

Dear Parents,

We are glad that your son/daughter would like to participate in our program and that you are supporting him/her in this matter. We are certain that your child will find studying at Freie Universität Berlin exciting, challenging and stimulating. He/she will discover Berlin as a city full of thrilling contrasts where East meets West, history meets future, art meets pop culture.

You as parents will surely have a number of questions about the program. Because we often receive inquiries from parents, we decided to compile your most frequently asked questions into a Parents' Guide. Further answers can be found in our pre-departure information package which will be sent to your son/daughter a few weeks before the beginning of the program. If you have any questions that remain unanswered after reading the Parents' Guide, please do not hesitate to contact us any time.

Sincerely,

The FUBiS Team

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General Information (contact information etc.)

How can I contact FUBiS?

You can contact us via e-mail, telephone or postal mail:

E-mail: fubis@fubis.org
Telephone: +49- 30- 838 73 472
Fax: +49- 30- 838 473 472

Address: Freie Universität Berlin
Internationale Sommer- und Winteruniversität FUBiS
c/o ERG Universitätsservice GmbH
Malteserstr. 74-100
12249 Berlin, Germany

Where can I find further information about FUBiS?

The best source of information about FUBiS is our website www.fubis.org. There you can find information about the FUBiS program e.g. program dates, course offerings, fees, policies as well as information on accommodation options and extracurricular activities that are offered by FUBiS. Participants can also register on the FUBiS website using the online registration form.

Before the FUBiS Program

What can my son/ daughter expect of the FUBiS program?

FUBiS is the International Summer and Winter University of Freie Universität Berlin, an intensive, short-term program of high academic quality. Students from all over the world participate in FUBiS, creating an international environment which promotes the learning and use of intercultural competency skills. Participation in the FUBiS program is an academic, cultural and personal enrichment for students.

How can participation be paid for?

After registering for FUBiS your son/daughter will receive a bill which has to be paid within 7 days of receipt. The amount may be paid by credit card or by bank transfer. After we have received the payment, your son/daughter is officially registered for FUBiS. Course spots will be given on a first-come, first-served basis. It is therefore advisable to register early, as soon as your son/daughter decides to take part in FUBiS.

What should my son/daughter bring with him/her?

Students should definitely bring the following things with them:

- valid passport
- if applicable: visa (for more information: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/visabestimmungen-node>)
- enough cash for the first days (approx. 300 euro)
- valid health insurance (FUBiS also recommends accident and liability insurance. If your son/daughter has chosen the FUBiS insurance package, which includes all three types of insurance, he/she will receive his/her documents at the orientation meeting)
- towels
- adaptors
- laptop with Wi-Fi (recommended)
- Berlin travel guide
- dictionary
- special medication (in original container) if needed

Which clothes your son/daughter should bring depends on the season. In winter, the temperature lies between +10 °C and -15 °C. Your son/daughter should bring a warm jacket, scarf, hat, gloves and water resistant shoes.

In summer, the weather is quite variable in Germany. It is advisable to bring clothes for hot summer weather as well as closed shoes, pants and sweaters for chilly days.

What are the Program Policies?

During the program, your son/daughter is bound to the FUBiS Program Policies, which regulate academic as well as general procedures and behavior at FUBiS. These can be reviewed at: <http://www.fubis.org/agb.html>.

What kind of immunizations should my son/daughter have?

Germany does not have any special immunization requirements.

What should my son/daughter keep in mind if he/she needs to bring medication with him/her?

If your son/daughter has a medical condition that requires him/her to travel with medication, he/she should have his/her physician write a letter describing his/her condition and prescription medications, including a list of any generic names of the prescribed medication. Medications should be left in their original containers. You may want to check with the nearest German embassy or consulate in your country to see if any of the prescribed medications are considered illegal in Germany. Your son/daughter should avoid carrying large amounts of non-prescription medication with him/her while travelling.

During the FUBiS Program**Berlin****What is life like in Berlin?**

Residents and visitors alike are fascinated by the traces of an eventful past that can be encountered almost everywhere in the city. Berlin offers unrivalled educational, intellectual, cultural, and recreational opportunities. The city has a high student population and offers something for everybody: renowned museums, monuments and memorials, concert halls and opera houses, theaters, pubs and clubs. For more information about Berlin please go to Berlin's official website (<https://www.berlin.de/en/>) or to the Berlin tourist information website (<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/>).

Is Berlin a safe city?

In international comparison, Berlin is a very safe city. Moreover, the FUBiS program is located in a very quiet residential area. Still, your son/daughter should take certain general precautions, especially in new or unfamiliar places. He/she should:

- avoid parks and wooded areas as well as dark, desolate streets and places at night.
- not get involved in arguments/disputes.
- not take any drugs and not drink more alcohol than he/she can tolerate.
- not leave his/her drink unattended in clubs and bars.
- not get into a car with strangers.

In Berlin, as in any other city, there are pickpockets and trick swindlers near tourist attractions. Therefore, FUBiS also recommends the following precautions:

- Always have an eye on personal belongings and keep wallets in a secure place.
 - Never get involved in bets or games with strangers where one can supposedly win money.
 - Always carry important telephone numbers with you.
 - In case of credit card loss, have the card blocked immediately.
 - Keep copies of passport and other travel documents separate from the originals.
 - Keep valuable articles in separate places.
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Freie Universität Berlin and FUBiS

Status and location of Freie Universität Berlin

Freie Universität Berlin is a premier destination for research and education in Europe. It is ranked nationally and internationally among the top research universities in Germany. In 2007, after an intense, nation-wide competition, Freie Universität Berlin became one of eleven German universities to be awarded an Elite status by the German Research Foundation (DFG). In the Excellence Initiative competition, Freie Universität won the highest number of grants and was selected for its outstanding graduate programs, excellent research clusters and successful internationalization strategy. In 2012, the second phase of the German national Excellence Initiative, Freie Universität Berlin has again achieved excellence status.

The university campus is located in a charming and mostly residential section of former "West-Berlin". Yet – thanks to Berlin's superb public transportation network – it is within easy reach of the city's downtown areas. There are various restaurants, cafés and bistros near campus, particularly near the urban train station close to the campus. A supermarket, a post office, bank, pharmacy, and other shops can also be found in this area.

How safe is the university?

Berlin is a central-European metropolis that is very safe in comparison to other international cities. There are no serious risks involved while staying in the city or while studying at Freie Universität Berlin. In the unlikely case that acute safety problems would arise or in case of dangerous weather conditions, the students will be informed by the FUBiS team and, if necessary, brought to a safe place. FUBiS works closely with its partners to guarantee a high standard of safety in all institutions and activities of the program and is prepared to support and advise students appropriately.

What kind of extracurricular activities are offered?

FUBiS sets great value on that fact that students can use their stay at Freie Universität Berlin not only for their academic development, but also for their personal growth, as they can greatly profit from the multicultural atmosphere at FUBiS. This is why we offer many extracurricular activities and get-togethers during which the FUBiS participants can get to know their fellow students as well as Berlin and the German culture. Most of these trips and activities are included in the program fee e.g.:

- The FUBiS opening ceremony and orientation meeting is the first time the entire FUBiS program comes together. After the orientation meeting, students will have a chance to get to know each other, the university, the FUBiS team, and the professors around a warm buffet.
- A tour through the German parliament building (Reichstag) and to the top of the Reichstag's dome.
- River Boat Tour on the river Spree through downtown Berlin (only in summer).
- A weekly Movie Time, where popular and well-known German movies are presented (German with English subtitles).
- A farewell ceremony with student presentations looking back on the past term and experiences, ending with a buffet.

FUBiS participants also have the chance to book day or weekend-trips to other German cities at extra costs (e.g. Leipzig, Dresden or Potsdam). In addition, there are also several excursions in Berlin during the week, for which students can sign up at the orientation meeting.

How can I contact my son/daughter while he/she is at FUBiS?

Mail for your son/daughter can be sent to the FUBiS office using the following address:

Freie Universität Berlin
International Summer and Winter University FUBiS
c/o ERG Universitätsservice GmbH
Name of Student
Malteserstr. 74-100
12249 Berlin
Germany

Your son/daughter will be informed immediately if he/she receives mail, and can pick it up at the FUBiS office. FUBiS will only accept personal mail; we do not accept packages.

In the accommodations, there are public telephones from which students can make international calls. Inexpensive international calling cards can be purchased at kiosks, call-shops, and internet cafés.

If your son/daughter possesses a laptop or another device that is equipped with Wi-Fi, you have various means of communication and messaging through the Wi-Fi network available on the campus of Freie Universität Berlin and in other places in the city (e.g. coffee shops). Please note that internet is only available in selected FUBiS accommodations.

Problems / Emergencies

Whom can my son/daughter contact in case of problems?

The FUBiS team will help participants in any way we can from the FUBiS office. We can also quickly refer students to a professional for help concerning almost every problem.

For emergencies outside office hours FUBiS has a 24/7 emergency phone number which students can call during the program in the evenings and on the weekends. The number for emergency calls will be provided to students in our pre-departure information package and again at the beginning of the program. At the orientation meeting, your son/daughter will receive a small card with our contact information, which they should always carry with them. We will also brief students on other important numbers and on behaviour in emergencies at the orientation meeting.

FUBiS is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and secure study abroad experience to all program participants. The well-being of all students is our highest priority. FUBiS believes that the support and the preparation of the staff and faculty on-site as well as the responsibility of all participants contribute to a successful and safe study abroad experience.

FUBiS program staff are regularly in contact with the university management, local and foreign authorities, partner institutions and study abroad associations about health and security standards. The FUBiS team is prepared to provide support to students with information about local health and safety services and to arrange for assistance in emergencies and unexpected situations. Essential information is shared in pre-departure information emails, during on-site orientation meetings and throughout the program with all constituencies.

What should my son/daughter do in case he/she gets sick or has health problems during the program?

If your son/daughter gets sick during his/her stay in Berlin, he/she will quickly be able to find the right doctor or specialist who can help him/her.

English speaking doctors: We have included an overview of addresses and phone numbers of different English speaking doctors and medical specialists near the university campus in the FUBiS Student Guide. The Student Guide will be available for your son/daughter approximately 4 weeks before the beginning of the program.

It is very important that your son/daughter have an international health insurance during his/her stay in Germany so that any doctor fees are covered. FUBiS offers an insurance package which includes an international health, accident and liability insurance. You will find further information here:

http://www.fubis.org/5_geb/versicherung/index.html

If your son/daughter regularly takes a certain medication, it is advisable that he/she bring it in a sufficient amount and in the original container.

Accommodation and Meals

What is included in the accommodation?

Like most German universities, Freie Universität Berlin does not own its own housing facilities. Upon request, FUBiS can arrange to accommodate your son/daughter in the following housing options:

- *Single room in shared apartments at the student dorms.* Students live together in an apartment-sharing community (cluster) with other students. Each student has his/her own room and shares the kitchen and the bathroom with other students in the cluster.
- *Single apartment in an apartment building.* Students stay in a one-room apartment including a small kitchen and bathroom. The apartment is approximately 18 m².
- *Accommodation in a homestay.* Students have their own room with a bed, cupboard and desk. The size and other furnishings of the rooms can vary. Breakfast and one warm meal a day are included in the price.
- *Seminaris Campus Hotel (Term III only).* Students live in an on-campus hotel room for 1 – 2 people. Breakfast, internet and access to the hotel gym and sauna are included in the price. Only available for Term III.

Each accommodation is furnished with a bed (including bed linen), a closet, a desk and a chair. The kitchen is fully furnished with basic kitchen equipment. Students will have access to washing machines and tumble driers which can be used for a small fee.

For more information about the accommodation options, please go to:

http://www.fubis.org/3_unterbr/index.html.

You can find an overview of costs in this table: http://www.fubis.org/5_geb/index.html.

Please note that FUBiS only serves as an intermediary in arranging accommodation for participants. FUBiS is not liable for any agreement between the renter and landlord.

If your son/daughter plans on arriving before the beginning of the FUBiS term or extending his/her stay after the term, we recommend that he/she find an individual accommodation for the extra days before/after the FUBiS term. If he/she plans to have a friend or family member stay with him/her (especially for an extended period of time) during the FUBiS program, we advise him/her to arrange for accommodation individually because the accommodation options offered through FUBiS are for FUBiS participants only and are intended for just one person. Some helpful tips can be found here:

http://www.fubis.org/3_unterbr/individuell/index.html.

Should your son/daughter take part in FUBiS Term II and III, he/she can stay in the chosen accommodation during the one-week break for a small extra charge.

What is the environment/location of the accommodations like?

Just like Freie Universität Berlin itself, most accommodation options are located in the quiet southern suburbs of Berlin. The single apartments are located in a residential area in the north of Berlin. Each accommodation can be reached by bus and metro. It takes approximately 30 to 50 minutes to get from the chosen accommodation to Freie Universität Berlin as well as to the city center with public transportation. Berlin is a very big, spread-out city, and commutes of 60 minutes by bus or metro are quite normal. However, in international comparison, the network density and quality of the Berlin public transportation system are of very high standard.

Is there internet access in the accommodations?

Generally, there is no internet access in the accommodations because this is not part of the standard housing facilities in Germany. However, all FUBiS participants will have access to the computer labs and the Wi-Fi network on campus. In addition, there are many affordable internet cafés in Berlin as well as cafés that offer free wireless to their customers.

Where can my son/daughter eat?

Meals are usually not included in the rent for a single room in a student dorm or a single apartment. However, students will have a furnished kitchen in which they can prepare their own meals. The residences are located within immediate walking distance to grocery stores where students can buy food and other convenience goods for daily use.

If your son/daughter is staying in a homestay, breakfast and a warm meal per day (but not lunch) are included in the price.

There are several dining options on the Freie Universität Berlin campus and nearby. For lunch, FUBiS recommends the student cafeteria which is called "Mensa" at German universities. There are many choices, including vegetarian, vegan, a salad bar, desserts, and sweets. A warm meal costs between 1.30 and 3.00 euros. In addition to the Mensa, there is also a coffee bar where students may purchase hot and cold beverages, and some snacks like sandwiches and cakes.

Costs**Which payments are due the day of the arrival?**

The FUBiS program and course fees have to be paid before the beginning of the program. When FUBiS participants arrive in Berlin, they will only need cash (EURO) to cover the costs during the first few days. We advise participants to bring about 300 euros for those first days to cover expenses, including:

- *A monthly ticket* to use public transportation in Berlin. This ticket is valid for 4 weeks from the date of purchase. FUBiS will notify participants about the current price of the monthly ticket before the program begins. The monthly ticket is the best choice for Term I (3 weeks) and Term III (4 weeks). For Term II (6 weeks), FUBiS recommends to purchase two weekly passes in addition to the monthly ticket.
- *Accommodation security deposit*. Some of the accommodations require participants to pay a security deposit when they move in. The security deposit will be returned to the students when they move out, as long as they leave their accommodation in an acceptable condition.
- *Meals* on the weekend of the arrival.
- *Tickets for extracurricular activities* which could not be booked in advance during the registration process. These will be sold at the FUBiS orientation meeting.

How high are the living costs in Berlin?

The cost of living is relatively inexpensive in Berlin compared to other German and European cities. However, how much money your son/daughter will need depends on his/her personal life style. According to a study of the German student unions, German students spend on average about 170 euros per month on food (basic groceries, i.e. not including eating out). In addition to the 170 euros, it is advisable that your son/daughter include enough money for cultural events and going out in his/her budget.

Valuable tips about student life in Germany can be found at <http://www.study-in.de/en/>

How can I send extra money to my son/daughter in Berlin if needed?

If your son/daughter needs money urgently, a bank transfer to a bank account he/she has access to over here would be the easiest solution. If this is not possible, you can also send money easily through a service provider like Western Union. Your son/daughter will receive the money within just a few minutes.

After the FUBiS Program

What kind of certificate will my son/daughter receive to document his/her successful completion of FUBiS courses?

Every student will receive an official transcript of Freie Universität Berlin after successful completion of all program requirements. The transcript will show the title of the course(s), the number of contact hours, the number of credits earned as well as the grade(s).

FUBiS / Freie Universität Berlin credits are calculated following the European Credit Transfer System. This system (ECTS) is based on the principle that 60 credits represent the amount of work done by a full-time student within an academic year. The amount of work includes attending class as well as the individual work and studying. The Academic Senate of Freie Universität Berlin has stipulated that one ECTS credit of Freie Universität Berlin corresponds to a workload of 30 hours.

Please note that each institution has its own policy regarding credit transfer from other institutions. We strongly recommend that students consult their academic advisor and/or professor to receive credit transfer approval prior to enrolling in the FUBiS program.

Also note that credits can only be awarded if your son/daughter is currently / has been enrolled at a university.

When will my son/daughter receive the transcript?

The FUBiS transcripts will be sent out approximately 4 weeks after the end of the program. At the beginning of the program, your son/daughter should let us know whether he/she would like to have his/her transcript sent to a private address or to his/her home university.

Resources

Parents' Guide in German

Links to miscellaneous topics

FUBiS

- Homepage: <http://www.fubis.org/index.html>
- Academic Program and Program Structure: http://www.fubis.org/2_prog/index.html
- Extracurricular Activities: http://www.fubis.org/4_exk/index.html
- Fees & Registration: http://www.fubis.org/5_gcb/index.html
- Accommodation: http://www.fubis.org/3_unterbr/index.html

Freie Universität Berlin

- General information: <http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/index.html>

Berlin

- General information: <https://www.berlin.de/en/> and <http://visitberlin.de/en>
- Public Transportation: <http://www.bvg.de/index.php/en/index.html>
- Museums: <http://www.smb.museum/smb/home/index.php?lang=en>
- Event magazines (in German only): <http://www.zitty.de/> und <http://www.tip-berlin.de/>
- Other Links: http://www.fubis.org/1_fubis/berlin/freizeit/index.html

Travel, Visa, Safety

- Foreign Office: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt>

FUBiS contact details

We at FUBiS are a young and dedicated team. Not so long ago, we studied or worked abroad and travelled the world ourselves. Our own positive experiences abroad are our motivation to organize this special summer and winter program for international students. Follow this link to find out who is in charge of what at FUBiS and how you can contact us: http://www.fubis.org/1_fubis/uns/mitarbeiter/index.html.