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Global Education Office  
Reves Center for International Studies  
The College of William & Mary

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Photo courtesy of Rob Leventhal

# Potsdam Summer Handbook

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William & Mary  
Potsdam

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# Visa Information and Budgeting

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## Travel Documents

### Passport

- You should apply as early as possible before departure to secure your passport through a Passport Agency (found in major cities), a local issuing office, a Federal or State Court House, or a Class I Post Office.

Start the process early so that there will be plenty of time to resolve any problems that may arise. If you will be using your current passport, make sure that it is good **for six months after your return to the U.S.** If it is not, you will need to renew it.

- Guidelines on renewing your passport or applying for a new one can be found at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html>



### Visa

- A visa for summer study in Germany is not required for American citizens. Citizens of other countries should check with their home government's foreign ministry.

### Budget

- Your budget for incidental expenses will depend on your personal taste and the amount of independent travel you intend to do during, before or after the program. For basic expenditures in Potsdam, such as lunch and dinner, we recommend that you budget approximately \$200 per week, plus extra money for shopping and traveling. It is probably possible to live for considerably less than this, but there is a lot to do in Potsdam and Berlin, and you should allow yourself funds to take advantage of the city's offerings. Naturally, if you plan to do a significant amount of shopping and/or traveling, you should budget accordingly. Former students have reported spending \$750-\$1,700 during the program, with most students averaging around \$1,500.

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## Traveling to Potsdam

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**NOTE:** You are responsible for your own travel arrangements to and from Potsdam

### Airport Pick-Up

Potsdam University arranges your airport transfer to and from Potsdam. There are options for direct flights to Berlin from the US. Please schedule your flight to arrive in **Berlin's Tegel Airport (TXL)** in the late morning or early afternoon May 25. As flights to Europe from the US are overnight, this means scheduling your flight to leave the evening of **May 24**. Information about airport pickup will be provided by your Program Director.

It is advised that students travel in pairs, if not larger groups. Use the Blackboard site and share flight information, or plan travel arrangements during the one-credit course.

As soon as possible following your arrival, remember to call your family to let them know you have arrived safely. This will not only save them from worry, but also help the Reves Center and the University of Potsdam from receiving panicked phone calls regarding your whereabouts.

There will be an orientation in Potsdam upon your arrival.

Students should plan to depart from Potsdam on **July 11**; program housing will not be available after this date.



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# Coursework

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A list of textbook requirements and syllabi will be distributed in advance of the program. For more information, contact the program director, Professor Robert Leventhal ([rsleve@wm.edu](mailto:rsleve@wm.edu)). At the University, students have computer access, internet and library privileges. Students should plan on using the internet on campus instead of at home.

During your stay in Potsdam, you will study at the:

## **Universität Potsdam**

Am Neuen Palais 10

14469 Potsdam

Tel.: 0331/977-0

Fax: 0331/972163

<http://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/university-of-potsdam.html>

In a unique scientific environment, the University of Potsdam was founded in 1991 by the amalgamation of the *Karl Liebknecht College of Education* and the *Brandenburg State College*. As the university in large part emerged from the College of Education, emphasis today is still placed on teacher training. The university consists of 20 research institutions of the metropolitan area of Potsdam. It is the largest university in the state of Brandenburg and also one of the youngest and the most beautifully situated of all academic institutions in Germany. Fact: Students do not pay tuition to attend universities in the state of Brandenburg!



At the beginning of the winter semester of the 2008/2009 academic year, 19,894 young people were studying at the University of Potsdam. The largest number of students were enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy, 5,934 (30%), with 5,324 (27%) at the Faculty of Mathematics and Science. 58% of the students are female, and more than 2,000 are external students. 26% of the freshers come from East Germany, 14% from the West and the remaining 14% from Berlin, evaluated by the place where they obtained their entry

requirements. After a comprehensive evaluation of its research performance in 2007, the University of Potsdam nominated eight areas of distinction ("Profilbereiche") and one area of excellence in the field of Cognitive Sciences ("Exzellenzbereich") to award their international recognition and research productivity. With an interdisciplinary research agenda, the area of excellence links the departments of Psychology, Linguistics, and Sports and Health Science.



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## Excursions & Activities

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### Official and Personal Travel Options

There will mostly likely be two separate weekend excursions, one to the city of Dresden and one to the cities of Hamburg and Lübeck. Most fees, transportation, lodging and two meals a day while on the excursion are included in the program cost. (Students may have to pay some museum fees). There will be other day trip excursions in the Potsdam area.

### Guidebooks

Consider purchasing a travel guidebook prior to leaving the United States to help you make personal travel plans. These can be purchased at bookstores like Barnes & Noble, or online (buying the e-book version will save weight!). Some guidebook publishers include:

- **Fodor's** (<http://www.fodors.com>)
- **Let's Go** (<http://www.letsgo.com>)
- **Lonely Planet** (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>)
- **Rick Steves Books**  
([http://www.ricksteves.com/books/update/update\\_menu.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/books/update/update_menu.htm))



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## Housing and Meals

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### **Housing**

Students will stay with host families who will provide breakfast each morning. Host families are members of the Potsdam community who are sincerely interested in welcoming American students into their homes. You should strive to fit in to the family as much as possible. Note that Europeans are extremely economical when it comes to using electricity and water, both of which cost much more than in the US. Keep showers as short as possible. There are specific guidelines in Germany regarding recycling that your host family will communicate to you. These are mandatory, not optional, in Germany. Under no circumstances should you go around the house in bare feet – this is not the custom in Germany. Either the family will provide a pair of Hausschuhe for you, or you can purchase an inexpensive pair. Please clarify the expectations of your individual family regarding visitors and late evenings. In keeping with the policy of the W&M Office of Residence Life, the Reves Center does not offer housing for the family of any students participating in W&M-sponsored study abroad programs. Also, family members or friends may not participate in any program activities or excursions. If you have family or friends who want to visit you while abroad it is recommended they do so after the completion of the program.

### **Meals**

Aside from breakfast with your host family and the overnight excursion, all meals are your responsibility. You can purchase lunch at the university cafeteria at subsidized student rates (around €2.50). Dinner will be on your own or with fellow classmates. Less expensive options include picnics or snack bars. Note that in restaurants, taxes and tips are usually included in the price. There is no need to tip over and above this, though most guests will round up the tab (1-2 €). Guests sitting outside may be asked to pay immediately.

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## Communication

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The GEO provides local cell phones for all students on William & Mary summer programs with *homestays*. Students that are not participating in a program with a homestay are responsible for researching and arranging their communication plan.

### **PLACING INTERNATIONAL PHONE CALLS**

See the “Handy Information” section for a time zone conversion chart before you call!

**Calling Galway from the United States:** Dial 011 +-353-91 + Local Number

**Calling the United States from Galway:** Dial 00-1+area code + phone number.

### **Emergency Numbers**

Police: 112 or 999

Medical Emergencies: 112 or 999

Fire: 112 or 999

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## Health & Safety

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### **Immunization**

Although it is no longer necessary to have smallpox immunization to re-enter the USA after international travel and no special health precautions are necessary for travel to Central Europe, students are encouraged to consider updating standard immunizations against meningitis and tetanus. For current information concerning recommended protection against communicable diseases for those planning to travel abroad, you may check the Center for Disease Control's website at:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/germany.htm>

If you prefer to talk to someone in person about the currently recommended immunizations, students are encouraged to visit Student Health, or consult with a physician in your area who has some expertise concerning immunizations for international travel.

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## Travel & Country Information

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We encourage all students to research their study abroad destination. The State Department has important information available online. Be sure to read up on German history, culture, and current events before your arrival. Knowing as much as possible about where you are going will not only make you more comfortable during your time in the country, but will also allow you to talk more knowledgeably with your teachers and new friends.

We strongly recommend that you register your travel plans with the U.S. State Department at this website:

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

This will help the State Department contact you if there is a family emergency in the U.S., or if there is a crisis where you are traveling. On this website you can find information ranging from geographic and political descriptions of the country, to special health and safety announcements.

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# Potsdam

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Photo Credit: Derick Arbaugh ('10): Belvedere auf dem Pfingstberg

**POTSDAM** is the capital of federal state of *Brandenburg*. It has a population of around 158,000 inhabitants and is part of the greater Metropolitan area of Berlin/Brandenburg. It is situated on the *River Havel*, 24 km (15 miles) southwest of the Berlin city center.

Potsdam has several claims to national and international fame. In Germany, it had the status Windsor has in England. It was the residence of the Prussian kings until 1918. Around the city there are a series of interconnected lakes and unique cultural landmarks, in particular the *parks and palaces of Sanssouci*, the largest World Heritage Site in Germany. The Potsdam Conference, the major post-World War II conference between the victorious Allies, was held at another palace in the area, the *Cecilienhof*.

*Babelsberg*, in the south-eastern part of Potsdam, was a major movie production studio before the war and has enjoyed increased success as a major center of European film production since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The *Filmstudio Babelsberg* is historically significant as the oldest large-scale film studio in the world.

Potsdam developed into a center of science in Germany from the 19th century. Today, there are three public colleges and more than 30 research institutes in the city.

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## Contact Information

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### Reves Center Contacts

You may call the Reves Center and its advisors at the numbers below between 8am and 5pm (Virginia time), Monday through Friday. In case of an emergency that falls outside of these times, please call William & Mary Campus Police at (757) 221-4596. Campus police will then forward your call to the correct person or office.

**GEO Center Advisor:** Laura McDonald ([lbmcdonald@wm.edu](mailto:lbmcdonald@wm.edu)) +001 (757) 221-2003

Reves Center for International Studies

College of William and Mary

P. O. Box 8795

Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

Fax – (757) 221-3597

\*To call the U.S. from abroad: 001+ (Area Code) + phone number

### In Germany:

Program Director: Professor Robert Leventhal ([rsleve@wm.edu](mailto:rsleve@wm.edu))

### Host Institution (Uni Potsdam)

Frau Maria Schulze

Universität Potsdam, Leiterin, Akademisches Auslandsamt

Am Neuen Palais 10

D-14469 Potsdam

Haus 9, Raum 018

Tel: 0049 0 331 977 1724

Fax: 0049 0 331 977 4283

Email: [maria.schulze.ii@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:maria.schulze.ii@uni-potsdam.de)

Embassy of the United States – Berlin

Consular Section

Routine calls: 030/832-9233

Emergencies only: 030/8305-0 8:30 am until 12:00 noon Monday-Friday