

Information for Students in Göttingen



Amherst College Department of German

2023-24



You can also find this information here:



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Dear Students:

This booklet is designed to provide useful information for students who wish to participate in our departmental exchange program with the University of Göttingen in Germany.

Please feel free to discuss details of this booklet with your academic advisor or the Chair of the Department of German. We also suggest that you consult the Amherst College Department of German website for information regarding [course offerings](#) and for [useful information](#) about our Department, majoring in German, honors work, study abroad and summer study options, links to interesting German Studies resources both here and abroad and post-graduate opportunities for fellowships in the United States and German speaking countries. We hope you will make use of the many opportunities to practice your German in Porter House, in the Department, at our *Kaffeeklatsch* get together, and at the weekly German Table. And don't forget to attend our departmental film series – you'll be surprised by the variety and scope of German feature films, many of recent vintage.

We look forward to working with you.

The Department of German Faculty

Heidi Gilpin, Chair
Christian Rogowski
Hannah Hunter-Parker
Jonas Rosenbrück
Anna Schrade

1. AMHERST COLLEGE STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM IN GÖTTINGEN

1.1 *General Information*

Göttingen is a small, bustling city (population ca. 135,000) in the northwest German state of Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony). Its renowned *Georg-August-Universität*, founded in 1734 and opened in 1737, has a long and illustrious history as a center of academic excellence. Many famous scholars, writers, artists, politicians, and scientists studied or worked at the University of Göttingen, among them mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss, scientist and aphorist Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, diplomat Wilhelm von Humboldt, poet Heinrich Heine, the Brothers Grimm, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, sociologist Max Weber, and physicists Max Planck, Robert J. Oppenheimer, and Werner Heisenberg. The University of Göttingen is associated with 45 Nobel laureates.

In 1789, Dorothea Schlözer was the first woman to be awarded a humanities doctorate at a German university. Lou Andreas-Salomé – friend of Friedrich Nietzsche, partner of R. M. Rilke, and student of Sigmund Freud – worked as a psychoanalytic therapist in Göttingen for several decades.

Our Amherst-Göttingen exchange program offers direct immersion into University of Göttingen courses, with local academic, administrative and social advisors ready to introduce and help students at every juncture. Amherst’s administrative advisor in Göttingen is Ms. Xiaoting He at the International Office.

After the Amherst College Department of German has accepted you as a participant of the program, you are assured acceptance at the University of Göttingen, provided you submit all the required matriculation paperwork on time. We will provide you with appropriate contact information. You should contact Ms. He as soon as you arrive in Göttingen. Former Amherst College Language Assistants are available to help you get settled in.

In order to ensure that you receive proper credit, regardless of your major, the courses you consider taking at Göttingen must be selected **in consultation with your Department of German advisor** at Amherst. Courses you consider taking for any other major credit at Amherst must be discussed in advance with your other major advisor at Amherst. You should stay in regular email contact with your major advisor/s and with the Chair of the Department of German.

1.2 *Obtaining Major and College Credit*

You must **register officially** for all courses through the University of Göttingen to receive an ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) transcript – in a manner analogous to that used for European students who enroll at Göttingen under the “Erasmus” exchange program.

Be sure to attend the **mandatory “Introduction Day”** (see the section, “GÖTTINGEN: THINGS TO DO UPON YOUR ARRIVAL”) for further information regarding course registration.

To receive proper Amherst College and major credit, all course work will have to be documented by an official ECTS transcript from Göttingen, **available via the FlexNow** option on the University's ecampus online portal, <https://ecampus.uni-goettingen.de>.

Each semester, you must obtain a minimum total of 30 ECTS credits in order to receive the equivalent of regular Amherst College credit for the semester. At least two courses per semester must receive 6 ECTS credits each. The rest can be made up of other courses, but we urge you to aim for more than 30 ECTS credits when you register, to be able to make up for any shortfall that might occur due to unforeseen circumstances or issues of timing: for instance, some written course work in Germany is not due until after the end of the semester, so professors may not anticipate that they may have to report your grades to FlexNow earlier than those of other students, because you will need to submit your graded transcript so that you can register for your Amherst College courses upon your return. Be advised that professors in Germany may be difficult to track down after the semester ends (this is especially important for students who only stay for the fall semester), so we recommend that you alert your professors and ask them to submit your grades in a timely fashion. It is the student's responsibility to collect the proper documentation concerning the credit points.

As classes begin at Göttingen, each semester, you should sample a variety of possible options in the online course catalog (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*) for descriptions of courses, keeping in mind that not all courses offered in a given semester may be listed there and that you may need to consult the online resources of the University's various academic sections (*Fachbereiche*):

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/course+catalogue+for+bachelor%27s+programmes/29209.html>

Note that this link above does not always contain a finalized list of courses. The final course catalogue can only be accessed via StudIP, which is an online portal for course management accessible only after you have completed your registration process and received login credentials and a student ID card in Göttingen.

This website (<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/46551.html>) gives information for incoming international students. There are also some documents attached on the right side, which will provide you with a list of classes offered in English with descriptions etc. Generally, lectures and bigger modules are offered every year, whereas the topics of seminars will vary more often.

To obtain the required 30 ECTS credits per semester, you can mix and match different categories of courses, such as *Vorlesungen* (lecture courses), sometimes accompanied by *Tutorien* (discussion sessions), *Übungen* or *Proseminare* (introductory courses), *Seminare* or *Hauptseminare* (intermediate and advanced courses). There are also some 2, 3, and 6 ECTS credit German language courses/modules for foreign students called *Studententechniken*, which are focused on particular aspects of the German language, such as *Berufskommunikation*, or *Hörverstehen*, for example. ECTS credits are usually awarded based on in-class written tests (*Klausuren/Prüfungen*), oral exams (*mündliche Prüfungen*), presentations (*Referate*) or independent research papers (*Hausarbeiten*). Sometimes, receiving full credit requires combining two different courses into a *Modul*. **NOTE: Credits are received for completing modules (*Module*), not for individual courses, although the examinations are normally associated with individual courses within the *Modul*. In order to receive credit, you must complete all of the examination requirements for your chosen *Modul*.** Consult the *Modulhandbuch* in particular disciplines for associated ECTS credits: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/modulhandbuch+bachelor-studieng%C3%A4nge/29209.html>. This link is only the *Modulhandbuch* for the Economics department, for example. Each *Fakultät* (department) has their own *Modulhandbuch*. You must do your own departmental research for course offerings and use the earlier link above for courses taught in English.)

Graded work is acceptable for Amherst College credit transfer only if it has earned a grade of at least C, i.e. a 3.3 in the German system (a grade of C- [3.5 or higher number] will not suffice and will result in a deficiency).

1.3 Departmental Major Credit

To fulfill part of the major requirements for the Amherst College Department of German, courses taken in Göttingen must be related to the field of German Studies (i.e. German major credit may be awarded for a broad range of topics taught in German, including German literature, politics, history, film and television studies, theater, or the visual or performing arts.)

Up to two courses of 6 ECTS credits per semester, or three courses of 6 ECTS credits per year, may be approved for German major credit. Students must stay in touch while abroad and consult with their Amherst College Department of German advisor via email about their course selection for German credit.

Students with double majors should check with their second major department advisor or chair about course selection and appropriate documentation for possible major credit.

1.4 College Credit

Any successfully completed academic course in the liberal arts (grade of C or above; i.e. 3.3 or lower number in the German system) taken at the University of Göttingen will, if properly documented on the student's Göttingen transcript, be recommended to the Registrar by the Department of German for general Amherst College credit.

Upon their return from Göttingen, all students, regardless of major, must submit their official ECTS Göttingen transcript to the Chair of the Amherst College Department of German. The Department of German faculty will then recommend to the Registrar the number of credits to be granted, normally the equivalent of eight full courses for an academic year, or four per semester.

All courses taken in Göttingen will be granted general college credit without grades attached, i.e. they will not figure into a student's grade point average listed on the Amherst College transcript.

While it is not possible to "mix and match" half-credits taken here and abroad (half courses need to be from Amherst and they need to complement one another), it is possible to petition to receive five Amherst course credits for work done during a semester abroad if you can document that you were awarded substantially more than the required 30 ECTS credits (usually 36). Such petition requires the approval of your advisor and your class dean. If you wish to use this option, you will need to alert the Chair of the Department of German of the request to apply for five Amherst College course credits per semester when you submit your transcript/documentation about the courses taken in Göttingen. This will ensure that we recommend 5 instead of 4 semester credits when we forward your documents for granting Amherst College credit to the Registrar.

1.5 *Costs and Financial Aid*

Our arrangement with the University of Göttingen is generous: for the duration of their stay at the University, students are charged only half of the Amherst College tuition rate. For 2023-24 this comes to \$16,662.50 per semester. Normally, Amherst students receiving Financial Aid are eligible to have their Financial Aid package applied toward the Göttingen program. Students who do not receive Financial Aid need to pay for their own transportation to and from Göttingen, but all students (regardless of Financial Aid status) receive **a modest monthly living allowance in Göttingen** which covers part of their living expenses (such as fees, health insurance costs, accommodation, and food). In recent years the stipend came to € 400.– a month, of which approximately € 280.– is charged for room rent. In addition, there is a security deposit of about two months' rent, which is returned after your departure and inspection of your room is done by the housing office of the *Studentenwerk* Göttingen.

We recommend, when figuring their expenses, that students should add to their budget about \$ 2,200.– per semester. To facilitate the transition to studying at the University of Göttingen, students are required to take the University's intensive German language course at the University's IIK: *Institut für Interkulturelle Kommunikation* (offered in September for the fall, and in March for the spring) prior to starting their semester there. Currently, this four-week course costs around € 500.– (usually, Amherst College will cover these costs for those students receiving Financial Aid).

Non-Amherst students must check with their home institution's Financial Aid office for details on how their financial aid may apply to this program.

2. **GÖTTINGEN: THINGS TO DO PRIOR TO DEPARTURE**

2.1 *Complete the Amherst College Göttingen Exchange program.*

The Application can be found [here](#), and should be completed no later than December 1.

2.2 *Schedule a Consultation*

All Amherst and non-Amherst students **must schedule** a consultation with the Chair of the Amherst College Department of German to talk about administrative details. These consultations should happen before **the end of February** if you are planning to go for the full year or for the Fall or Spring semester. Students will be assigned an Amherst College academic advisor for their time at the University of Göttingen. While away, students are urged to stay in close email contact with their Amherst advisor, consulting about the choice of courses and any other academic matters. In addition, non-Amherst students need to consult their home institution's study abroad office for procedures and deadlines for study abroad.

Please note: the academic schedule of the University of Göttingen differs from that of Amherst College: classes during the *Wintersemester* generally run from mid-October to mid-February; classes for the *Sommersemester* run from mid-April to mid-July. While it is possible to attend the University of Göttingen during the fall only (*Wintersemester*), the fact that Amherst's spring semester starts in late January will necessitate that students proactively **make arrangements with their instructors in Göttingen** to submit course work early, before their departure back to the U.S., so as to receive proper credit. We therefore recommend that students consider spending the entire academic year in Göttingen and generally give preference to applicants who apply for both semesters.

2.3 Complete the GEO Study Abroad Office form

If you are accepted, you **MUST complete the GEO Study Abroad Office form** confirming which semesters you will study abroad **BY APRIL 1** of the spring prior to your study abroad year. **This is a hard deadline regardless of which semester you plan to be abroad, or both: April 1.** If you miss this deadline, you will not be permitted to go abroad for either or both semesters the following year. Fill out this form early!

Ms. Janna Behrens is the Director of Global Education at Amherst College: jbehrens@amherst.edu. Amherst students must formally declare their plans to study abroad to the Global Education Office (GEO), via the Off-Campus Study Checklist in the Amherst College [Travel Registry](#) by **April 1**.

It is very important to meet all internal deadlines (**April 1** whether you plan to study abroad in the Fall Semester, for the whole year, or in the Spring Semester only; **there are no exceptions to this deadline**). Non-Amherst students must adhere to their college deadlines and requirements.

Remember: you must declare at least one major before initiating the Study Abroad process. If you fail to do so, the Global Education Office cannot process your form. Meet with your academic advisor(s) to discuss your specific plans, especially as they relate to receiving credit in your academic major(s). To receive credit for your semester or year away and to have financial aid transferred to your approved program, you must adhere to the GEO's [policies](#).

2.4 Submit Transcript and Letter of Motivation

Students accepted by Amherst College to the Amherst-Göttingen exchange program will need to submit their Amherst College academic transcript and a letter of motivation (detailing their interests and plans for their studies in Göttingen) to the Academic Coordinator of the Department of German, Megan Howes, at mhowes@amherst.edu. For students attending Göttingen for the entire year or our Fall semester only, the deadline is **April 1**, for those planning to attend during our Spring semester, the deadline is **October 1**.

After Megan Howes nominates you to study at the University of Göttingen, you will receive an email from Göttingen; this email will include a link for you to submit your application to them which is due by **May 1** if you are attending Göttingen for the academic year or for our Fall semester only, and is due by **November 1** if you are attending Göttingen during our Spring semester only.

2.5 Talk to Our Current and Recent Language Assistants and Previous Program Participants

Language Assistants, and former program participants can give you more information about studying and living in Göttingen. You can also check the *Study Away Evaluation Forms* filled out by previous program participants. [Evaluations of study abroad programs](#), including the Amherst-Göttingen exchange, are available to Amherst students online (click on [Program Evaluations](#) listed on the left of the screen). Non-Amherst students, please email Janna Behrens at jbehrens@amherst.edu to request this information.

2.6 Advance Online Matriculation at the University of Göttingen

You will receive an email from Göttingen in April if you are attending for the entire year or Fall semester, or in October if you will be attending for the Spring semester only. This email will include instructions for all necessary steps of the matriculation procedure and must be read, and the instructions followed, very carefully. The application is due by **May 1** if you plan to go for the Fall/*Winter* semester or for the full academic year, and by **November 1** if you plan to go for the Spring/*Sommer* semester.

2.6.1.

The email you receive from Göttingen (*see 2.6 above*) will include a link to **register for a German language course** offered at the University's *Institut für Interkulturelle Kommunikation* prior to the beginning of the semester. The fee for this **required course** is currently about € 500.-. Usually, Amherst College covers these costs for those students receiving Financial Aid. (See the section above: "1.5: Cost and Financial Aid").

2.6.2

Please note that the lease for your room runs from September 1 to August 31 (= 12 months) if you stay the full academic year, or September 1 to February 28 (= 6 months) for the first (*Winter*) semester, and March 1 to August 31 (= 6 months) for the second (*Sommer*) semester. This applies even if you arrive later and/or leave earlier. If you wish to reduce expenses, you can arrange to sublet your room after the end of the second semester (*Sommersemester*) – traditionally an easy option, since demand for affordable housing is high in this popular university town. Get in touch with the student housing office within the *Studentenwerk Göttingen* to ask for particulars about subletting your room.

2.7 Liability and Health Insurance

By German law, all students are required to have health insurance that meets the German standard for university students. The Amherst College Student Health Insurance Plan meets that standard. Students may enroll in this plan for their semester or year in Göttingen. Please contact the Controller's Office in December for spring semester students and July for fall or full year students to enroll. If a student is not on the Amherst health insurance plan, it is the student's responsibility to confirm with the International Office in Göttingen that their plan offers sufficient coverage. If it does not, students will be expected to purchase additional insurance for their stay in Germany.

2.8 Passport and Visa

Make sure your passport is valid for the entire length of your stay overseas, **plus six months**.

American citizens do not have to apply ahead of time for a student visa for Germany, but **must** (if you don't have a visa) apply for an *Aufenthaltsgenehmigung* (residence permit) also called an *Aufenthaltsittel*, once you arrive in Göttingen (see the section "GÖTTINGEN: THINGS TO DO UPON ARRIVAL"). In your meeting to get your permit, you must bring a copy of your American bank account statement to prove you have the funds to stay in the city.

Non-American citizens should contact the German Consulate in Boston (www.boston.diplo.de), Three Copley Place, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02116, phone (617) 369-4900.

Non-Amherst students should contact the appropriate German Consulate in their college location. To process your visa you will most likely need a *Zulassungsbescheid* (confirmation of admittance) from the University of Göttingen, which Xiaoting He will send to you after she has received your online matriculation application.

Citizens of European Union countries do not need visas. **Please consult with the GEO office about the Schengen visa as soon as you are admitted to Göttingen.**

2.9 *Bring 3 Biometric Passport Photos*

Before your departure to Germany, be sure to have new biometric passport photos (at least 3 copies) made. You may need these for the student dormitory, and for the student ID card. It is also a good idea to scan all your important documents (such as your passport) and keep a paper and/or electronic copy. CVS on Pleasant Street in the town of Amherst can take and print biometric passport photos. The ZHG (*Zentrales Hörsaalgebäude*, or “Blauer Turm”) on the main University campus in Göttingen has a photo booth on the ground floor in which you can take these photos as well (cash only).

Further useful information to consult prior to arrival is available on the University’s web pages.

General information on how to [prepare for arrival in Göttingen](#).

A comprehensive guide to [living and studying in Göttingen](#).

Information for students on [a partnership program](#) such as ours.

3. GÖTTINGEN: THINGS TO DO UPON YOUR ARRIVAL

3.1 *Money to Cover Initial Expenses*

It is important that you bring along, or have access to, enough money to cover living expenses and other costs (such as any up-front fees, the costs for the required intensive language course, or the room rent and security deposit) for the period from your arrival in Göttingen to when you receive your first local stipend. We estimate that, depending on when you arrive and keeping in mind that you will have to pay for the preparatory language course (currently, around € 500.–), this can be upwards of € 1200.–. If you are on Financial Aid, the College may be able to help you cover these initial costs (because you can carry some, perhaps even all, of your Financial Aid package to Germany). Also, the College may be able to help with travel costs to Göttingen, depending on your specific Financial Aid arrangements.

3.2 *Use the Exchange Buddy System*

Once your online matriculation has been processed, the University will inform you about the *Exchange Buddy System*. Be sure to use this system to arrange for a buddy to pick you up upon arrival. The exchange buddy will be able to pick up **the keys to your room** – which, depending on your arrival time, may be essential, since the University’s housing office has very limited opening hours. You will be considered an *Erasmus* student. The Exchange Buddy program is a very easy and convenient way to meet open-minded local students who are eager to help you enjoy your time and have a smooth start in Göttingen. Prior and/or current Göttingen language assistants at Amherst have often been known to help students out with many of these arrival details.

3.3 Introduction Day

Be sure to time your arrival in such a way that you are able to participate in one of the Introduction Days for the four-week intensive language program organized by the University of Göttingen. **It is imperative that you participate in this mandatory orientation session.** Once you have completed the online matriculation process, the University will communicate dates and more details about this to you. Participating in one of these Introduction Day sessions will allow you to complete most necessary local on-the-ground formalities **in one day**. Please note that this orientation session involves fees, which you should be prepared to pay.

- a. Bring your passport and biometric passport photos as well as scanned or xeroxed copies. Also, be sure to bring enough money to pay the various fees listed below.
- b. You will receive your official confirmation that you are an exchange student (*Bescheinigung*). The orientation fee (currently about €180.–) is for your student I.D., which doubles as a pass for most buses in town, and as a rail pass for the free use of some local/regional trains throughout the state of Lower Saxony.
- c. You will have to take your documents (such as your passport and rental agreement) to an office on the ground floor of the New Town Hall (*Neues Rathaus*) to complete your residence registration (*Anmeldung*). The University of Göttingen International Office (Xiaoting He) will help you in this process.
- d. You will be expected to open a German bank account, either in town (Volksbank or Sparkasse sometimes do not charge monthly fees) or online (such as the German N26 bank). One LA said: “I have had great experiences with the Santander Bank, especially also for international students. They have an office downtown and sometimes even schedule group appointments for multiple students upon arrival. The bank account is free of charge.” Note that if you have a Bank of America account in the U.S., its German partner, Deutsche Bank, does not charge transaction fees. With a Bank of America Credit/Debit Card, you can pay at any Point-Of-Sale (POS) terminal in most grocery stores, etc. without extra fees. However, if you want to withdraw Euros with a Bank of America Credit/Debit Card, there is a fixed fee as well as a fee for a percentage of the amount charged/withdrawn. In order to open a bank account in Germany, you must have a Residence Permit (see 3.4 just below).
- e. Representatives from German health insurance companies will also be present to verify that you have adequate health insurance. Be prepared to show evidence of your American health insurance coverage if you wish to have the German health insurance requirement waived.

3.4 Residence Permit

Students who are not European Union citizens must get a physical Residence Permit (*Aufenthaltstitel*) from the city’s Office of Foreign Affairs. You will need biometric passport photos, proof of funds, matriculation documentation and a stipend statement for this. Do this immediately once you have all of these documents. The International Office works closely with the city of Göttingen’s Office of Foreign Affairs. You can also apply for an electronic Residence Permit (*Aufenthaltstitel*) from the Office of Foreign Affairs. There is currently a fee of around € 100.–.

3.5 Monthly Living Allowance Stipend

You should have received information about your stipend from the University's International Office prior to your arrival. Once you have your bank account number, please go and see Ms. Xiaoting He immediately at the International Office so that your stipend is implemented. Once you submit your German bank account details to Xiaoting He, you will start getting your stipend deposited to your account each month. You will also, separately, have to visit the [Studentenwerk](#) office to submit your bank account details for rent charges.

It is common in Germany to have your rent automatically withdrawn from your bank account on a regular basis. This involves a direct deposit arrangement, called a *SEPA Lastschriftmandat* – keep in mind that this will reduce your available “cash resources.”

3.6 Course Enrollment (*Einschreibungsverfahren*)

Currently, there is no unified course enrollment system that covers all departments and academic fields – procedures range from “first come, first served” (**pay attention to deadlines!**) to random lottery systems, if classes are over-subscribed. Hence it is important to check via the [eCampus](#) system what the specific procedures are for signing up for courses in particular fields of study (*Studienfächer*). **Registration is done through StudIP (which is accessible through eCampus) and the procedures for individual courses are on StudIP as well.**

In order to take courses in particular fields, you need to make sure you are enrolled in their respective departments. For example, if a student wanted to take a Computer Science course, they would need to request enrollment in the Göttingen Department of Mathematics & Computer Science (*Informatik*), but if the same student also wanted to take classes in German Literature, they would also have to enroll in the German Philology department, and **they need to do so well before classes begin**. Being able to take German Language (*Germanistik* Department) courses does not mean that you can take German Literature (*Philosophische Fakultät / Deutsche Philologie* Department) courses. The German language (*Germanistik* Department) courses are tailored for international students and all international students are automatically enrolled in the *Germanistik* Department and allowed to take those courses. However, if you want to take regular courses in the German department like all other local/German students, you have make sure you are enrolled in the *Deutsche Philologie* Department. Similar regulations may obtain for signing up for exams. **NOTE: You must be registered/enrolled in a department in order to register for their courses and receive credit for exams!** In Germany, deadlines tend to be firm. **Please email Ms. Xiaoting He, ideally many weeks before course registration for that course opens (which is sometimes two months before classes begin), to inform her of all the courses you wish to take** (with the course code/number, full title, type of course (*Modul, Seminar, Vorlesung*, etc.), number of credits, and name of Professor if available, along with your full Amherst College transcript), **so that she can contact each relevant department chair to request permission for you to be enrolled in their department, so that you will be permitted to register for courses in that department as soon as course registration opens for each course.** According to new information from Ms. Xiaoting He on October 11, 2023, Amherst students do NOT need to be a declared major at Amherst in a department in which they wish to take a course at the University of Göttingen.

4 GÖTTINGEN: USEFUL NON-ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

4.1 *Using / Getting a Mobile Phone*

Oftentimes you can keep your American smartphone, turn off the data plan and use the WiFi feature with applications like Zoom or WhatsApp. (Göttingen students use WhatsApp instead of iMessages or Messenger.) Make sure that your phone is unlocked (i.e., that it can be used with a different cellphone carrier), or you will not be able to use a German SIM card with that phone. If your phone is unlocked, you can simply buy any SIM card in Germany and subscribe to a prepaid package that includes a certain amount of talk-time and data per month. If your American smartphone can use ESIM, you can consider the esim companies like alosim and others. If your phone is locked, you would need to consider buying a new phone either in the U.S. or in Germany and get a German SIM card and subscribe to the same pre-paid package described above. Some good phone plans are provided by Vodafone, Telekom, O2 and Aldi-Talk. Aldi-Talk (available at any Aldi Supermarket) is the cheapest one: it does not always have the best download/upload speeds, but some international students have been happy with it because you can cancel the plan on a monthly basis, which a lot of other companies don't offer. You can add to your prepaid phone balance for many of these cellphone companies via their apps or webpages or at most supermarkets in Germany. **Purchasing a SIM card requires that you present your passport.** If you buy your SIM card from a supermarket instead of a cellphone company store, you will have to video conference with a person online and present your passport.

4.2 *Internet Access*

Ask if internet access is included in the rent (for dorms run by the *Studentenwerk* it normally is), and ask around your dorm and find out who the Internet Tutor is, he or she will help establish the Internet connection for you. Contact the *Studentenwerk* if you have problems with the quality of the Wifi connection. There is also **eduroam** in Göttingen, which you can log into with your Amherst College or University of Göttingen credentials; so if you have a good eduroam WiFi reception, you might not need to set up a separate internet connection.

4.3 *Sprachpartner*

There is a bulletin board located in the Mediathek/Library of the Language Center (ZESS = *Zentrale Einrichtung für Sprachen und Schlüsselqualifikationen* in Goßlerstraße 10, advertising German conversation partners. It is a good idea to find one, for it can also help you meet more friends and get a better insight into German university life. You might also consider signing up to the Tandem program <https://uni-goettingen.de/en/572807.html> to find a person to speak German with and you offer English or another language you know in return. Even if you don't have a partner, you can show up to the events they offer, which is often a fun board game afternoon/night.

4.4 *“O-Phase / O-Woche”* (Students in Göttingen use both terms)

This is the orientation week for all incoming first-year students arranged by various student organizations and department faculties. It typically takes place during the last week before the beginning of the fall (*Winter*) semester. It is a good way to get to know the city, make new friends, and learn about local activities, as well as familiarize yourself with your academic environment. It is not obligatory, but it is a good way to get in touch with people. More information on Orientierungswoche für Erstsemester-Studierende can be found [here](#) (again, this link is only for Economics.) All *O-Phasen* are organized by the departments themselves but usually take place in the same week and you can take part in the activities of several O-Wochen, e.g. German and Math).

One Amherst student writes: “Be aware that there is often drinking involved aside from actually providing information. Normally, towards the beginning of the week, you will get a schedule, so you can choose which days and hours you want to take part. It is of course always OK to say NO to drinking etc. and often the days are really fun and you meet great people.”

4.5 *Getting a Bike*

Consider getting a bike, even though Göttingen is a very walkable city. Keep your eyes open for flyers and postings. There are cheap used bike sales near the train station, in Humboldtallee and the city center. Alternatively, you can get decent bike rental and repair plans from outfits such as *Swapfiets*. Once the plan term is over, you simply return the bike and get the added benefit of free repairs throughout the rental period. Another cheap option is to look for used bikes at <https://www.kleinanzeigen.de/>. Ask the LAs for recommendations. One writes: “Although often unfriendly, the cheapest and fastest way to get a bike fixed is at Radelaktiv in Friedrichstr. 1.” In addition, the university has a (self) repair center: <https://asta.uni-goettingen.de/services/fahrradwerkstatt/>. The staff (student volunteers) help you fix your bike for free, and they only ask for small donations. One LA “really recommends this, but just keep in mind that the demand is usually high and it’s pretty packed.”

4.6 *Groceries*

The closest grocery store to the *Max-Kade-Haus* dorm where most Amherst College students live, is on *Annastraße*: *Rewe* (a mid-priced supermarket). It is one block away from the *Kreuzbergring* and *Weender Landstraße*. Another (discount) supermarket, *Lidl*, is further down the street from *Rewe*. *Tegut* (upscale, organic) and *Aldi* (discount) are also within walking distance. One LA writes: “The most affordable stores are Kaufland, Aldi, Penny, Lidl. Some higher priced stores are Edeka, Rewe, Alnatura (lots of organic items). Also, consider going to the Wochenmarkt, our farmer’s market on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (most booths) in the mornings. It may be a little pricier than a discounter, but is local and fun to shop at.”

4.7 *Sports*

Most sports in Germany are not directly organized by universities, but rather by clubs. You can join a club; they will probably be more than willing to have you train and compete with them. You can also take courses with the *Hochschulsportteams*; they may charge a small fee per semester. Check out the [university sport website](#). One LA writes: “The Hochschulsport classes (<https://store.sport.uni-goettingen.de/dashboard>) are amazing! There is a basis+ account, which allows you to take part in any of the group fitness workouts (no extra fee, you just show up to one of the 5 classes every day; some offered in English), and you can also check out the other classes they offer, ranging from volleyball to dance classes etc. They offer Schnupperwochen at the beginning of the semester so you can try out several classes. Also, we have a FIZ gym (<https://my.sport.uni-goettingen.de/fiz/>). It is pretty affordable for students (E28/month) for a membership that you can cancel every month.”

4.8 LEAVING GÖTTINGEN

4.8.1

Ask Ms. Xiaoting He about all procedures to be followed before you leave town. **You are required by law to "deregister" yourself before you leave Göttingen.** It is the same process as registering yourself: visit the Rathaus with your passport and residence permit.

4.8.2

Make sure that you have paid any outstanding rent after your room has been inspected and deemed to be in acceptable condition, and then return your room keys. Do not leave any stuff behind when you leave because otherwise the *Studentenwerk* will charge you for removing those items and it will be deducted from your original room deposit. If you want to give away belongings that are in good condition before you leave, you can simply leave them out on the street (clothing in a large paper/plastic bag and other items in an open box). Make sure you do not put them next to a trash can. One LA writes: "Also, consider selling your things on Kleinanzeigen if you want to make some money off of them."

4.8.3

Make sure that your ECTS transcript is complete. Without this documentation, no Amherst College or major credit can be assigned for your semester or year. Courses for which there are no grades are considered incomplete and may be assigned failing grades after a one-semester grace period in which the Department of German can recommend credit to the Amherst College Registrar.

Please share your complete transcript from Flexnow with the Chair of the Department of German, and with Megan Howes at mhowes@amherst.edu.

One LA writes: "Many professors take a LONG time for grading. It is normal for credits and grades to only show up 1-2 months after the end of the semester. Do not stress out, but definitely give your professor a heads up if you need the grade pretty quickly."

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GÖTTINGEN:

You can learn more about Göttingen and its university on the various websites. The university's official online portal:

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

The city's official information portal:

<http://www.goettingen.de/>

Follow the University's facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/georgiaaugusta>

One LA writes: "Follow Instagram accounts such as @goettingerglueck

<https://www.instagram.com/goettingerglueck/> for some good tips on what to do and where to go."

USEFUL ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS:

Ms. Xiaoting He – Advisor for Administrative Matters

International Office Universität Göttingen

Von-Siebold-Str. 2

D-37075 Göttingen

Phone: + 49 (551) 39-21348

Email: xiaoting.he@zvw.uni-goettingen.de

Mr. Martin Jagonak – Study Abroad Advisor

International Office (as above)

Email: martin.jagonak@zvw.uni-goettingen.de

Emergencies: 110 (Police)
112 (Fire & Health)

CURRENT & FORMER AMHERST COLLEGE LAs/Language Assistants:

Cara Hösterey, LA 2023-24, choesterey@amherst.edu

Yasemin Özden, LA 2023-24, yoezden@amherst.edu

Luisa Hütter, LA 2022-23, luisa.huetter@stud.uni-goettingen.de

Klara Hilgenberg, LA 2022-23, klara.hilgenberg@t-online.de

Tia Behrens, LA 2021-22, tiajulina.behrens@stud.uni-goettingen.de

Clara Joya Horn, LA 2021-22, clara.horn-joya@gmx.net