:

BAGGAGE REGULATIONS: Call the airline directly or go online to inquire about baggage regulations. A backpack with a frame must be checked as one of these allowed pieces. (It should be noted that a backpack has been found useful by past participants due to the amount of traveling you will be doing). Attach a label on the outside of your luggage and place a name and address label inside.

In most cases, you are allowed one piece of carry-on luggage not to exceed 45 total inches, which must fit under the seat in front of you or in an overhead bin. Make sure your luggage follows TSA regulations. Weigh your luggage before you arrive at the airport to ensure it is not overweight. Remember that bags should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down crowded train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. A coat and a handbag, briefcase, or laptop may also be carried on. Also, in case your luggage is delayed for a few days, be sure to pack a change of clothes and any medicine or toiletries you would need in your carry-on bag.

Keep in mind that baggage requirements for intra-European flights are different from transatlantic flights. When traveling on low-cost airlines, you may have to pay a fee for each checked bag.

LAPTOP: If you bring a laptop, it will be considered one of your carry-on items. You should purchase insurance to cover it in case it is stolen or damaged.

VALUABLES: Carry extra cash and travelers checks in a money belt or neck pouch. Do not carry all your cash in one place. Never pack money, valuables, or important documents in your checked luggage!

LOST LUGGAGE: Make a list of everything you pack, then bring a copy of the list with you and leave a copy at home. This will be helpful if your luggage is lost and you need to identify the items and cost of your luggage. If your luggage is lost or mishandled, you must file a claim with airline personnel immediately. Do not leave the airport thinking it will be easier to do so at a later time. It won't be.

Airlines don't refund lost baggage unless you have original receipts, so keep the items you care about with you at all times when traveling.

Travel Documents:

Before departure you should make copies of all of your important documents. Leave one set of copies with your family and take one with you to keep in a safe place separate from your original documents.

- The information page of your passport
- Insurance policies and contact information
- Your airline ticket
- Front and back of credit cards and phone numbers for credit card replacement (you cannot dial an 800-number from overseas so you will need a direct number).

- Travelers check numbers
- Contents of your wallet
- Prescription medications
- Rail passes

Immediate Cash/Travel Funds:

You will need some ready cash when you arrive at your program site. ATM cards with international service (Cirrus or Plus) are accepted throughout Europe and have become the most common way of transferring money for students. Typically, the exchange rate is more favorable than exchanging US dollars or travelers checks at an overseas bank. Still, you might want to carry approximately €100.00 in cash and an equal amount or less in travelers checks for an emergency fund. You can find more information in the Financial Information section of the handbook

Flight and Arrival Information

Travel Arrangements:

All students are responsible for arranging and paying for their own international flight to Germany.

ARRIVAL:

- For fall and all year students, October 1 is the preferred option, however, if you cannot stay that late at the place where you do your intensive language course; please contact the Dickinson office in Bremen in advance. Depending on the number of apartments available before October 1, exceptions for arriving early can be made.
- For spring students, you can arrive in Bremen between February 7th and 8th.

DEPARTURE:

- In principle, all year-long students and spring-semester students can depart after July 18, 2015, which is when classes end. However, in some cases it could happen that classes require a final exam the week after the end of class session. So we recommend to leave the earliest a week after classes end, or to book a flight that can be changed to stay even longer. Please be aware that many classes will require a long paper to be written AFTER the end of the semester – since you need to incorporate a lot of specific literature in such papers, it is recommended that you complete all coursework while still in Bremen instead of taking it home where you might face difficulties finishing it.

If you would like the assistance of a travel agent to arrange your flight, you can contact CGSE's travel agent, Advantage Travel. When you have booked your flight, please complete the flight itinerary questionnaire found on the online application system at <http://dickinson.studioabroad.com>.

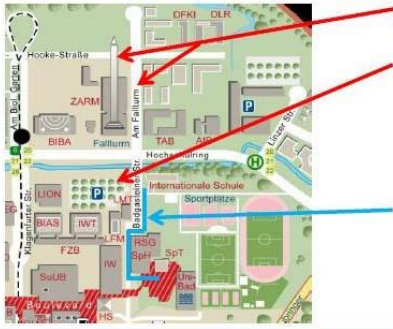
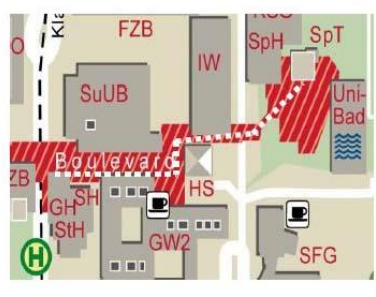
In general, passengers on international flights need to be at the airport at least 3 hours before departure. Be sure to leave yourself plenty of time for potential delays due to increased security measures. You will need your passport to check in and when you land, so keep it in your carry-on luggage.

Clearing Immigration and Customs:

Upon arrival in Germany, you will go through a Passport Control Station (**Passkontrolle**), and then proceed to the baggage pickup area (**Gepäckausgabe**). When you have retrieved your luggage, there will be a Customs Check (**Zollabfertigung**) with two exits. The green one is for those with nothing to declare. The red one is for those who are carrying dutiable goods. Once you have cleared customs, you will proceed to ground transportation where you can travel from the airport to the local train station. Some trains depart directly from the airport, depending on the destination.

Getting to the Dickinson Room at the University of Bremen:

Dickinson-in-Bremen, Uni Bremen SpT C 5200
 Tel. +49 421 218 69571 dickinson.info@gmail.com

Arrival by CAR	Arrival by PLANE	Arrival by TRAIN
<p>GPS: Badgasteiner Str., 28359 Bremen</p> <p>Without GPS: Take exit „Universität“ on A27, at the first intersection turn right onto <i>Hochschulring</i>, take the first street on the left</p> <p>From the airport: Take A281 towards <i>Oldenburg</i>, exit immediately onto B6 towards <i>Center/Cuxhaven</i>, stay left, follow signs to <i>Universität</i>. Once on <i>Hochschulring</i>, turn right in front of (drop) tower into <i>Badgasteiner Str.</i></p>	<p>TAXI Trip is approx. 30 € Address for taxi driver: Badgasteiner Str. 28359 Bremen / right across „Fallturm“ (drop tower) University of Bremen</p> <p>CAR RENTAL All car rental providers are located beyond the tram tracks, outside the airport</p>	<p>TAXI Trip is approx. 15 € Address for taxi driver: Badgasteiner Str. 28359 Bremen / right across „Fallturm“ (drop tower) University of Bremen</p> <p>TRAM Tram stop: Exit main station towards the city, keep left towards tram stops Line: No. 6 going to „Universität“, platform E Tickets: machine inside the tram (coins, small bills) or at the BSAG ticket booth, across from platform E Get off: at „Universität Zentralbereich“ (14min ride)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Parking</p>  <p>Free parking</p> <p>Parking lot, 0,70 € upfront, coins only</p> <p>Way to Sportturm (SpT): From Badgasteiner Str. proceed along the garage to the courtyard (with trees), take brick stairs on the left</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Way to „Sportturm“ (SpT)</p>  <p>Exit tram at „Universität Zentralbereich“</p> <p>Walk up all stairs inside the glass hall</p> <p>On the boulevard, go right, follow the boulevard all the way</p>	
<p>Enter the building, elevators are straight ahead (through glass door), on the 5th floor, take the right hallway, then the last door on the right side, room C 5200</p>		

Registering with Authorities:

Students with U.S. passports are allowed to enter Germany without a visa, but will be required to obtain a residence permit when they reach Bremen. By law, everyone in Germany, Germans as well as foreigners, must report their place of residence and any changes in residence. Within three months of your arrival in Germany, you must have a residency permit (**Aufenthaltstitel**). We recommend that you apply for this as soon as possible after you arrive in Bremen; it will cost about €100. This is a cost for which you will be reimbursed. On-site staff will give you directions to the office that will issue your visa (**Ausländerbehörde**), give you a residency registration form (**Anmeldung bei der Meldebehörde**), and sign as your sponsor. When you turn in the completed forms, you will be given a receipt. Keep this document in a safe place, as you will need it for banking and at the end of the year to finish paperwork before your departure.

A new initiative of the American Embassy in Berlin allows all Americans in Germany to obtain automatic security updates and Public Announcements by e-mail. To subscribe to this service, simply send a blank e-mail to GermanyACS@state.gov and type the word “SUBSCRIBE” on the subject line.

THE PROGRAM

The City of Bremen:

Bremen, a beautiful old Hanseatic city with a 1000-year-old history and a population of 500,000, is one of Germany's most important commercial harbors. The city center, still surrounded by earthen ramparts and a moat (now a park), is filled with fine examples of medieval and renaissance architecture. These include St. Peter's Cathedral (**Dom**), with its lead-encrusted crypt and mummies in open coffins and the picturesque town hall (**Rathaus**), with its grand facade of rose-colored brick and arcade. Nearby are the famous statue of the Bremen town musicians (**Bremer Stadtmusikanten**), the Guild House of the merchants (**Schütting**), and, of course, Bremen's trademark, the stone statue of **Roland** that stands five meters tall. From here, one can discover other parts of the old city: the **Schnoor**, **Böttcherstrasse**, and the **Schlachte**.

Besides the charming treasures of the main market square, the city boasts a large and modern business section. It is home to a wide range of companies, including Beck's Beer and branch offices of the EADS Airbus industry or Mercedes-Benz. Radio Bremen has earned acclaim for having one of the most innovative television studios of the ARD public broadcasting network. Bremen's theaters offer classical drama and opera, as well as experimental plays, dialect plays, and puppet theater. The rustic art colony of **Worpswede** is not far from the city, and Hamburg, the second largest city in Germany, is only 70 minutes away by rail.

When you first get to Bremen, a city map (**Stadtplan**) will be made available to you by the program. The map shows all the streets and all the public transportation lines.

The University of Bremen:

The University is located in the city's North-Eastern district of Horn-Lehe. Founded in 1971, it has a student population of about 20,000. The University offers a full range of courses in the natural sciences, humanities, engineering, social sciences, education, and sports, along with special German language and literature course options for foreign students. The University of Bremen is unusual among German universities in that it is relatively new and has a genuine campus feel with academic buildings, a library, a dining hall and a bookstore all in one place. The University is expanding, adding new research facilities at a rapid pace.

During a recent German initiative to identify the country's best universities ("Exzellenzinitiative"), the media dubbed the University of Bremen the "Marvel on the Weser," and Bremen was named among the top 11 institutions of higher learning ("Elite Universities") in Germany. Hallmarks of a University of Bremen education include interdisciplinary study and research, research-based teaching projects and a pervasive focus on internationalization. Among other fields, the university is especially strong in social sciences (a department which includes political studies, European studies, etc.), ecology-/sustainability-related fields, and marine biology, as is shown in the three institutions that are being facilitated by the "Initiative for Excellence:" The "Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences" (BIGSSS), the Excellence Cluster "The Ocean in the Earth – MARUM," and the Graduate school for marine sciences GLOMAR ("Global Change in the Marine Realm").

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

DAAD Summer Intensive Language Course (for academic year and fall students):

Academic year and fall students choose and apply to a Summer Intensive Language Course (**Sommerkurs**) through the German Academic Exchange Service (**DAAD**) and make travel plans accordingly. As soon as you have been accepted into a language course, **please email the name, address, contact information, and dates of the program to the on-campus coordinator, Professor Sarah McGaughey (mcgaughs@dickinson.edu), and to Samantha Brandauer (brandaus@dickinson.edu) in the Center for Global Study and Engagement.**

Communicate with the Program Director before the end of your summer course (by September 1 at the latest) about the day and time of your arrival in Bremen. The director can arrange to have someone meet you at the airport/main station and take you to your room and the University of Bremen. Many students travel before the language course and the beginning of semester. Students who have a valid academic reason for arriving before Oct. 1 should contact the program least four weeks in advance with a request for accommodations. It is vital that you inform the Bremen office early on about all your pre-semester travel plans; please write an e-mail to Verena Mertz: mertv@dickinson.edu.

IMPORTANT: At the end of the intensive language program, you must request a certificate of completion (*Bescheinigung*) and a grade. You need both this document and a grade to receive credit for the course.

If academic year and fall students do choose to travel after the summer course and before the fall semester begins, they should arrive in Bremen on October 1. The program orientation will probably begin on October 5.

Intensive Language Course (for spring-semester program):

Spring-semester students will be enrolled in seven-weeks of intensive language coursework, divided in two blocks, in Bremen. A placement exam will determine which course level is appropriate for you.

Use of the German Language:

Students are expected to use the German language in all communication both in and out of the classroom. Students are also encouraged to get involved in activities in order to meet German students and make contacts for practicing German.

Academic Standards:

Each participant in the program is expected to be in residence in Bremen while classes are in session and is required to regularly attend those classes for which transfer credit is sought. Students are expected to participate in the excursions offered as an integral part of the program and to take full advantage of the cultural offerings of the University of Bremen. Because the program includes weekend trips and other events, please notify the director should you travel during the semester. Before making travel plans for the semester break, make sure you know the dates of the Vienna trip in February.

Academic Culture:

Studying in Bremen, at least during the first weeks, is likely to feel confusing and at times a little daunting. The German university system is fundamentally different from undergraduate programs in the U.S. The German system promotes independent study and individual inquiry over structured assigned reading and continuous assessment. If you assume responsibility for your own learning, you will have a rich, rewarding year. This task will be made easier if you make an effort to talk to your professors and take on projects that interest you. Even though the seminars will be bigger than you are used to, you should not be discouraged to talk in class. Your fellow classmates will understand that there may be a language barrier,

and you should not allow that to intimidate you. Furthermore, the on-site staff are there to aid you not only in all aspects of your academic planning, but also to supervise internships, to help clear up misunderstandings, and to deal with problems as they arise.

At German universities, course catalogues are not distributed to students. A complete course listing is available online at:

<http://www.uni-bremen.de/studium/lehrveranstaltungen/veranstaltungsverzeichnis.html>

Course Selection/Registering for Classes:

You need to consult with the director regularly during the course selection process; the director will advise you about the appropriate type/level of course as well as the number of course credits likely to be assigned to each selection. You will register for classes after your arrival in Bremen. During the first week of each semester, you should sit in on classes that interest you before making a final commitment.

The only required course is the Comparative Cultures course (GERMAN 340) taught by the director in the fall semester.

Otherwise, you may enroll in most courses offered at the University of Bremen, provided you have the appropriate linguistic skills and academic background to do well in them. Students are also required to enroll in special university German language courses called **studienbegleitende Sprachkurse**, unless they have already reached the C1 level after completing their summer intensive language course. German majors are encouraged to enroll in at least one German Studies or German literature course while studying at the University of Bremen. Options at the University for Independent Study are available. Students should consult with the on-campus coordinator at Dickinson and their major advisor(s) when choosing their courses.

Credit Transfer:

Credit Transfer:

During the academic year, students should enroll in four courses per semester. Five courses constitute a course overload, for which a student must apply. It is not recommended to take more than four courses in the first semester in Bremen.

For successful completion of a normal full-time course load at the University of Bremen, you can receive the equivalent of eight to nine course credits for the year or up to four and a half (4.5) course credits each semester without a course overload. One Dickinson course credit is equal to 6 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). Courses with 3 ECTS transfer to Dickinson as half a credit (0.5) and courses with 9 ECTS equal 1.5 credits.

The Intensive Language Course taken outside of the academic semester in the summer or before the spring semester counts as one course credit towards the 32 needed to graduate and is not included in the full-time course load at the University of Bremen. It does not count towards the German major or minor.

Including the one course credit for successful completion of the Intensive Language Course, you may transfer a maximum of ten (10) total credits for the year or five (5) for the semester.

- Typically, you will earn one (1) course credit for a regular university course, i.e., lectures and seminars (***Vorlesungen und Seminare***). The required work may vary – the most common format is one oral presentation plus a paper of 10-15 pages or an oral presentation plus a written or oral exam. Please note that the pages are 1.5-spaced on A4 paper and calculated based on the amount of text in the paper.

- You will earn a one-half (0.5) course credit for successful, graded completion of skill courses, such as the *studienbegleitende Sprachkurse* in German or other foreign language courses. The *studienbegleitende Sprachkurse* in German do not count towards the German major or minor.
- To receive credit for a course, you must show satisfactory performance at a level equivalent to a Dickinson “C” (3.7 on the German scale) or above. Courses that are taken pass/fail will not be accepted for transfer credit.
- Only liberal arts classes will qualify for transfer credit.
- Generally speaking, a course must have an equivalent at Dickinson in order for you to earn credit. Exceptions include classes that focus on the culture and/or history of the country in which the student is studying.
- Transfer credit will not be awarded for coursework that duplicates what a student has already completed at Dickinson.
- Must be taken for a grade; pass/fail courses are not allowed.

Grades/Transcript:

For each successfully completed course, you will have to ask the professor for a certificate (a *Schein* provided by the program), which you will hand in to the director. Using these originals and the Grade Equivalency Chart the Registrar will convert the German notation to an equivalent letter grade. All courses will appear on the Dickinson transcript with (translated) course titles and letter grades, but the grades for Uni Bremen courses will not calculate into your cumulative GPA.

German 340, the Comparative Cultures courses taught by the Academic Director during the fall semester, is an official Dickinson course, is not a transfer credit, and will be calculated into the GPA.

Grade Equivalency Chart

Bremen grades	Dickinson equivalent
1	A
1,3	A
1,7	A
2,0	A-
2,3	B+
2,7	B
3,0	B-
3,3	C+
3,7	C
4	D
5	F

Physical Education Activities:

Students who take formal instruction in physical education or play on an organized university team in Bremen and have written proof of successful completion of the program may receive credit from the physical education department on the Dickinson campus. Official standards regarding credit from the physical education activities abroad are as follows: 1) the activity is currently offered; 2) the student

secures the approval of the Durden Program Director; 3) the student participates in an activity for a length of time equivalent to (or greater than) that of a similar activity at Dickinson (as a guideline, 20-22 hours of supervised instruction = 1 block); 4) the student chooses an activity which does not duplicate a physical education course already completed at Dickinson; and 5) the student's participation is documented by the instructor of the class or by the Durden Program Director. Credit for self-paced activities will not be permitted.

Upon returning to campus, the student should present to the chair of the Physical Education Department the appropriate documentation of participation. Alternatively, the Durden Program Director may verify to the department chair that the student has participated in a supervised, structured program of physical activity for which credit should be given. In either case, the department chair will notify the Registrar's Office of those persons who are to receive physical education credit.

Internships:

The program strongly encourages students to complete an internship. It is not only a great asset for your resume, but also a means of immersing yourself into the German culture on a different level and in a different way than in the academic realm.

If you are interested in doing an internship in Bremen, you should discuss possibilities and your interests in the fall with the Durden Program Director. Please note that there is no guarantee that a student will receive an internship. However, the director will help you as much as possible to secure an internship, given you show the necessary dedication. For some internships, the student's level of spoken and written German needs to be fairly high to function in the internship environment. You will receive an internship certificate/reference.

Students should contact the Career Center for the internship form and more information about internships while abroad. Due to the differing academic calendars, TNP may not always be possible. For instance, you would have to start your internship in late October if you were to register it through TNP for the fall semester. Usually, internships take place either during the semester break (February/March) or during the spring semester (**Sommersemester**). While most internships are unpaid, Dickinson offers funding options, such as the SIRF or the Müller-Petersen-Hach Internship Grant (MPH).

In principle, it is also possible to arrange a one-month full-time internship from mid-July to mid-August. Please inquire with director in Bremen about this option.

German Language Proficiency Test:

Those who become truly proficient in German should consider taking an academic German language proficiency test (TestDaF). If you pass this difficult test, you will receive a document (**Bescheinigung**) that certifies your language ability and will enable you to study at any German university you wish at any time in the future. If you are at all serious about returning to Germany to study, this is an important addition to your CV. It is also useful for letters of recommendation from the German department, should you apply for work or a graduate program in Germany. The Foreign Language Institute (**Fremdsprachenzentrum**) offers a special preparatory course for this test. Ask the director about the catalogue of the Institute's offerings.

Books/Library/Reading assignments:

Unlike the American system, courses in German universities sometimes do not have assigned textbooks, nor does the professor always assign homework. However, there is an e-learning module to which the professor may upload texts that you have to read for the respective session. In addition, the professor will present a reading list at the beginning of the course and a selection of books on a special shelf in the

library (“Handapparat” or “Seminarapparat”). The reading load will appear smaller than it is at Dickinson, however, you will be expected to do much more autonomous study and research. Therefore, it is important that you read independently and widely from this reading list. **In the first weeks and months, you should read substantially** so that you have a basis for understanding the lecture and discussion. As you read, keep a journal in which you write (in German!) about what you have read, argue for or against the premise of the author, and note cross-references with class discussions and other readings. This sort of journaling, which is a traditional learning tool for German students, will help you formulate ideas for your seminar paper. Note that you must go beyond reproducing arguments discussed in the course and in readings, and instead you should generate your own critical approaches and ideas on the arguments presented. German professors and instructors expect students to formulate their own line of argument on the topics of the course. At the same time, they also expect full research papers written in a German academic style, which includes bibliographies and extensive citation.

For language courses (and as an aid for writing papers), it may be useful to purchase a grammar textbook and a good dictionary. We recommend investing in an all-German pocket dictionary, such as Wahrig.

You will have full access to the University of Bremen library. During orientation the on-site staff will guide you through the process of obtaining a library card.

Accessing College Library Resources from Off-campus:

If the libraries at the University do not have the resources you need, or if you have trouble getting the assistance you need for your research projects, please remember that you can access all the resources and services from Dickinson College Library no matter where you are. All you need to do is to go to the Dickinson Global Library page (http://lis.dickinson.edu/Library/Research/Global_Library/LibraryResourcePage.htm).

You can access the page on the library website under “For Students,” or “For Faculty,” or “Doing Research.”

From the Dickinson Global Library page, you will find detailed information on

- How to find journal articles through the online databases
- How to find books and have them sent to you
- Research resources available online such as subject guides and online reference works
- And most important of all, how to get in touch with a Dickinson College librarian via phone, email, and instant messaging and get the assistance you need.

LIFESTYLE ABROAD

Living Accommodations:

All students will live in a private student dormitory (called **Studentenwohnheim**) not far from the Bremen campus. The dorm is comprised of small efficiency units rented by Dickinson. Some students may share an apartment with another Dickinson student, others will live in a single. Each apartment is equipped with a kitchenette and a bathroom, and each student has his or her own private (bed)room. the Durden Program will provide all necessary furnishings, kitchen utensils, carpets, and beddingso that students will find a functional and equipped home on the very first day when they arrive.

Exceptions to these living accommodations may be made for students who wish to apply to live in student suites (**Wohngemeinschaften** or **WG's**) or in private rooms in town. Living in a WG is highly recommended, but it does involve commitment and activities form the student's side: Interested students should contact us months before their stay and look for room offers themselves. Should the rent be higher than in the Studentenwohnheim, students have to cover additional costs of living themselves. Please speak to the director, if you are interested in this type of housing option.

Cultural Activities:

For cultural activities you undertake, you will be reimbursed by the program up to the amount of 200 € per semester.

Food and Shopping:

Germany has many regional dishes, too numerous to mention here. While in Bremen you will want to try some of the specialties of the area. Because of its proximity to the sea, Bremen has many fish specialties; try as many as you can until you find your favorites. German restaurants usually offer options for Vegetarians (**Vegetarier**).

Besides sausage and beer, Germany is known for the many kinds of delicious breads and rolls (**Brötchen**) that can be bought fresh every morning at the bakery or market.

Shopping tips: the larger stores in Germany close at 8 p.m. on weekdays and at 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Stores are closed on Sundays. Besides shopping in the local supermarkets, try shopping at one of the open-air markets (the equivalent of farmers markets in the U.S.). A few stores may close for lunch.

Entertainment and Recreation:

There is a lot to do in Bremen, both at the University and in the city. At the start of each semester, brochures about sports opportunities are widely distributed on campus. If you want to get involved, do so early on; it is a good way to make friends. Avoid clinging together as an American or a Dickinson contingent.

Another great way to interact with German students is the through the Study Buddy and Tandem Program offered by the University of Bremen. Students will be paired with German students who are interested in exchanging ideas about their field of studies (Study Buddy) or would like to focus on mutual language practice (Tandem – German/English). The students can also easily meet other international students by attending ERASMUS meet ups and events, which are organized by German students interested in meeting visiting international students.

At first, it will probably be up to you to take the initiative. You will learn German much more quickly this way and will begin to make friends and feel more comfortable. Most Germans have studied English for nearly ten years. Avoid falling into the comfort of speaking English with them. Practice German!

The University of Bremen offers a variety of different sports classes that usually take place in the evening hours. A fitness center is located inside the sports tower and the swimming pool and other sport venues are located around it. The Durden Program reimburses students for up to 50 € worth of sport classes a semester. This usually covers up to three normal sport classes. However, the money can also be used to cover the costs of joining one of many local sports club in the city. This is a great opportunity for students to interact with Bremen residents of all ages and backgrounds outside of the university sphere.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ACADEMIC YEAR STUDENTS: Academic-year students enrolling in a summer intensive language course will need to plan for extra personal expenses, including food, accommodations, and travel during the time between the end of the language course and their arrival in Bremen. In planning for these expenses, US\$3000 was deducted for the fall semester's tuition and fees. For students, this equates to a reduced fee in the fall, resulting in a credit which enables each student to cover these costs before arriving in Bremen. The program stipend will begin on October 1 for full-year students, on February 1 for Spring semester students.

MONTHLY STIPENDS: Your monthly stipend will be 400 €. All stipends will end in July (last transaction). Spring students arriving in February will enroll in an intensive language course in Bremen (paid by Dickinson). In February and March, spring-only students will receive a monthly ticket for local transportation until they receive the student pass upon registering for the summer semester at the university.

Bank Account:

Once you are in Bremen, the on-site staff will help you open a bank account at Sparkasse Bremen. It is free to open up a bank account. Your monthly allowance will be deposited by direct transfer (**Überweisung**); you will also be able to pay bills by direct transfer. Sparkasse is a bank with an ATM on the university campus and numerous branches throughout Germany. It is your responsibility to close your bank account before you leave.

ATMs:

Before leaving the U.S., check to see whether your bank can transfer funds directly to your Bremen account. Once you have established a German account, you can provide the U.S. bank with the international bank number (IBAN or SWIFT) in Germany.

An ATM card that accesses a checking account in a U.S. bank is also useful, especially when traveling, and is widely accepted in European countries. The ATM card must be in your name.

Credit Cards:

Many major credit cards (e.g. Visa and Mastercard) are accepted abroad, depending on the country. With a VISA card, you may obtain cash advances at a German bank. Penalties for exceeding a card limit are more severe in Europe than in the United States. A credit card can be very useful for big purchases, such as restaurants, hotels, shops, and airline tickets, or for an emergency, during which you can track your spending. When you use a credit card it should be in your name and you should verify your credit limit before you travel to Germany.

Check on Fees with Bank and Credit Card Companies:

Before leaving the U.S., check with your local bank and credit card companies about fees for using your card overseas. Many banks and credit card issuers impose additional charges on foreign transactions; others such as Capitol One (at least at print time) do not. If the fees are hefty, consider withdrawing larger amounts of cash from the ATM and taking only what you need and keeping the rest in a safe place. Only use credit cards with high fees for big purchases or in emergencies.

You should notify your bank and credit card companies that you are going abroad for an extended period of time; make sure to inform them of the countries to which you intend on traveling. Otherwise, when they see charges on your card from a foreign country, they may assume that your card has been stolen and suspend your account. Keep a separate record of your credit card numbers and phone numbers of the companies so you can report theft or loss of your card quickly.

Spending Money:

Students sometimes ask how much spending money they should plan to have during their time abroad. This amount depends, of course, on the lifestyle you adopt and how much you plan to travel. As a general guideline, you should plan to spend about \$4,000 for the year, and around \$2,000 for a semester. You might want to have extra money sent to you as needed. Your allowance in Bremen will cover everyday expenses; it will not, however, be enough to cover vacation travel or other personal expenses.

Part Time Work:

Part-time work opportunities in Germany are few and far between. While you can work in Germany without a permit for a limited number of hours a week, you should not plan on part-time work as a means of financial support.

COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Students sometimes tell family/friends that they will phone home “the minute they arrive.” However, plans often go awry because of plane or train delays, unavailability of an international phone line, etc. To save parents and loved ones worry, we suggest an agreement to call at the earliest convenient time, rather than promising to call at once.

E-mail, cell phones, and Skype allow students to keep in closer touch with family and friends back home than ever before. There is a good side to this, but it is possible to overdo it so that you focus too much on home to the detriment of your abroad experience. Consider writing frequent letters, postcards, or a blog instead. These can be reread and kept as a record of your time abroad.

Mail:

DURING THE SUMMER SESSION: Please keep in mind that it takes approximately 7 - 10 days for mail to reach Germany, so it is probably not a good idea to try to receive surface mail during the summer course. If you are expecting mail to be sent to you, you should fill out a change-of-address card when you leave so that your mail will follow you to Bremen.

IN BREMEN: After you are settled in Bremen, you can receive mail at your residence.

Cell Phone/Telephone:

Cell phones are an excellent way to communicate with other students on the program and to be reachable in the event of an emergency. It may, however, be very expensive for you to make international calls with your US cell phone, so you should buy a German cell phone or Sim-Card (and number) during the first weeks.

You will generally find German phone numbers starting with a “0” – however, if you dial such number from outside of Germany, you have to start with the country code “49” and then LEAVE OUT the “0”. Therefore, you will often find numbers written with a “zero in brackets”: “(0)” to indicate that one uses either the country code or, within Germany, the 0.

There is a six-hour time difference between the U.S. (east coast) and Germany; it is six hours later in Germany.

Skype (International calls through the internet):

One of the most inexpensive ways to make international phone calls is through the Internet. Skype is one of the most common options for this type of phone service. All that is required is access to a computer with an Internet connection and a headset or external microphone.

For more information on Skype and its offers, visit the website at www.skype.com.

Computers and Internet Access:

The Dickinson Room at the University has four computers available for student use. Computers have Internet access and can be used for e-mail, printing, working on papers, and Skyping.

All of the dormitory rooms have internet connections. In any case, we encourage you to limit your Internet use to create a healthy balance between staying in touch with your friends and family in the U.S.

and taking advantage of the time you are in Germany and have access to daily life.

If you bring a laptop computer, check to see if it has a built-in voltage converter for 230V. If not, you will need to purchase a voltage converter adapter for 230V. Be sure to bring a plug adaptor for the electrical outlet.

E-mail:

Remember that official communications from Dickinson College (for example, instructions from the Registrar, Campus Life, or the Center for Global Study and Engagement) will be sent to your Dickinson e-mail account. If you ordinarily use another e-mail account, remember to check your Dickinson account regularly for messages. Be sure to clear your Dickinson Inbox regularly so that messages can reach you. Make sure you empty your Outbox and Deleted messages regularly.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVELING WHILE ABROAD

Bremen Public Transportation:

Your University of Bremen student ID serves as a ticket for Bremen's public transportation system, so be sure to carry your **Semesterticket** and a picture ID (e.g. driver's license) at all times. There is a hefty fee for those who use public transportation without a ticket. Your student ID will give you access to student fares on trains. Students enjoy free fare on regional trains (no Intercity-Train) to Hamburg, Oldenburg, Osnabrück, Hannover, and other parts of Northwestern Germany.

Transportation beyond Bremen:

Please note this information is subject to change. Please check for updated information before purchasing.

IN GERMANY: There are many economical ways for students to travel on the German railway network (**Deutsche Bahn**). The **Deutsche Bahn** sells a **Bahncard 25** or **50** that will give you, respectively, a 25% or 50% discount (the Bahncard 25 can also be used with special online offers for a cumulative price reduction). You will need a passport photo for this pass. Please note that Bahncards will be automatically extended for another year if not cancelled 3 months prior to its expiration date!! Other types of passes are also available (e.g., **Schönes Wochenende Ticket** or a **Länderticket**). For more information, ask at the train station information office or visit www.bahn.de.

When boarding a train, check the destination sign on the rail car you board to be sure it is going to or toward your destination. For travel on major holidays or during the tourist season, it is wise to purchase a seat reservation (**Sitzplatzreservierung**) in advance. The small price is well worth the assurance that you will not have to stand in the aisle during your trip.

IN EUROPE: If you decide to purchase either a Eurailpass or Eurail Youthpass before leaving the United States, consider a 5 or 10-day Eurailpass that is good for two months from date of activation. It can be activated any time **up to six months after purchase**. Other rail passes are available in Europe. Many students prefer the InterRail pass, which is good for one month of unlimited second-class travel throughout Great Britain, Western Europe, and some Eastern European countries. You get a 50% reduction on rail travel in the country in which you buy it, and travel is free in other countries. It is valid for 30 days after activation.

AIR TRAVEL: In Europe, there are discount airlines, such as Easy Jet or Ryan Air, that offer flights for relatively cheap fares. Consider signing up for airline e-mail newsletters in order to receive information on any travel deals. Airline websites that students have found useful in recent years include:

- www.skyscanner.com
- www.ryanair.com
- www.de.kayak.com
- www.easyjet.com
- www.vueling.com
- www.swoodoo.com

Travel Guides:

Before leaving the U.S., you can purchase one or more of the Let's Go or Lonely Planet series of guidebooks. They are published for most European countries and are very informative for traveling on a tight budget. To help save money, check www.amazon.com or www.half.com for used travel books. Travel guides for Germany and some European destinations are also available in the Dickinson Room at

the Uni Bremen.

Hostels:

You can save money and meet other young travelers by staying in youth hostels. One popular hostel network is the Youth Hostel Federation, which has a network of hostels all over the world. You can purchase a membership card to the Youth Hostel Federation and receive discounts on hostel accommodations and other travel offers. For more information, you can go to <http://www.hihostels.com/>. Other websites that offer reviews of hostels throughout the world are www.hostelworld.com and www.hostelbookers.com.

Backpacks: For traveling light during vacation periods, most students find a backpack easier to handle than a suitcase. An internal frame pack with straps that can be concealed offers versatility. Do not keep money, travelers checks, credit cards, or your passport in your backpack.

International Student Identity Card (ISIC):

The ISIC card, or International Student Identity Card, can be used internationally to identify oneself as a student, thus qualifying in many countries for discounts on airfare, museums, theaters, and the like. Other benefits include a Help Line for emergency assistance as well as supplemental hospital and accident insurance. ISIC cards can be purchased on line at www.istc.org/sisp/.

Safety while Traveling:

Whenever you travel, take care of your belongings and safeguard your credit cards, mobile phone, and cash at all times. One of the safer places to carry your passport and money is in a breast pouch tied at your neck or in a money belt strapped at the waist, under your shirt. A word to the wise: keep a small amount of money easily accessible so you do not have to dig into your hidden money in public.

Driving in Germany is NOT recommended.

HEALTH, SAFETY & INSURANCE

Health Care

Although Health Insurance (**gesetzliche Krankenversicherung**) will cover your medical needs, you and your doctor should list any medications that you use regularly. Brand names and dosages may differ, so you may have difficulty obtaining the specific medication you need. Any prescription drugs should be left in the original containers marked with your name, the doctor's name, and the generic name of the drug. If possible, take a supply for the semester/year. If you wear a medical tag or bracelet, be sure to take it with you. While personal hygiene products are easily available, some medicines available here over-the-counter are available only by prescription in Germany.

If you should need to use your U.S. primary health insurance policy, you will need to be prepared to pay cash and get receipts to present to your U.S. insurer for reimbursement.

German Health Care

While enrolled at the University of Bremen, German public health insurance in Bremen (*gesetzliche Krankenversicherung*) will cover all costs for medically necessary treatments (including dental problems). Small fees and co-payments may apply for non-essential medical treatments like glasses etc. Coverage for academic year and fall only students begins on October 1 and for spring students on April 1 and ends at the end of July. Information about the student coverage will be available during the orientation period in Bremen. Dickinson College will cover the monthly insurance fees for students.

However, the *gesetzliche Krankenversicherung* is NOT a substitute for the required health and accident insurance purchased in the United States. Please note that the *gesetzliche Krankenversicherung* policy will not cover you in some countries outside of Germany.

AIDS and STDs Overseas:

You are at the same risk for AIDS and STDs while abroad as you would be at home since your risk of infection depends on your behavior. Therefore, if you are sexually active, use good judgment and common sense. It is also highly recommended that you carry a personal supply of condoms and birth control, especially if traveling to underdeveloped regions of the world.

Insurance FAQs

Planning for your health and safety while abroad is particularly important. You want to be prepared to make the most of this opportunity and the time to ask questions is not when you are in immediate need of health care services. Take a few minutes to read over these frequently asked questions and feel free to contact the Center for Global Study and Engagement if you have additional concerns.

Do I need health insurance abroad?

Yes. Check your current policy to see if your policy covers you outside your home country. Even if your current policy covers you abroad, you may have to pay for medical treatment upfront and submit receipts for reimbursement within a certain time-frame.

What if my insurance doesn't cover me abroad?

Dickinson also covers all students studying abroad through a policy with ACE Insurance Company. This policy is a secondary policy to your primary insurance policy; however, if your standard policy doesn't cover you abroad, ACE becomes your primary policy. Students are automatically signed up for coverage and the cost is included in the program fee.

What happens if I get sick abroad?

During on-site orientation you will be given information about local doctors, clinics, and hospitals. Be sure you talk with your program director and let them know about any health issues you are experiencing; they are there to help.

Is insurance included in the cost of the program?

Yes, basic insurance is included in the cost of the program. However, you must maintain your primary policy, whether that is purchased through Dickinson or independently.

Can I take prescription medication with me?

It depends; you need to make sure it is legal. Check the consulate website of the country you are visiting—they may be able to direct you to resources advising on what drugs are accepted. If it is legal, carry the doctor's prescription and a letter stating the reason you are taking the medication and, of course, keep the medication in the original container!

What if my prescription medication is illegal?

You should talk to your doctor about changing your medication, if possible. In extreme cases, you may have to consider choosing another country to study abroad. Please investigate this early on in your process; the more time you and your doctor have to explore options the less stressful this aspect of your preparation will be!

What if I need to refill a prescription abroad?

It is illegal to mail prescription medication. Arrange with your doctor and insurance company to take enough medication with you for the duration of your studies. It can take many months to arrange this, so start the process early.

Am I covered if I travel outside the host country?

You are covered by the ACE policy as long as you are outside the United States, for the duration of the program. If you travel before or after the program you should make sure your personal insurance provides adequate coverage.

Am I covered by the ACE policy if I travel before the program or after the program ends?

You are only covered by the ACE policy during the program dates. In the event you elect to extend your travel beyond the policy term you can purchase additional insurance at the link posted below. If you have any questions please contact Tim Cummons at tcummons@rcmd.com or (800) 346-4075 ext 1452.
<http://www.rcmd.com/solutions-students-and-faculty>

If my laptop is stolen when I'm on the program, am I covered by Dickinson insurance?

Students are not covered by Dickinson for personal liability, including the loss or theft of personal property. It is the responsibility of each program participant to purchase liability insurance, if needed. Students who bring laptops are advised to purchase adequate coverage. Check first to see whether the homeowner's insurance of your parents/guardian will cover personal liability while overseas. Normally, a copy of the police report filed at the time of loss or theft will be required by the insurer before any claim will be considered.

What if I need accommodations?

Accommodations available to students with disabilities in the United States may not be available to students studying abroad. It is unlikely that you will find the same medications, medical and/or psychological care, or support services at your study abroad site that you would at home. It is also possible that some host sites abroad may not be adequately equipped for students with physical disabilities.

For you to fully assess whether you will be able to successfully complete a study abroad program, we encourage any student with special needs to review the program descriptions and to visit websites about the community in which you will be living and learning. If you wish to have assistance from Dickinson College in helping you to assess your ability to succeed in studying in a particular program or in identifying programs where more support may be available, you are encouraged to come talk to the Center for Global Study and Engagement. It is important to ask questions and do your research before you apply.

Once you determine the right program for you and, if accepted, you will be invited to self-disclose your personal needs on a medical questionnaire open to you through the on-line application system. Disclosure is completely voluntary. However, on-site staff will have a better chance to advise you of accommodations that may be possible if they are aware of your needs before you arrive on site. If you choose to study on a program and travel to an abroad site, you will be expected to fully participate in the program. Therefore, you need to inform yourself about the demands of the program in order to plan ahead and to prepare to cope with your health needs in a new environment.

I suffer from depression and/or anxiety, am I still able to study abroad?

It is strongly recommended that you consult your counselor or psychiatrist when considering study abroad. When abroad, most students experience various states of excitement and frustration as a result of the opportunities and differences presented by the new culture. These alternating emotions are usually related to the natural phenomenon of culture shock, which occurs when people adapt to a new culture and surroundings. As you become accustomed to your new surroundings and establish a routine, these feelings will begin to subside. If homesickness, depression, or eating disorders persist, seek professional assistance and inform your program director. If you are currently seeking treatment from a mental health care provider, remember that English-speaking counseling services abroad may be limited and the terms of care will likely be different from here in the U.S.

What if I am a non-Dickinson student, do I still need coverage? Am I covered under Dickinson's health insurance?

Like Dickinson students, guest students attending Dickinson programs from other colleges and universities must have health insurance coverage. However, non-Dickinson students are not covered under Dickinson's ACE insurance policy.

Health Matters

Medical Check-ups:

Before leaving the United States, you should visit your physician, gynecologist, eye care specialist, and dentist. Make sure you are in good health before going abroad so that you can avoid any potential problems.

Immunizations/Inoculations:

Even though Germany does not require any specific immunizations, please consult with the Dickinson College Health Center or your personal physician to make sure that all of your routine inoculations are up-to-date. These include measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) and diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DPT). It is strongly recommended that you also consult with your personal doctor and/or the College Health Center about other inoculations (e.g., Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B) or medicines that are advisable for the country you are visiting. For more up-to-date country-specific information about immunizations and other health precautions, consult the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website: www.cdc.gov/travel/.

Medications:

Prescription/non-prescription medication(s) should be in the original container from the pharmacy and labeled with your physician's name, your name, and the medication name and dosage. **Do not transfer any medication into an unmarked container.** You should also carry a written letter or prescription from your physician verifying that this medication was prescribed by a licensed practitioner and is necessary for medical reasons. If you are on prescription medications or take particular over the counter medications, such as cold medication or a certain painkiller, you should take enough with you to last the duration of your stay. It is neither advisable nor legal in some circumstances to ship medications by mail. It is your responsibility to make sure that your medications are legal in your host country. You can find this out by consulting the consulate website of the country you will be visiting. You may also want to take along some cold/flu medication, anti-diarrhea, and anti-fungal medicine. Women prone to gynecological infections should take a supply of medication. Be aware of recent changes in airport security regulations limiting the type of liquids or gels that can be transported in carry-on luggage.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that students with diabetes or health situations that require routine or frequent injections should carry a supply of syringes sufficient to last their stay abroad. If you carry narcotics or syringes, you should also bring a copy of the prescription and a statement from the prescribing physician.

Mental Health, Stability, and Stress:

For students under the care of a counselor or psychiatrist, please be sure that you see him/her before you depart from the US. Participating in a study abroad program in another country will not lessen any emotional issues that you may presently be experiencing. When you are abroad, you will probably experience various states of excitement and frustration as a result of the opportunities and differences presented by the new culture. These alternating emotions are usually related to the natural phenomenon of culture shock, which occurs when people adapt to a new culture and surroundings. As you become accustomed to your new surroundings and establish a routine, these feelings will begin to subside. If homesickness, depression, or eating disorders persist, consider seeking out professional assistance.

Health and Safety in Flight:

For safety and comfort, wear loose-fitting, natural-fiber clothing during your flight. Do not wear snug-fitting or heeled footwear! If possible, avoid wearing contact lenses. Low humidity in flight tends to remove the moisture from the eye's surface. It is helpful to do seat exercises or to walk in the aisles in order to maintain good circulation. One easy exercise you can do is to tap your toes while keeping your heels on the floor. This pushes blood up your legs and reduces swelling. Tap for several minutes every

hour or so.

It is always advisable to sleep during long flights. You should avoid alcoholic beverages in flight because they cause dehydration. Recycled air also has a drying effect, so you should stay hydrated with non-alcoholic beverages. If you require a special diet, be sure to notify the airline at least 72 hours before departure.

The most common difficulty or problem that can result from flying is known as jet lag, which is the sudden sense of fatigue or wakefulness at the “wrong” time. Jet lag is more pronounced flying east than flying west. Veteran international flyers recommend going to bed and getting up at the customary local time from the beginning. This helps the body adjust quickly. Avoid naps until fully adjusted to the new time zone; the body confuses naps with night sleep.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Being Informed about the Host Country and World Affairs

What do you know about your host country?

1. Can you name the capital city and the head of state?
2. Can you name the major political parties and what they stand for?
3. How is the government organized in your host country as compared to the U.S.?
4. Name five large cities, identify their location and a feature they are famous for.
5. What are the key historical events of the 20th and 21st century in your host country?
6. What are the major religions in your host country and what role do they play?
7. Who are the major literary and/or cultural figures of the last two centuries?
8. What is the state of the economy? What are its problems, successes, and how is it organized?
9. Can you identify on a map the major rivers, mountain ranges, and other significant geographical features?
10. Can you identify on a map the states, provinces, or other political subdivisions of the country?
11. How is the educational system organized and funded?
12. What is the predominant view in your host country regarding current U.S. foreign policy?

Without researching the answers, most of us would do poorly on this little quiz. However, most local people at your study abroad destinations could probably answer most of these questions about the U.S. Think about it!

Before you leave, do some serious research to educate yourself about your host country. In the case of Germany, travel guidebooks and encyclopedias offer a respectable starting point. Read books, magazine articles, and newspapers about host country history, literature, geography, cuisine, etc. Major U.S. newspapers, such as the New York Times, have web pages dedicated to current travel and news information on Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. However, we strongly recommend you to also consult European news like BBC or the German Spiegel Online (www.spiegel.de), Deutschland radio (<http://www.dradio.de/>), and especially Tagesschau (www.tagesschau.de) are good resources for current events and culture. Foreign films are also a good resource. Take the initiative and get acquainted with international students at Dickinson's campus before going abroad.

No matter where you go, you will be asked hard questions about U.S. foreign policy. Please be aware that in Germany there are some different understandings of politeness, meaning that it is not unusual or considered impolite to talk freely and sometimes almost bluntly about religion or politics, even to strangers. Try not to take it personally or be offended if people criticize your country's policies. It is crucial that you have an understanding of what is going on internationally. Read newspapers and magazines that cover international affairs in depth. Include foreign news sources to expose yourself to other perspectives and a different set of facts abroad. The point is: you do not want to arrive abroad poorly informed or be caught off-guard by an encounter with viewpoints sharply different from your own. You especially need to be knowledgeable about the situation in Iraq and the Middle East, and how your host country and the United States stand in relation to those areas. People will have strong opinions and want to engage you in dialogue. Prepare for these situations and recognize their value as learning opportunities.

Local Customs (“do’s and taboos”):

- It is customary for Germans to shake hands in greeting when they meet and when they depart. This includes all people in the group, especially if in a home. Do not keep a hand in your pocket when shaking hands!
- Always knock before entering a room if the door is closed.
- When entering a small shop, always say **Guten Morgen** or **Guten Tag** on entering and **Auf Wiedersehen** or **Tschüss** when leaving. In Northern Germany, informally greet friends and acquaintances with the word “Moin.”
- If you are invited to someone’s home, consider it an honor. Take a small gift of chocolates or flowers. Unwrap the flowers just before presenting them to the hostess. Do not bring red roses (which signify passionate love) or calla lilies (which signify death).
- When in conversation with others do not touch, but do maintain eye contact. Do not keep your hand in your pocket(s) when conversing. It shows a lack of respect and is considered rude.
- The words **Danke** and **Bitte** are used very frequently to show courtesy and respect.
- When eating, you are expected to eat everything on your plate and not waste food; do not use your fingers to eat or eat with your mouth open. Observe and emulate the use of the knife and fork, which is different from U.S. custom. When you are finished, lay your knife and fork vertically, side by side, on the right side your plate. Do not eat with your mouth open. When eating, do not put your hand in your lap; rest the hand you are not using on the table (at the forearm).
- In some restaurants, it is customary to sit with strangers at a table (they will do the same with you); always ask politely before you sit down: **“Ist hier noch frei?”** When asked the same question by others, you should graciously allow them to join you.
- Germans are polite. However, Germans tend to be more direct than Americans, who sometimes confuse this with being rude.
- Be aware that German students tend to dress a little less casually – e.g. it is uncommon to wear sweatsuits or sweatpants in public or at the university. Especially for cultural and public events (theater, public lecture a.s.o.) it is common to dress up a little – so bring adequate clothes for such occasions.
- Do not jaywalk! It is illegal and the jaywalking pedestrian is at fault in the case of an accident. You may be fined for jaywalking, too.
- DO NOT WALK IN BICYCLE OR TRAM PATHS! In Bremen, there is heavy bike and tram traffic; cyclists are especially disinclined to brake for those who foolishly walk in their lane.

Racial/Gender/Sexuality Issues:

RACIAL ISSUES: For the most part, the German people are fond of U.S. citizens, despite recent disagreements over U.S. foreign policy. Minority students and students of color may encounter situations that are uncomfortable. An encounter between students of color and a group of skinheads or neo-nazis could be dangerous, so avoid contact.

GENDER ISSUES: Although sexual harassment of women is uncommon, it can happen and one has to be very firm when responding to such attention. As in most large cities, women traveling alone late at night need to be on their guard.

SEXUALITY ISSUES: The general attitude toward gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals is open and positive. Most young people are tolerant on the question of sexuality. In Bremen and at the University, there are special interest clubs and organizations.

Suggested Reading/Web Sites:

BOOKS:

These Strange German Ways and the Whip of the Ways, by Susan Stern (Atlantic Brücke, 2000).

Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French and Americans, by Edward T. and Mildred Reed Hall (Intercultural Press, 1987)

Women Travel and More Women Travel, edited by Miranda Davies and Natania Janasz (The Rough Guides)

WEB SITES:

Dickinson in Bremen:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/academics/programs/german/>

Dickinson in Bremen Blog/Website:

<http://blogs.dickinson.edu/bremen>

University of Bremen:

<http://www.uni-bremen.de/>

German News:

<http://www.spiegel.de>

<http://www.sueddeutsche.de>

<http://www.tagesschau.de>

<http://www.faz.de>

<http://www.zeit.de>

Bremen:

<http://www.bremen.de>

Mix:

<http://www.mix-online.de>

Deutsche Welle online:

<http://www.dw-tv.de/>
