

Meet the World

International Student Mobility
at Freie Universität Berlin

www.international.fu-berlin.de



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Academic Calendar and Important Dates

	Winter term	Summer term
Semester dates	October 1 to March 31	April 1 to September 30
Lecture period	Mid-October to mid-February	Mid-April to mid-July
Exam period	During the last two weeks of the lecture period; may vary from department to department	During the last two weeks of the lecture period; may vary from department to department
Lecture-free period	Mid-February to mid-April	Mid-July to mid-October
Enrollment in person for exchange and program students	Begins September 1	Begins March 1
Orientation period	During the first week of October	During the first week of April
Course registration	During October	During April
Suggested arrival	At least 5 to 10 days before orientation starts	At least 5 to 10 days before orientation starts



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The Brandenburg Gate is one of Berlin's most important monuments – a landmark and symbol all in one.

Germany's Capital and Cultural Metropolis

Berlin is one of the most exciting cities in Europe. As Germany's capital and cultural metropolis, it attracts people from around the world. A vibrant and constantly changing city, it is a center of cultural, political, and economic life. Berlin has an eventful history – from its founding in the 13th century to seeing two World Wars, the Cold War, and the fall of the Wall. For most of the second half of the 20th century, Berlin was the fulcrum of a divided Europe. Following German reunification in 1990, Berlin has been going through a period of constant change, and it has developed into a truly international city.

Berlin has a unique cultural profile within Germany and is known for its outstanding museums, opera houses, theaters, and concert halls. Being thus well-known for its established culture, Germany's capital also boasts an unparalleled festival, club, music, and nightlife scene. Berlin's most famous sights may be the TV Tower, the Brandenburg Gate, and the Reichstag parliament building, but the city's creative and lively urban atmosphere also relies on numerous galleries, cafes, vintage shops, and flea markets. Each February, Berlin's International Film Festival, the Berlinale, draws film stars and cinema enthusiasts. The city is also a center for world-class sports, and the Berlin Marathon is a popular event.



Berlin's great wealth of urban green space helps provide a high quality of life.



U.S. President John F. Kennedy holding a speech at Freie Universität Berlin in 1963.

Green Berlin

Berlin is less widely known for the extensive forests and garden plots scattered throughout the city, but they contribute greatly to the quality of urban life. While Berlin is a large urban region, it features abundant parkland such as Grunewald, Treptower Park, or the Gardens of the World, and a myriad of bridges crisscrossing the rivers and canals. Both features give the city not only a feeling of spaciousness, but also of remarkable green beauty. The most recent example of Berlin's spaciousness is the former Berlin Tempelhof Airport, which was recreated into a public park and event location after it was no longer used as an airport. An extensive and affordable public transportation system makes it easy to get around the city. Due to a recent public initiative, there is an increase in traffic of bicycles and electric cars.

Berlin and Its Universities

Berlin is an important region for education and research. In addition to four universities, the city hosts numerous universities of applied sciences and colleges. Freie Universität Berlin has an agreement with two other universities in Berlin – Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Technische Universität Berlin – and with Universität Potsdam, located approximately 30 kilometers from Berlin, to facilitate academic exchange. This means that all students enrolled in any one of the four universities may use all the university libraries and, within certain limits, have access to courses and lectures of these four universities. Besides the university system, Berlin also has numerous independent research institutes and libraries, such as various Max Planck Institutes or the State Library of Berlin, Germany's biggest library.

Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin

The history of Berlin's universities is entangled with the city's history. Freie Universität Berlin was founded on December 4, 1948, by students and faculty with the support of the American Allied Forces and politicians. The move was sparked by the persecution faced by students who took a critical view of the system at the former University of Berlin, at that time called Universität Unter den Linden, which was located in the Soviet sector of the divided city. Students and academics wanted to be free to pursue their learning, teaching, and research activities at Freie Universität Berlin, without being subject to political influence.

To remain relevant and to compete academically and intellectually from its isolated position in West Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin established connections with academic institutions and leading academic figures in Germany and other parts of Europe and the world. What started out of necessity soon became a strategy for success: Freie Universität Berlin currently maintains more than 450 international partnerships worldwide.

Welcome to Freie Universität Berlin



According to the prestigious journal *Times Higher Education* Freie Universität ranks above all the other German universities in the humanities.

Winner in the Excellence Initiative

Freie Universität Berlin is a leading research institution. In both rounds of the Excellence Initiative, a nationwide governmental competition between German universities, it was selected as one of the few universities with excellence status, thereby receiving additional funding for its institutional future development strategy. Freie Universität Berlin can thus take its place as an International Network University in the global competition among universities. The university's performance in the Excellence Initiative provided funding for several new doctoral programs and interdisciplinary research clusters.

Guiding Principles: VERITAS, JUSTITIA, LIBERTAS



The Latin words *veritas*, *justitia*, and *libertas* frame the seal of Freie Universität Berlin. The words stand for the values that have defined the academic ethos of Freie Universität Berlin ever since it was founded in 1948. As important as each of the university's three guiding principles is on its own, the interaction between them is also fundamental. Only where truth, justice, and freedom come together as values to form a greater whole is there space for intellectual commonality and open discourse in an unrestricted interchange of ideas. The responsibility that arises from the three guiding principles enshrined in Freie Universität's seal is a living commitment.

International Network University

Freie Universität Berlin is proud of its broad international network, from worldwide student exchange to international research clusters and collaborative institutes. Having numerous partnerships all over the world, Freie Universität Berlin is one of Germany's most international universities and for years has scored top positions in rankings by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). This internationality is reflected by the student body of Freie Universität Berlin, with more than 15% of its students and 26% of its doctoral candidates coming from abroad.

Research Profile

The research performed at Freie Universität Berlin is marked by several factors: excellence within disciplines and interdisciplinary excellence, a broad variety of academic and scientific networks, and areas of focus that enjoy high international visibility and competitiveness. Providing generous and targeted support for junior scholars and scientists is also one of the central aims of Freie Universität Berlin.

The university has established particular areas of research focus in several cooperative initiatives, such as those involving archaeology, ancient studies, and Earth sciences (in the Topoi excellence cluster) and area studies (North American Studies, Islamic Studies, East Asian Studies). According to the 2014 – 2015 university ranking by the prestigious journal *Times Higher Education*, Freie Universität Berlin ranks among the world's best 25 universities in the humanities. In a nationwide comparison, Freie Universität is the top-ranked German university in the humanities.

The Campus

Freie Universität Berlin is located in the southwest of Berlin, in the garden district of Dahlem, which had already become an excellent location for research and study in the early 20th century. Academic activity in Dahlem was supported by the Prussian Minister of Culture, who proposed the founding of “a German Oxford” at that time.

Since being founded, Freie Universität Berlin has used former buildings of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society – forerunner of the present-day Max Planck Society – as well as bringing a number of architecturally innovative buildings of its own to the area, such as the Philological Library, which was designed by the renowned architect Lord Norman Foster. The campus of Freie Universität Berlin is made up of groups of buildings located within walking distance of one another. The campus planners designed it along the lines of an English or American college campus, a novelty in post-war Germany.



The Philological Library is surrounded by the building complex housing the humanities and social sciences.

The Dahlem campus hosts 12 of the university's 15 departments and central institutes, more than 20 libraries, various student cafes and dining halls – including Germany's first vegetarian university dining hall, university sport facilities, and the Botanic Garden. The campus is surrounded by wonderful green gardens and lakes. Some of Freie Universität's institutes are located in the nearby districts Düppel and Lankwitz.

Schools, Departments, and Central Institutes

Freie Universität Berlin is a full university, offering almost 200 degree programs across a wide range of subjects at the following schools, departments, and central institutes:

- Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy
- School of Business and Economics
- Department of Earth Sciences
- Department of Education and Psychology
- Department of History and Cultural Studies
- Department of Law
- Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
- Department of Philosophy and Humanities
- Department of Physics
- Department of Political and Social Sciences
- Department of Veterinary Medicine
- Medical School Charité – University Medicine Berlin
- Institute for East European Studies
- Institute for Latin American Studies
- John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies



Designed by architect Lord Norman Foster, the library building has been the recipient of many awards.

Student Services

Freie Universität Berlin offers a large number of services that are aimed at supporting students from the very beginning in all possible situations and circumstances. These services include family support, language courses, recreational sports, IT support, and psychological counseling. There are also various bodies at Freie Universität that represent the interests of specific groups by participating in collective decisions, e.g., the Advocate for Students with Special Needs who is responsible for accommodating the needs of students with disabilities and chronic health conditions in courses, exams, and internships.

Studying at Freie Universität Berlin

For international and exchange students, studying at a German university can be an enriching and challenging enterprise. Compared to other university systems worldwide, studying at a German university is often said to be more independent and free, from the choice of courses to putting together one's own timetable. The style of teaching and studying at Freie Universität Berlin depends on the degree program chosen, but in general students will encounter a variety of lectures, seminars, or tutorials, demanding active participation in discussions or by giving presentations.

The main language of instruction is German, but there are also a number of subjects held in English, particularly within the Institute of English Philology and the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. Nevertheless, it is highly recommended that international and exchange students take courses in German. They will be sufficiently supported by a number of student services such as the Language Center.

Library and Research Facilities

The University Library and approximately 40 departmental libraries form a combined library system consisting of almost 8 million print media items, 38,000 e-journals, 400,000 e-books, and 1,300 databases. All the students at Freie Universität may also use the library facilities of Humboldt-Universität, Technische Universität, and Universität Potsdam. Additionally, Berlin hosts Germany's largest State Library, making the city an ideal place for study and research.

Internationality at Freie Universität Berlin

As an Exchange Student: Make the Most of What Freie Universität Has to Offer!



Roughly 28,500 young people study at Freie Universität Berlin.

International from the Very Beginning

Due to the university's unique founding history and its formerly isolated location within the divided city of Berlin, it was a matter of necessity to establish and maintain many international study, research, and teaching contacts. At present, Freie Universität has more than 450 partner universities all over the world, including 95 direct exchange partnerships, 320 university partnerships within the Erasmus academic exchange network, and 45 institute partnerships. This network makes Freie Universität Berlin one of Germany's most international universities.

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Study Program “Cultural, Social, and Historical Perspectives on Berlin and Germany”

The Institute of German and Dutch Languages and Literatures offers a study program exclusively for exchange students like you, with a thematic focus on the culture, society, and history of Berlin and Germany, and, to some extent, other German speaking countries. Courses in this study program pursue several goals:

- To convey knowledge about key aspects of the history, culture, and social situation in Berlin and Germany that are relevant for an understanding of the present situation
- To impart academic and intercultural skills which will help you be successful while studying at Freie Universität Berlin
- To help you gain confidence regarding your spoken and written (academic) German

You may choose up to four courses per semester. To obtain full credits, regular attendance (80%) is expected, along with “active participation,” which takes on different forms depending on the course: giving a presentation, writing up the minutes of a course session, handing in texts, or simply actively taking part in class discussions. At the end of the semester, students usually take a 90 minutes written examination; in some cases, however, students may have to submit written work (essays) during the semester instead.

There are two types of courses within this study program.

Modules 1, 2, and 3

The courses in these modules are designed for students from all academic fields and provide a general, transdisciplinary introduction to relevant aspects of German culture, history, and society. Most courses are taught in German; two or three courses are taught in English. All modules are offered every semester.

Module 1: “Kulturelle Orientierung in Berlin (Cultural Orientation in Berlin),” taught in German, language requirement: German B1; 4 hours per week; 10 ECTS credits. The course includes visits to museums, exhibitions, theatres, and/or memorial sites.

Module 2: taught in English, language requirement: English B2; 2 hours per week; 5 ECTS credits. Courses in the past semesters: Berlin, Seen from the Outside / Berlin Now! / (G)local Berlin. In/Outsider Narratives / Reading, Writing, and Screening the City. Images of Berlin in Text and Film.

Module 3: taught in German, language requirements: German B1; 2 hours per week; 5 ECTS credits. Courses in past semesters: Berlin im Bild – Bilder von Berlin (Images and Pictures of Berlin) / Geschichte(n) und Nachgeschichte(n) des Nationalsozialismus im Berliner Raum (History and Memorialization of National Socialism in and around Berlin) / Berlin als multikulturelle Stadt (Berlin as a Multicultural City).

Modules 4, 5, and 6

The courses in these modules are designed for students of the Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, and Cultural Studies. In these courses, students engage with films, literary texts, and other works of art which are analyzed with regard to their specific medial and aesthetic qualities as well as in their historical, political, social, and cultural context. All modules are taught in German and are offered every semester.

Module 4a: language requirement: German B1; 4 hours per week (including e.g. film screenings, visits to museums, exhibitions, memorial sites, etc.); 10 ECTS credits. Courses in past semesters: Film in der DDR: zwischen Kunst, Kritik, Unterhaltung und Propaganda (Film in the GDR: Between Art, Criticism, Entertainment and Propaganda) / Berlin im Film (Berlin in Film) / Berlin als multikulturelle Stadt (Berlin as a Multicultural City).

Module 4b: language requirement: German B1; 2 hours per week, 5 ECTS credits. Courses in the past semesters: Das geteilte Berlin (Berlin as a Divided City) / Berlin in der Literatur (Berlin in Literature) / Berlin in der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur (Berlin in Literature for Young Readers) / Berlin in der Migrationsliteratur (Berlin in Migrant Literature).

Module 5: language requirement: German B2; 2 hours per week; 5 ECTS credits. Courses in past semesters: Filme der Weimarer Republik (Films of the Weimar Period) / Nationalsozialismus im Film (National Socialism in Film) / Die deutsche Wiedervereinigung in Literatur, Film und Alltagskultur (German Unification in Film, Literature, and Everyday Culture).

Module 6: language requirement: German B2; 2 hours per week; 5 ECTS credits. Courses in past semesters: Jüdisches Leben und Jüdische Literatur in Berlin (Jewish Life and Jewish Literature in Berlin) / Erinnern an die DDR: Fakten und Fiktionen (Remembering the GDR: Fact and Fiction).

Learning German at Freie Universität Berlin

Language Courses

As an exchange student, Freie Universität gives you opportunities to learn and improve your German. The department German as a Foreign Language in the university Language Center offers courses for exchange students before or/and during the academic semesters, as well as having a well-equipped self-learning center, where students can develop their language skills independently, or find a tandem-partner.

→ Pre-semester Language Courses for Exchange Students

GENERAL INFORMATION: these pre-semester courses are specially for exchange students like you and take place in the six weeks before the beginning of the winter or summer semesters. Your lesson times are from Monday to Friday between 9:15 and 13:30, and a completed course earns you 6 ECTS credits. As an exchange student, you benefit from much cheaper fees: € 600 for exchange students (€ 1,350 for other students). Classes have a maximum of 16 participants. On the first day of the course, students are asked to take a language test in order to place them into the groups at their level.

CONTENTS AND OBJECTIVES: training in reading, listening, speaking, and writing argumentative texts. Improvement of oral and written expression, grammar, and lexical proficiency. Selected topics on politics and society in the Federal Republic of Germany within a historical context are also part of the course. The objectives of the course are the levels A2 to C1.

→ Language Courses for Exchange Students during the Semester

GENERAL INFORMATION: the Language Center offers German courses during the semester free of charge, which is a great opportunity for you to continue improving your German during your stay at Freie Universität Berlin. Depending on your level, which gets assessed by a short language test, you can follow courses from the A2 to C1 level.

Assessment Test

The computerized language level assessment test “onDaF” is carried out at the Language Center. It is free of charge and obligatory in order to take part in a German language course at the Language Center.

Please note that the registration for language courses functions separately from the registration for university seminars. These are the steps to follow:

- Students take the assessment test “onDaF.” The results of the assessment test and further required information (e.g.: Goethe-Institut or Test-DaF certificates) enable placement of the students in the courses most adapted to their level.
- After the test, the students are to go to the registration office at a given date and time. Here they will find out about which level they have been placed in and where they are to register. Students then have a choice of courses they can select in order for their language classes to fit with their university schedule.

A2.1–A2.2 | 8 ECTS credits | 8 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- introducing, developing, and consolidating basic grammatical constructions
- systematic learning of basic vocabulary
- training listening, reading, oral, and written skills in everyday situations
- introducing forms of independent learning and working
- reflecting about cultural aspects in everyday life in Germany, Berlin, and at university

GENERAL THEMES: learning the language; family and biographies; houses; free time, and hobbies; cultural offers; new media; traveling and mobility; education, studies, and profession.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, production of short texts; a final exam: reading and listening skills, grammatical structures.

A2.2–B1.1 – Bridge Course | 8 ECTS credits | 8 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- developing and consolidating basic grammatical constructions
- systematic learning of vocabulary
- developing listening and reading skills
- exercising oral and written expression
- introducing forms of independent learning and working
- reflecting about experiences in Germany, Berlin, and at university

GENERAL THEMES: daily life at the university; living in a big city; the history of Berlin; consumerism and advertising; new media; learning, training, and profession; traveling and mobility.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, reading and listening exercises, production of short texts, a presentation; a final exam: reading and listening skills, grammatical structures.

B1.1 | 8 ECTS credits | 6 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- developing and consolidating grammatical structures
- systematic learning of vocabulary
- developing listening and reading skills
- oral and written exercises
- introducing forms of independent learning and working
- promoting cultural and inter-cultural knowledge

GENERAL THEMES: daily life as a student in Berlin; history of Berlin; aspects of German history post-1945; Jewish life in Berlin; abroad and home; multicultural society.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, reading and listening exercises, production of short texts, a presentation; a final exam: reading and listening skills, grammatical structures.

B1.2 | 5 ECTS credits | 4 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- revising and developing grammatical structures
- systematic learning of vocabulary
- developing listening and reading skills and oral and written expression
- developing forms of independent learning and working
- study strategies
- promoting cultural and inter-cultural knowledge

GENERAL THEMES: studying at Freie Universität; a survey of German history after the First World War; Project: “The Golden Twenties – Culture and Society in the Weimar Republic”; people who leave their home country: immigration and emigration in German history and present times; migration and integration; current issues in German society; coping with the unknown: multicultural society, xenophobia, right-wing extremism.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, production of texts, a presentation as part of a project; a final exam: reading and listening skills, grammatical structures.

B2.1 – with thematic projects | 5 ECTS credits | 4 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- developing listening and reading strategies
- developing vocabulary and oral and written expression
- developing and consolidation grammatical skills
- introducing techniques for independent language learning for academic writing
- promoting cultural and inter-cultural knowledge
- project: research and presentations (oral and written) on a theme of the course

GENERAL THEMES (not all themes are treated each semester): Berlin history between East and West; searching for traces – GDR; migration and integration in Berlin; Berlin’s cultural landscape; Berlin in film – Film in Berlin; current political and societal debates; alternative life structures and subcultures in Berlin; Berlin – city of science.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, texts; project: presentation and essay.

B.2.2 – Studies related course | 5 ECTS credits | 4 hours per week

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- consolidating grammatical structures and introducing new complex structures
- developing vocabulary and reading and listening comprehension (taking notes in lectures, summarizing content and theses)
- practical exercises: research, structuring texts, presentation techniques, discussion
- developing written skills (different text sorts, e.g.: taking minutes in a course, thesis-papers, summaries)
- consolidating independent learning techniques for language learning and academic writing
- promoting cultural and inter-cultural knowledge

THEMES FOR PROJECTS: Berlin in prose; current affairs; media landscape and coverage in Germany with a focus on Berlin.

Full credits are obtained through continuous assessment: e.g. grammar tests, production of texts; project: presentation and essay.

B2.2 – Foundation course: Communication in studies | 10 ECTS credits | 8 hours per week

This course is open to exchange students with an already advanced level of German. There is a limited number of places for this course, it is therefore necessary to pass a test in order to take part.

Full credits are obtained through regular attendance (80 %), regular handing-in of homework, active participation, and handing in a six page long portfolio of texts/homework produced during the semester.

C1 – Advanced courses | 5 ECTS credits | 4 hours per week

- Advanced course A: fields of interaction in an academic (or professional) context – reception and production of complex texts
- Advanced course B: forms of discourse in higher education and career – presentation, argumentation, discussion, and criticism
- Advanced course C: working with texts, working on texts

Full credits are obtained through regular and active participation, regular handing-in of homework, and handing in a ten-page long portfolio of texts/homework produced during the semester.

Self-learning Center and Tandems

An important part of the Language Center is its self-learning center, where you can practice and learn German in a flexible manner, in your own time. You will find all kinds of self-teaching materials, including course books, language-learning software, newspapers, magazines, and movies.

It's a well-known fact that there is nothing like speaking a language for learning it. A good way to do this is by finding a tandem partner. In a tandem, two native language speakers teach each other their respective languages.

The Language Center has an online platform where you can sign up. You are then put in touch up with German-speaking students who are also looking to learn or improve their foreign-language skills. The Language Center also offers workshops on tandem learning.

Summer Courses

Freie Universität also hosts intensive language as well as academic courses in the semester breaks. If applicable, you might be able to earn ECTS credits for your studies, which has to be arranged with your home university.

These courses are not part of an exchange program and are fee-based.

→ **International Summer Courses at the Language Center**

GENERAL INFORMATION: the Language Center offers three International Summer Courses, which last for three weeks (72 hours of morning lessons; 30 hours of afternoon cultural excursions and activities). The level of German of the participants is determined through a placement test, after which they will be placed accordingly in groups of approximately 15. The costs vary from € 610 to € 630.

Participation in the program of cultural studies is not obligatory but appreciated. All activities in the afternoon are part of the course concept and are therefore already included in the course fee.

- Berlin Encounters: Intensive Communication Course and Cultural Program | A2/B1
- Berlin at its best – Learn the Language, Experience the Culture | B2–C1
- Authors in Berlin – Berliner authors: a literature course for students of German and literature | C1

→ **FUBiS – International Summer and Winter University**

GENERAL INFORMATION: FUBiS is an intensive language and academic program through which students can earn credits that may be counted toward their degrees at their home institutions. FUBiS sessions run for 3 to 6 weeks and take place both in summer and winter.

The FUBiS program enables students to choose between various options:

- Participation in either one semi-intensive German class or in one subject class
- Intensive German language classes
- Combination of language and subject classes
- Combination of two subject classes which may count toward a major or minor at the home institution

FUBiS classes make use of the vast historic, cultural, and political institutions and resources Berlin offers. Study and field trips to museums and memorials as well as political and cultural institutions are integral parts of the curriculum. In some classes students have a unique opportunity to attend specially organized and exclusive round-table discussions with decision makers, diplomats, and experts in their field of study.

Costs vary depending on the length of a course, the chosen course option, and accommodation style.

Courses in English

Many departments at Freie Universität Berlin offer courses taught in English. As the courses change each semester, please use the online course-catalog's search engine to find the most recent courses offered in English. Please take into account that the search engine does not differentiate between bachelor's and master's courses.

University Sports

University Sports at Freie Universität Berlin provides a service for all members of the university. Every semester a wide range of courses, sport activities, competitions, and events are organized and offered to students and employees of Freie Universität and of partner universities in Berlin. One of the main objectives of University Sports is to provide special opportunities for international students and to develop an open and inclusive cultural environment to favor intercultural exchange among students of any nationality at Freie Universität. University Sports also offers courses in English.

International Club

The International Club is a group of students who wants to promote internationalization at Freie Universität Berlin, and it organizes a wide range of events and activities for international and national students. Membership costs € 10 for one semester and € 15 for two semesters and comes with plenty of perks, such as a free drink at the monthly international bar nights, reduced rates for trips and events, and a network of interaction with German and international students.

International Liaison Offices

Freie Universität Berlin maintains a worldwide network of liaison offices. Their job is to support the university's researchers in reaching out internationally. In 2005, Freie Universität Berlin, in conjunction with Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (Munich), opened a joint representative office in New York. This German University Alliance represents the two universities in the U.S. and Canada and works to increase the exchange of students, scientists, and scholars. With additional liaison offices in Beijing, Brussels, Cairo, Moscow, New Delhi, and São Paulo, operated in cooperation with strong partners, large research institutions, or universities, Freie Universität Berlin is strategically extending its radius of action as an international network university.



Further information about the liaison offices:

www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/inu/cic/branches

Offices of Foreign Partners at Freie Universität Berlin

Several partner universities of Freie Universität Berlin maintain offices in Berlin, among them The University of California System and Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. In 2006, Peking University opened its first branch in Germany, the Confucius Institute at Freie Universität Berlin. Its objectives include the promotion of knowledge of Chinese culture, the cultivation of Chinese-German cooperation, and the spread of Chinese languages. Six universities in the United States joined with Freie Universität to form the Berlin Consortium for German Studies. Students from the universities included in the consortium may study at Freie Universität for one or two semesters (Columbia University, University of Chicago, Cornell University, Johns Hopkins University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University).

FACTS AND FIGURES

DEPARTMENTS AND CENTRAL INSTITUTES:	15
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:	197
DOCTORAL PROGRAMS:	23
STUDENTS:	29,000 undergraduate and graduate students
DOCTORAL CANDIDATES:	5,800
PROFESSORSHIPS:	349, including 39 joint appointments with non-university research institutes; 110 junior professorships
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH CENTERS:	10 hosted, 10 at Charité, 8 with participation by the university

Ways for Students from Abroad to Come to Freie Universität Berlin



People from 125 countries are involved in undergraduate and graduate study and teaching activities.

ADVANTAGES FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS AND PROGRAM STUDENTS

As an exchange or program student at Freie Universität Berlin, you benefit from a number of advantages:

- A simplified admission procedure
- No official German language test needed
- Support from our student exchange office and an extensive orientation period before the semester starts, making your first steps at our university in Berlin easier
- A wide range of German language courses for exchange and program students during the semester, from basic to advanced level (A2 to C1 in accordance to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language – CEFR)
- The opportunity to take courses about Berlin, its history, and culture that have been specially designed for exchange and program students.

For more details, see insert “As an Exchange Student: Make the Most of What Freie Universität Berlin Has to Offer”

Find Your Way to Us

There are many ways for undergraduate, postgraduate, and PhD students to come to Freie Universität Berlin. Have a look at the table to find your way to us!

Program	Level	Information
Students from abroad: International students wishing to complete a degree at Freie Universität Berlin	undergraduate, graduate, PhD	www.international.fu-berlin.de/studying
Direct and departmental exchange students: Students wishing to spend one or two semesters at Freie Universität Berlin and whose home university or the department they are enrolled at has an exchange agreement with Freie Universität Berlin	undergraduate, graduate, PhD	www.international.fu-berlin.de/studying
Erasmus+ students: Students enrolled at universities linked to Freie Universität Berlin via an inter-institutional agreement who wish to spend one or two semesters at Freie Universität	undergraduate, graduate, PhD	www.international.fu-berlin.de/studying
Program students: Students wishing to spend one or two semesters at Freie Universität Berlin via DAAD, Fulbright, or other external agreements	undergraduate, graduate, PhD	www.international.fu-berlin.de/studying
Freie Universität Berlin European Studies (FU-BEST): For students wishing to complete a separate one- or two-semester program consisting of subject and language courses mainly	undergraduate level, intended for North American students	www.fu-best.de
International Summer and Winter University (FUBiS): For students wishing to complete a three-, four-, or six-week program consisting of subject and language courses	undergraduate, graduate	www.fubis.org
Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies: For PhD students or postdoctoral researchers with specialized knowledge of modern and contemporary Germany and Europe	PhD, postdoc; intended for U.S. and Canadian citizens or permanent residents	www.fu-berlin.de/bprogram



Further information about international student mobility:
www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international



According to statistics from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Freie Universität is by far the most popular destination in Germany for students from abroad.

Exchange Students at Freie Universität Berlin

Students wishing to study for one or two semesters at Freie Universität Berlin may come via an exchange agreement between their home university and our institution or via an external scholarship program.

Direct and Departmental Exchange Students

Direct and departmental exchange students come to Freie Universität Berlin as non-degree seeking students within an exchange agreement between Freie Universität Berlin and their home university or between a department of Freie Universität and a department at their home university. They will be admitted for the duration agreed upon in the individual exchange contracts.

Program Students

Program students come to Freie Universität Berlin as non-degree seeking students via certain external scholarship programs such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the Fulbright Program.

Application

Direct and departmental exchange students cannot apply to Freie Universität Berlin directly, but have to be nominated by their home university first. Application procedures, deadlines, and formalities are entirely regulated by our partner universities' international offices.

Program students must apply directly to an external scholarship donor who has an agreement with Freie Universität Berlin. The scholarship donor will then nominate the program students to Freie Universität Berlin.

Freie Universität Berlin usually requires exchange and program students to have completed at least two years of undergraduate study and – depending on the exchange agreement – a certain level of German language proficiency.

Departments Open to Exchange and Program Students

All direct exchange and program students may choose courses from the following departments, provided that they fulfill particular course prerequisites:

- Biology and Chemistry
- Education and Psychology
- Earth Sciences
- History and Cultural Studies
- Mathematics and Computer Science
- Philosophy and Humanities
- Physics
- Political and Social Sciences

Restrictions apply in Law, Economics, and Business Administration. Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, and Pharmacy are only open to exchange students coming within certain departmental exchange programs. Students who come through a departmental exchange program to Freie Universität may only take courses within the department by which they have been nominated.

With few exceptions, all undergraduate programs are open for exchange students. Freie Universität Berlin also offers a range of master's programs. Admission to a master's program is only possible with the approval of the department offering the master's program. If students have the necessary prerequisites, exchange students may be enrolled as visiting PhD students. Fee-based continuing education master's programs are not open to exchange students.

Useful to Know



An easy way to get around is to use the extensive public transportation system.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get around in Berlin?

Berlin is a big city with approximately 3.5 million inhabitants living in an area of 890 square kilometers. The easiest way to get around is either by bike, using more than 750 kilometers of cycle tracks, or to use the extensive public transportation system, consisting of city trains, subway lines, street cars, buses, and ferries.



Berlin Public Transport System: www.bvg.de

Berlin by Bike: www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/verkehr/mobil/fahrrad

Where in Berlin is the campus of Freie Universität Berlin located?

All campus locations of Freie Universität Berlin are located in the southwest of Berlin. The Dahlem campus hosts 12 of the university's 15 departments and central institutes and most of the libraries. The Lankwitz campus hosts the Department of Earth Sciences, while the Department of Veterinary Medicine is located on the Düppel campus.



Campus Locations of Freie Universität Berlin:

www.fu-berlin.de/en/redaktion/orientierung

Does Freie Universität Berlin offer on- or off-campus accommodation?

There is no on-campus accommodation, but the accommodation service of Freie Universität Berlin has various off-campus dorms and single or shared apartments on offer. Since there has been a dramatic increase in the demand for student housing, we recommend students wishing to use our accommodation service to apply as soon as possible after they have received their letter of admission.



Freie Universität Berlin's Accommodation Service:

www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/unterbringung

Does Freie Universität Berlin charge fees to exchange students?

Exchange students do not pay tuition or registration fees. However, students need to pay the so-called semester fees of approximately 250 euros per semester. These are non-university related fees and pay for the elected student union as well as for a public transportation ticket for the whole area of Berlin for the entire semester. Students will be asked to pay the fees after arrival in Berlin as part of the enrollment process.

How can I apply?

As a program or exchange student, you cannot apply to Freie Universität Berlin directly. Application procedures, deadlines, and formalities are entirely regulated by our partner universities' international offices or, for program students, by the external scholarship donor. Please contact the International Office of your home university or the external scholarship donor.

What is the procedure after I have been nominated to Freie Universität Berlin?

Once you have been nominated to study at Freie Universität Berlin, you will receive a letter of admission. This letter contains important information as well as a link to our online student portal where you must complete a pre-enrollment form. Upon arrival in Berlin, you should come and see the International Student Mobility Office as soon as possible in order to finalize student enrollment and set up your account which you need to enroll for courses and use computers on the campus.

What kind of visa do I need to enter Germany and to study at Freie Universität Berlin?

- Students who are citizens of the following countries do not need a visa in order to enter Germany: *member states of the European Union (EU), member states of the European Economic Area (EEA), Andorra, Australia, Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Monaco, San Marino, South Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland, or the USA.* Upon arrival in Berlin, citizens of these countries (except EU and EEA) must apply for a residence permit.
- Students who are not citizens of the countries listed above must apply for a visa at their local German Embassy or German General Consulate before coming to Germany.
- It is not possible to study in Germany on a tourist visa.

Does Freie Universität Berlin offer any scholarships?

Freie Universität Berlin does not offer any scholarships unless specified in the exchange agreement between our institution and the student's home university. Students may apply for a scholarship at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

What are the German language requirements to study at Freie Universität Berlin?

All exchange and program students are exempt from a German language exam (DSH or TestDaF), which is otherwise required for international students studying at a German university. However, depending on the exchange agreement or the conditions of the external scholarship donor, a certain level of German language skills may be required. Generally, in order to follow courses and complete course assessment satisfactorily, German language skills equivalent to at least B₁, preferably B₂ (CEFR) are recommended.



The main language of instruction is German. Program and exchange students may take free German language courses.

Does Freie Universität Berlin offer any German language courses?

Yes, all program and exchange students may take free German language courses during the semester, from basic to advanced level (A2 to C1). Students wishing to improve their German language proficiency before beginning their studies at Freie Universität Berlin may attend a six-week intensive German language course (20 x 45 min of instruction per week) which is offered six weeks before the beginning of the winter or the summer term. The course fee is approximately 600 euros. For more details see insert “As an Exchange Student: Make the Most of What Freie Universität Berlin Has to Offer.”

What is the language of instruction at Freie Universität Berlin?

Are there any courses taught in English?

The main language of instruction is German. Subjects held in English outside the Institute of English Philology and the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies are very limited in number. Availability may vary and cannot be guaranteed. An overview of subjects taught in English is available from the online course catalog three months before the semester starts.

How do I choose and register for courses?

The course catalog of the following semester is available online two months before the beginning of the lecture period. You may browse the course catalog and look for courses of interest to you. Please keep in mind that not all departments are open to exchange and program students. Availability may vary depending on the exchange agreement or the conditions of the scholarship donor. Once students have initialized their account after enrolling in person at Freie Universität Berlin, they can register for courses online. The registration period starts October 1 for winter term courses and April 1 for summer term courses.

 Course catalog of Freie Universität Berlin:
www.fu-berlin.de/vv

What are the general living costs per semester?

Compared to other European capital cities, the costs for living in Berlin are reasonable, but of course they may vary, depending on the lifestyle chosen by the student. Roughly estimated, the monthly expenses are 600 to 900 euros (including accommodation, food, books, semester ticket, health insurance).

Freie Universität Berlin

University Homepage

Please note the button DE/EN on the top to switch between German and English language versions of the page.

www.fu-berlin.de/en

International Mobility

www.fu-berlin.de/international

International Student Mobility

www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international

General Information for Exchange and Program Students

www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international/studium_fu/auslandssemester

Accommodation Service

www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/unterbringung

Info Service Studium

www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/studienberatung/info-service

Course Catalog

www.fu-berlin.de/vv

Language Center

www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de

University Sports Center

www.hs-sport.fu-berlin.de

Library System

www.fu-berlin.de/en/einrichtungen/bibliotheken

Family Support Center

www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/familienbuero

International Club

www.fu-berlin.de/studium/international/internationaler_club

Germany / Berlin

German Embassies and General Consulates

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

German Visa Regulations

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen

Official Berlin Website

www.berlin.de

Berlin Airport

www.berlin-airport.de

Berlin Public Transportation System

www.bvg.de

Berlin by Bike

www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/verkehr/mobil/fahrrad

Berlin Events and Culture

www.berlin.de/kultur-und-tickets

Scholarships / German Language and Culture

German Academic Exchange Service

www.daad.de

Goethe Institute (official cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany)

www.goethe.de

Contact

Freie Universität Berlin

Office of International Affairs

International Student Mobility – Welcome Services

Ilthisstraße 4

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