

DAAD Orientation Meeting

Section ST24 - Western, Northern and Southern Europe

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First:

Congrats &

Welcome to Germany!

- ▶ You're welcome to **live tweet** during the talk if you want
- ▶ You're welcome to **ask questions any time** during the talk (it doesn't have to be at the end of the presentation)

Background

- ▶ **Franco-Swiss** (e.g. no visa / EU)
- ▶ **PhD** Candidate in **Linguistics** (Humanities)
- ▶ Long and **regular contacts with Germany** *before* the DAAD scholarship
- ▶ Career prospects: **research**, preferably in Germany or Europe

The Specificity of the *Cotutelle*: Always In-Between

- ▶ Regular stays both in my home country (France) and in Germany, alternatively
- ▶ Often in Germany, but also often... not there: How to keep in touch with what's going on?

Where to Get Information?

[Student Life]

- ▶ **Activate your university email account** and turn on automatic forwarding (or check at least 3-4 a week)
- ▶ Subscribe to all the **newsletters** of your university and *read* them > fellowships, workshops, talks, etc.
- ▶ **Archive** the relevant information / Find yourself **a system**
- ▶ On your first rounds at university, **make pictures of posters, small ads**, etc. (maybe you think you'll remember, but you probably won't)
- ▶ Go to **information meetings** (not only for the information you'll get, but to meet new people and to know who your contact persons are)

How to Get Involved?

[General]

- ▶ Go to *Stammtische* (e.g. Meetups), but not only to international ones!
 - ▶ To meet people with common interests: <https://www.meetup.com/> (and obviously Facebook)
 - ▶ To meet your neighbours: <https://nebenan.de>

How to Get Involved?

[Student Life]

- ▶ You can **engage in student life** (e.g. General Students' Committee (German: *Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss*) or AStA)
- ▶ Most **application procedures to hire professors** (*Berufungsverfahren*) are **open to students**: you are allowed to go and listen to the talks + participate in the didactic examination (*Lehrprobe*)

Professors, Chairs & Forms of Address

- ▶ Organised around **a chair (*Lehrstuhl*)** = a professor
 - ▶ Know **how to address your professors**: ‘Dear Professor X’ / ‘Sehr geehrte Frau Professorin X’ (first time) / ‘Lieber Herr Professor X’ (after a few encounters and/or if the person replies with ‘Liebe/r Y’)
 - ▶ If someone has a doctor title, mention it in the form of address as well: ‘Liebe Frau Dr. Z’ (people from the administration, too!)
 - ▶ When you select your classes, **try to alternate between all kinds of statuses**: professors, teaching assistants/lecturers (*Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiter*innen*)
 - ▶ **Do not necessarily try to write all your essays (*Hausarbeiten*) with professors**; they are generally busier and less likely to devote you some time if you are struggling with your first writings

How *Not* to Piss Off Your Professors

- ▶ **DON'T** ask questions to your professors and lecturers regarding your student status, enrolment, etc.
 - ▶ It's not their job and they do *not* have access to the information!
- ▶ The **Information Centre** of your university is the first place to go (e.g. Info-Counter Student Services Center at the Freie Universität)

Where to Get Information?

[University]

- ▶ For **information regarding your grades or study requirements**, go to the *Studienbüro/Prüfungsbüro* (exam office) of the faculty/academic division (*Fachbereich*)
- ▶ For **information regarding the specificities of your Institute**, go to the secretary of the chair (*Lehrstuhl*)
- ▶ To **make an appointment with a professor** during office hours, don't email them directly unless they specifically asked you to do so!
 - ▶ Email the secretary *and/or*
 - ▶ Enrol on a sheet on their office's door *and/or*
 - ▶ Just show up during office hours

Office Hours aka *Sprechstunden*

- ▶ Note that all lecturers, professors, and administrative staff usually have **office hours (NOT 9-17!) aka *Sprechstunden***
 - ▶ Usually **2 to 4 hours / week**, so if you have a seminar at the same time, you may need to leave early or come late...
 - ▶ If you want to **talk face-to-face**, enrol for the office hours (you'll usually have about 15 minutes, so **prepare** the meeting!)
 - ▶ If you need to **call**, do it **outside of the office hours** (otherwise nobody will answer)

What Can You Ask Professors and Lecturers? (1/2)

- ▶ If you have questions related to a talk you're going to give or your essay, the best way to approach your teachers remains... to go to the office hours
 - ▶ Preparation of an **upcoming task**
 - ▶ Difficulties related to the **content of the seminar**
- ▶ You can email them for small questions requiring a short answer [ALWAYS specify which class you're talking about]
 - ▶ Need for a **deadline extension**

What Can You Ask Professors and Lecturers? (2/2)

- ▶ In-between (may be willing to help, may consider that it's not their job):
 - ▶ **How to write an essay?** There are usually workshops, sometimes even crash courses during lunch break > go early in the semester to know what to expect
 - ▶ **How to combine courses?** It should be in the *Studienordnung/Prüfungsordnung*, so they may consider that you have to read it first.

Practicing German

[Some Tips that Worked for Me]

- ▶ **Talking in German all the time**, even with non-native speakers
- ▶ Always having a **notebook to write down new words / expressions** quickly...
- ▶ ... And then **re-read them in the bus/subway/tram** and try to use them in the days after
- ▶ **Asking to be corrected**; many people are not willing to at first, but if you explicitly say you'd like to be corrected, they are usually glad to help
 - ▶ (and this way you won't be mispronouncing a word or saying something that does not exist for two years before realising it...) 😊

Following the News

- ▶ If you're still learning German, **you can follow the news regarding Germany, even in another language!**
 - ▶ You'll have an idea of the tendencies, debates, people, etc. before you turn to radio/newspapers in German and you'll be less lost in terms of content
 - ▶ A tip for French speaking people: Press review of the French embassy in French on German politics <https://de.ambafrance.org/Wochentlicher-deutscher> (check if the same service exists in your embassy / in languages you already speak) [*Update on 22 Jan. 2019: Unfortunately this doesn't exist anymore*]

Some Resources

- ▶ *Langsam gesprochene Nachrichten der Deutschen Welle* (news uttered in a slow pace):
<https://www.dw.com/de/langsam-gesprochene-nachrichten-deutsch-lernen/a-2902081>
- ▶ *Tagesschau in 100 Sekunden* (daily TV news in 100 seconds):
<https://www.tagesschau.de/100sekunden/>

Enjoy!
Viel Spaß!

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