



There are 409 institutes of higher education in Germany. 104 of them are full research universities (Universitäten), and 203 are universities of the applied sciences (Fachhochschulen). 937,000 or 48% of the total of some two million students are women. 246,000 foreign students are enrolled at German institutes of higher education. After the United States and Great Britain, Germany is the third most attractive country worldwide for foreign students.

3.1 Course Programs and Timetables

The academic year in German universities is generally divided into two semesters (= two six-month periods): a winter and summer semester.

Academic Calendar 2011 – 2012 with Public Holidays

Winter semester (WS 2011/12) 1 October 2011 – 31 March 2012	
03 Oct 2011	Holiday: German Unity Day
17 Oct 2011	First day of classes
16 Dec 2011	Last day of classes (Christmas Break)
25 Dec 2011	Holiday: Christmas Day
26 Dec 2011	Holiday: St Stephen's Day
01 Jan 2012	Holiday: New Year's Day
02 Jan 2012	First day of classes
18 Feb 2012	Last day of classes
Summer semester (SoSe 2012) 1 April 2012 – 30 September 2012	
06 Apr 2012	Holiday: Good Friday
08 Apr 2012	Holiday: Easter Sunday
09 Apr 2012	Holiday: Easter Monday
10 Apr 2012	First day of classes
01 May 2012	Holiday: Labor Day
17 May 2012	Holiday: Ascension Day
27 May 2012	Holiday: Pentecost Sunday
28 May 2012	Holiday: Pentecost Monday
14 Jul 2012	Last day of classes

3.2 Types of Courses

Universities offer various kinds of courses that may be weighted differently, depending on the university in which it is held. The following provides a general overview.

Lectures (Vorlesungen) involve a university instructor speaking on a specific topic. Students can prepare or follow up these lectures by reading appropriate texts (reading lists are usually provided). Students receive credit (Scheine) for attending lectures. In some cases, a written or oral exam is given at the end of the semester in which students are required to demonstrate their knowledge of the material taught in the lectures.

Seminars (Seminare) enable students to work on a small research project under the guidance of an experienced researcher. Presentations of seminar papers, discussions and subsequent review with fellow students and the organizer of the seminar play a key role. Students receive credit by presenting a paper, an assignment or taking a written examination. Some universities use seminars to extend and apply the content taught in the lectures. Since this kind of course requires active student participation, they should ideally be held in small groups. In some subjects, there is such demand that early registration is required.

A **tutorial** serves to deepen and extend the content taught in lectures and seminars. Tutorials are basic study courses headed by advanced students (tutors). In contrast to tutorials, consolidation courses headed by university instructors, lecturers, assistants or research assistants are also sometimes called **exercises** (Übungen).

Courses in which students exchange ideas and information in the final research phase are often called a **colloquium** (Kolloquium). Colloquia give participants opportunities to present their current work and to discuss it with fellow students and others from their field.

3.3 Advisory Services

Finding your way into and around the higher education system can seem like wandering through a maze. Fortunately, plenty of advisory services are available to answer your questions and solve any problems you may encounter.



The BMS One-Stop Office (see 2.1)

The One-Stop Office is your most important port of call for all sorts of questions and problems. It is part of the BMS administration supporting the BMS students in all practical issues that may arise, including travel, visa, housing, language courses, bureaucratic issues, child care, music and sports opportunities.

The BMS One-Stop Office is located in the math building at the TU Berlin and has weekly office hours at FU and HU during lecture time. Our contact details can also be found at the back of this Guidebook. <http://www.math-berlin.de/>

The International Office

The International Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt - AAA) is the point of contact for all foreign students. It is part of the university administration and is responsible for international academic relations and all related affairs, including student exchange, incoming and outgoing students, etc.

FU-International Office:
<http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/einrichtungen/verwaltung/zuv/abt-4/ivc/index.html>

HU-International Office:
http://www.aia.hu-berlin.de/index_html-en

TU-International Office:
http://www.auslandsamt.tu-berlin.de/menue/id_akademisches_auslandsamt/parameter/en

Central Study Counseling Office

The central study counseling office (Zentrale Studienberatung) deals with general study-related questions, as well as inquires about course content and requirements.

FU-central study counseling office:
<http://www.fu-berlin.de/studienberatung/studienberatung/index.html>
(in German)

HU-central study counseling office:

http://studium.hu-berlin.de/studying/beratung/index_html?set_language=en&tcl=en

TU-central study counseling office:

<http://www.studienberatung.tu-berlin.de/> (in German)

Student Unions and Representations

AStA (Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss) is the name of the executive body of the student unions. These independent bodies represent student interests inside and outside the institutions of higher education. The student unions are divided into sections, such as the section for social activities, cultural activities, international students, etc. All students are entitled to work in the various sections.

The student unions organize a varied program of sporting, cultural, and leisure activities and offer advice on how and where students can find a job or accommodation. They also organize a car-sharing system, typing courses and keep you informed about important issues and events. Some student unions even offer German courses for international students. So the student union is well worth a visit.

FU-student union: <http://www.astafu.de/english>

HU-student union: <http://www.refrat.hu-berlin.de/> (only in German)

TU-student union: <http://www.asta.tu-berlin.de/>

The BMS has its own student representation in the BMS administration. The BMS Student Representatives exist independently from the above-mentioned student unions. See 1.9 BMS Student Representatives for more information.

The Departmental Student Body

The departmental student body (Fachschaft) is made up of students from a specific discipline and represents student interests in the relevant department. At the beginning of the semester, members of the body advise first semester students on studying their specific subject.

The departmental student body will be pleased to welcome you as a new member.

FU-mathematics student body:

<http://fsi.spline.de/> (only in German)

HU-mathematics student body:

<http://www.mathematik.hu-berlin.de/~fsr/index.php> (only in German)

TU-mathematics student body:

<http://www.math.tu-berlin.de/~fbrstud/> (only in German)

Doctoral Students' Portal

The portal gives potential doctoral students a general idea of doctoral studies

at FU Dahlem Research School:

<http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/en/inu/drs/> and

Humboldt-Universität: <http://www.hu-berlin.de/promovierende-en>

and TU-Doc at TU Berlin: <http://www.forschung.tu-berlin.de/tu-doc/menue/promotion/parameter/en/font3/>

HUPI International

HUPI International is a doctorate initiative founded in HU Berlin to improve the working climate and conditions of all HU doctorate students enabling them to exchange information and knowledge. HUPI organizes introductory and information meetings in cooperation with the research division and the International Office. You can register to receive their newsletter by going to the HUPI website: <http://hupi.hu-berlin.de/> (only in German)

mathX e.V.

mathX e.V. is a free alumni and students association located at the Department of Mathematics at HU Berlin promoting mathematics at HU, fostering contacts with former and fellow mathematics students and supporting many initiatives in the area of mathematics.

mathX-website: www.mathx.org (only in German)

General Counseling Services for Foreign Students (for all universities)

Opening hours:

Mon, Wed, Thu: 12.00 am – 4.30 pm

Place: Monbijoustr. 3, room 6

Tel.: +49 30 2093 1062

Mail: beratung.auslaenderinnen@referat.huberlin.de

Legal advice for students (for all universities)

Opening hours:

Wed: 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm

Place: Monbijoustr. 3, room 16

The National Association of Student Services in Germany

The DSW (Deutsches Studentenwerk) is the national association of student services in German universities. Its local student chapters

(Studentenwerke) deal with students' social affairs, allocate student residences and offer a social advisory and counseling service.

DSW Germany: <http://www.studentenwerk.de/>

The Berlin Studentenwerk (see also 5.5 Accommodation and 6.7 Mensa Card)

Through a mandate of the German Federal State of Berlin, the Berlin Studentenwerk provides social, economic and cultural support services to Berlin students.

Dining Facilities – student dining halls and cafeterias providing wholesome food at low prices to more than 45,000 students daily.

Residential Accommodations – more than 40 student residences with over 10,500 accommodations are available.

Jobs – helps you find an appropriate position if you are qualified to work in Germany.

Counseling and Support – providing assistance with psychological or social problems, support for foreign or disabled students and providing pre-school child care.

DSW Berlin: <http://www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/en/>

InfoPoints:

Campus FU	Otto-von-Simon-Straße 26 14195 Berlin Tel.: +49 30 93939 70 Mon – Fri: 10.00 am – 2.00 pm
Campus HU	Behrenstraße 40/41 10117 Berlin Tel.: +49 30 93939 70 Mon – Wed: 8.00 am – 4.00 pm Thu: 10.00 am – 6.00 pm Fri: 8.00 am – 3.00 pm
Campus TU	Hardenbergstraße 34 10623 Berlin Tel.: +49 30 93939 70 Mon – Fri: 8.00 am – 6.00 pm