

Goethe Institute, Munich, Germany

a. I recommend either staying in the Wohnheim, as that is where most of the other students stay. However, staying in an apartment or wohngemeinschaft would work as well.

b. no

2.

a.

-the classrooms were small: 15 people at most.

-instruction was all in german, no English was allowed.

-teachers and students had a good relationship, even went out for beers on some nights.

-grading was not very difficult but it was very effective.

- administration was very helpful and polite.

-library and computers were very up to date and helpful.

b. quality of instruction was very succinct.

c. they were all good classes and teachers.

d. not as hard as UW but a lot more cultural awareness and exposure.

3.

a. Living in the Wohnheim was the only housing option available.

b. Wohnheim because it was easy to arrange and had nice amenities.

c. I would suggest the wohnheim for short stays but an apartment for longer ones.

4

a. the campus was a 4 story building in the middle of down town. It was very close to everything in munich, and was easily to get to via u-bahn, or trolly.

5. NA

6.

a. Oktoberfest and markets were the best ways to get a good feel of the culture.

b. The hardest cultural stereotype to over come was explaining how not all Americans were uneducated, and lacked cultural experience.

7.

a. ATM

b. 1500 euro

c. Daily/ weekly train tickets.

8.

a/b. none

9. Some one who is not afraid to live and interact with people from other cultures they may not be familiar with.

10. they were amazing,

APR 16 2010

1. Arrival/Orientation
 - a. The Goethe Institut provides accommodations for most sites in Germany, but in Munich there is a student apartment-style building that I lived in. It was very easy to access from the U-Bahn system, but there is also a home stay option where you live with a local family from Munich. I personally liked the apartments, as it was very easy to get to know fellow students outside of the classroom but if you wanted something more "German" in experience and to also live with a family, then perhaps the home stay would be better.
 - b. The first day when you arrive at the Goethe Institut, there is an orientation after the initial oral/written test. They give you a general map of the city, along with telling you about the "cultural" programs that they offer before/after class most days – such as visiting museums in a group, or touring the city with guides. Basically, they tell how to orient yourself within the city and give you a map. Not necessarily the most in-depth of orientations and introductions to the city, but if you can read a map – you'll be fine.
2. Instruction
 - a. The classes were a lot smaller than most classes at UW, depending on what level you were in though most were between 12-15 students. They were comparable to the language classes at UW that I've experienced. The teachers were all native German speakers, with little to some English language knowledge though not all students spoke English. Instruction was all in German, from what levels I took. Teachers were very helpful, and we spent a lot of time in class – probably from 4-5 hours a day, so you got to know your teacher very well. Exams were somewhat difficult, as there was only one that really counted at the very end of the course. They didn't seem to match the material that was focused on in the course, but the knowledge covered was definitely needed to do well on those tests. Administration was very helpful, providing residence requirements for the city of Munich (if you're staying for more than 1 month, you need to register with the local police and they did that for you), along with sending copies of my transcripts to the IPE office even after I'd finished the course. Library was very helpful – had great selection of dictionaries, grammar books, movies, and novels that students could checkout and even use in-house.
 - b. Quality of instruction was great, all the teachers were very knowledgeable (considering they were German) and very friendly. Content covered a lot of grammar and vocabulary, through texts and local newspaper.
 - c. All the courses/teachers were very good, and they vary from course to course.
 - d. I plan on being a German major, so studying in Germany was not only required but helped me grasp the language in a seemingly real-life applicable way that made the language more relevant to day-to-day life.
3. Housing
 - a. Student apartments and home stay with a local family
 - b. I chose to live in the student apartments because it offered me a greater chance to get to know people my age and students from all around the world.
 - c. As I said earlier, it depends on what sort of experience you're looking for. I loved living in the student apartments because I got my privacy and independence and I was able to connect with other students but if you wanted to live with a family, and be seemingly more immersed with the language, then I would recommend living with a host family.
4. Campus/Community
 - a. There was no real "campus" like there is at UW, but it's more of just a building along one of the main boulevards in Munich. Though, it was in a very business-like neighborhood that was busy. It

was only a few blocks from Karlsplatz, and then a five minute walk to Marienplatz which is one of the biggest shopping squares in Munich. It was very central, and quite safe.

5. Health & Safety

- a. I didn't really have any safety concerns while I was there, and no one I personally knew experienced any theft. There was a terrorist threat while I was abroad that was focused on Oktoberfest, but that was not acted upon and was quite safe. I didn't get sick when I was there, but the doctors would be readily available if needed and could most likely be recommended by the Goethe Institut staff.

6. Culture Aspects

- a. Culture didn't seem too different from our own, though the lower drinking age allowed bars/pubs to be easily accessed and become a social scene for most students.
- b. There weren't too many social differences, though Munich is in Bavaria which is one of the most conservative states in Germany – they were still quite liberal by most U.S. standards. Most stores are all closed on Sundays, and they close earlier (usually by around 8pm) every other day of the week. Almost nothing is open past 9 or 24 hours a day.

7. Financial

- a. I'm not sure about the "best" way to access money from the U.S. in Germany, but I just used my debit card and pulled out money through the ATM. There was a few dollar fee every time you pulled out money, but in quantities large enough it didn't seem to make much of a difference. I know that traveler's checks can be used as well.
- b. I probably used about 150-200 Euros per month. Rent for the student apartment was taken care of through the tuition amount paid directly to the Goethe Institut, but monthly U-/S-Bahn cards cost about 45 Euros. I had to buy my own groceries, etc. And if you want to travel any extra, train tickets are probably 30-100 Euros a piece depending on the distance.
- c. Some of the programs run through the Goethe Institut (such as a visit to Prague, museum visits, day trips) cost a few Euros extra that hadn't been included in the tuition costs.
- d. n/a

8. Program Administration

- a. I used the IPE office to administer this program, but responses to applications/credit forms were not prompt. I had mail that was sent to the office that was lost, and had to be resent from the Goethe Institut in Munich. There was also little to no communication between me and the IPE office about my responsibilities until after I'd returned and made extensive inquiries about how to receive credit for my time abroad.
- b. n/a

9. Program/Student Type

- a. I believe this program to be best suited for someone with a base in the German language because going to Germany, and receiving instruction in German could be quite overwhelming for someone who has no experience/knowledge of German.

10. Overall Experience

- a. Because your entire "grade" from the Goethe Institut is based off one short and very difficult test at the end of the course, the program is not very easy in the long run. Though there is no set responsibility, if you don't have the self-motivation/-responsibility, then you will not do well in the course – which could affect your credit situation/grade point when it's translated back into the UW form. This program is really what you put into it because you are forced to put into it what you want to get out of it.

Goethe Institute
Munich, Germany

on.edu

1. Arrival Overseas/ Onsite Orientation:

- a. Accommodations are provided for students upon request.
- b. The program's arrival orientation was very thorough. You arrive the day before classes begin and are given directions to the school and your accommodations via email. First you arrive at the Goethe Institute where you are given a packet of important information about the city and adjusting to the new surroundings, also information about visas and other technical information.
- c. Afterwards you are given an oral interview, and a written comprehension exam to place you in the correct course level. Afterwards you make your way to the accommodations, which are only a few stops away on the S-Bahn from the school location. It is very well organized and easy to settle in to your new living space, and there is a short meeting in the late afternoon that covers basically everything you need to know about the apartment building, laundry, grocery stores in the area and any other questions you need to have answered.

2. Academics

- a. The instruction was wonderful! I really enjoyed my professors; they were really nice and generally very funny. It was a great environment to learn a foreign language. Not only are you immersed in a foreign language but you are also immersed in a variety of cultures, which the professors generally draw upon for activities and presentations. The grading scale in Germany is different from our 4.0 scale we use at the UW, but once you get used to it, it is not a big deal. The exams were manageable as long as you did the daily assignments and kept up on new vocabulary words.
- b. (See above)
- c. All of the instructors were great, and if you ever have a problem with an instructor you can always talk to the main office and they are more than happy to help switch you into another class if it is possible.
- d. My study abroad course work just solidified my German skills and helped me in my German courses here at the UW immensely! My UW education has benefited greatly from my experience abroad, my comprehension level is so much greater than I ever would have expected, and I hope to continue my advancement in the language in the future.

3. Housing

- a. The housing options vary according to the location that you choose to study. Munich had two different options. The first option is an apartment building owned by the school in a residential area on the outskirts of Munich. The other

option is staying with a host family. Most everyone stays in the apartment building and if there is no room in the apartment building then the Goethe Institute will arrange for you to stay with a host family.

- b. I chose to stay in the apartment building, and it worked out great! Everything is provided for you, sheets, towels, and the laundry machines are free of cost and available 24/7 to use in the basement. There is a communal kitchen on each floor, really easy to use, and once again everything is provided for you. I believe that the whole apartment building was renovated in the last 2 years and the rooms were really nice and comfortable. Each room is given their own bathroom and mini fridge as well.
- c. I definitely recommend the apartment building (Student Wohnheim). It was really great, clean, comfortable living space. But I had a few friends that lived with host families and were pleasantly surprised at how accommodating they were. So really anywhere you live you will love it, and there is always a place to stay, you will never be stranded.

4. Program/ Exchange Site:

- a. The campus and surrounding community are beautiful! The apartment building is only 5 minutes walking distance away from Schloss Nymphenburg, which has a beautiful park and a great place to run, or do some homework in the afternoon out on the grass. It is also 5 minutes away from the largest beer garden in the world, which was really fun. The school campus is right off of Karlsplatz, the shopping district is really close and any pharmacies, bookstores, and lots of restaurants are in the area. Everything is really close and the transportation in Munich is so easy to use and always on time.

5. Health and Safety:

- b. I never had any health issues while I was in Germany, so I couldn't be a great advocate for the health facilities. But I can say that the Zivi's of the apartment building are really helpful and are willing to take you whenever you need to go to the hospital or even the doctor if you need it. I never had any problems with theft; I was even in huge tourist traps like Oktoberfest and also never felt unsafe. There aren't really any areas/ districts that I felt unsafe in either. I would say just be aware of your surroundings, but overall really safe area.

6. Cultural Aspects:

- c. I integrated into the community by meeting people in my classes and also in my living situation. The Goethe Institute offers daily activities outside of school cultural and tourist like attractions that are almost all free. There are a few day trips like going to the Zugspitze or the Alps that have additional costs but they are really affordable. There is a gym in the area that many students joined while they were studying. Also there are a bunch of pubs and restaurants in the area that students can meet and socialize. Beware...Mexican food is REALLY expensive.
- d. I never ran into any cultural differences that affected me in a negative way. I just embraced all the culture that surrounded me and learned from it.

7. Financial:

- a. I found the best way to access/transfer money from home was just withdrawing a certain amount of cash for the week and if I was going to buy anything over that amount for the week (i.e. Plane tickets, etc.) then I would just use a debit card. You can find one of the partner banks to yours in Germany and that makes your withdraw fees less expensive than using a random atm.
- b. Spending money is a tough subject. I would say that reasonably it would take anywhere from 200-400 euros a month. Which is about 350-600 US dollars. I found that the groceries were really expensive in Munich, and food in general in restaurants was also a big expense. As well as Taxi's...do yourself a favor and get to an S-Bahn before 2:30 am because after that the trains run about every hour. But since most extracurricular activities were included in the program, that didn't take up as much money as I expected. And transportation is about 40 Euros a month to by a pass for the U-Bahn and S-Bahn and also the Trams so that was helpful.
- c. N.A
- d. No complications with financial aid. Just be proactive and make phone calls to make sure that they know you are studying abroad and you will be fine.

8. Program Exchange administration:

- a. The IP&E office really wasn't a problem for me. The only thing that I got a bit nervous about was how slow they were about putting up my study abroad 360 class that held my spot at the university, and also every time I called up with questions they generally didn't have a good answer for me. But in the end it all worked out and the post help is much better than the pre-help.
- b. While I was abroad I didn't have any contact with the IP&E office. I did appreciate the occasional travel help emails that I received from IP&E but other than that everything was fine.

9. Program/ Student Type:

- a. I think that you have to be prepared as a student to be on your own. This is not a group-oriented program. I had one other student from the UW go with me and that was because I had mentioned it to them to do this study abroad with me. But in most other cases I think the student should be prepared to be on their own and be willing to mix with people from all over the world, while speaking in a different language.

10. Overall Experience:

- b. My overall experience was absolutely AMAZING! I can't recommend this program enough to other people. I wish that I could go over and over again. I was able to travel all over Europe because of the prime location of Munich. And I expanded my knowledge of not only the German Language, but also of different cultures and interacting with people that I would never dreamed that I could have met. I have friends all over the world now thanks to this program that I will always keep in touch with!