
Foreign Reporting in Berlin
GERMANY
Winter Session 2018
January 4-23



Study Abroad Program Guide
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**DESTINATION:
GERMANY**

Twenty-five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Berlin is enjoying a cultural and political renaissance that has made it one of Europe's youngest and hippest cities. It is the geographic center of a united Europe and the capital of Europe's strongest economy. Yet, neither the city nor its 3.4 million residents have forgotten the city's dark past as the center of Nazi power and the showpiece for the Soviets during the Cold War. Powerful monuments like the Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Topography of Terror, the Soviet War Memorial and the Checkpoint Charlie Museum demand reverence and acknowledgement.

And Berlin is booming. It's undergoing an artistic and architectural explosion. Cranes towering over the city remind visitors that the city continues to reinvent itself and to redefine itself for the 21st century. Across the city, artists, architects, museum directors, café and club owners and entrepreneurs have discovered new uses for old buildings.

Although only traces of The Wall exist today, the mental walls built by 28 years of division still haunt Berlin. It is one of the only places in Europe where visitors can still feel the cultural differences between Eastern and Western Europe. At the same time, Berlin teems with immigrants, particularly Turks, many of whom were born in Berlin and struggle between two cultures.

Europe currently faces its greatest immigration crisis in centuries, as hundreds of thousands of Syrian, African and Middle Eastern refugees flee their war-torn homelands. Germany – the site of the 20th century's most aggressive and horrific xenophobia – is today the European nation taking in the largest number of migrants. In September 2017, Germans will decide if they want to grant Chancellor Angela Merkel a fourth term.

Students will come face to face with these tensions and with these historical currents as they explore the city and get to know its residents.

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT BERLIN

Climate

Berlin has a moderately cool and humid climate and is generally comfortable to visit any time of year.

Predictably, December to February is the coldest period. When fierce winds blow in from Russia, it gets mighty chilly, often with subzero temperatures but clear, cloudless skies. Rain is a possibility any time of year. Berlin is at the intersection of several climate regions and – like Buffalo – weather can be unpredictable and change throughout the day. Weather forecasts are also often wrong. Plan on winter temperatures being as cold as in Buffalo (but without the wind).

Bring warm, waterproof clothing that you can layer and comfortable walking shoes. Bring a pair of boots or waterproof shoes for rainy days and a small umbrella/parka.

Transportation

Berlin's infrastructure and public transport system is well-designed and environmentally friendly. Trains run on time (Germans love order) and it is surprisingly easy to use the buses, trams, U-Bahn (subway) and S-Bahn (light rail) systems as well as the Regionalbahn (RB) and Regionalexpress (RE) trains, and ferries. The main operator of most public transportation is BVG. For detailed information on Berlin public transit visit: www.bvg.de/en. Students will receive subway and bus passes on the first day they arrive.

Berlin is divided into neighborhoods, called Bezirke, and Berliners define themselves by where they live. Students will notice distinct differences in neighborhoods; there is bourgeoisie Charlottenburg, wealthy Friedrichstrasse and Unter der Linden, funky, international Kreuzberg, trendy Mitte and student-filled Freidrichshagen and Prenzlauer Berg.

Food

Berlin is home to a diverse culinary scene reflecting the immigrant history of the city. Berlin is well known for its vast offering of vegetarian, vegan and otherwise sustainability-oriented food, such as fair trade goods or organic food. Berlin is one of the cities with the most vegetarian and vegan restaurants in the world. Many local foods originated from north-German culinary traditions and include rustic and hearty dishes with pork, goose, fish, peas, beans, cucumbers or potatoes. Typical Berliner fares include currywurst, invented in 1949 and the Berliner known in Berlin though as a Pfannkuchen.

Due to its large immigrant population, Berlin food also boasts heavy Turkish and Arab influences. For example, döner kebab, and falafel have become common fast-food staples. Food in most cafes and restaurants is offered at affordable prices.

The program includes breakfast from Jan. 7-Jan. 23 at the youth hostel. The hostel will also provide one other warm meal per day (either lunch or dinner). On long travel days, we will be taking bagged lunches, which the students will prepare themselves at breakfast. There will always be vegetarian options, but if you are vegetarian or have other dietary needs, please inform the program director.

We will be having some optional group dinners in restaurants. Students will be expected to pay for some of these meals.

Alcohol

All participants in the program will be of legal drinking age while in Germany. It is absolutely mandatory that every participant behave responsibly in choices involving alcohol, as the abuse of alcohol endangers not only the individual but the other participants as well. Alcohol abuse is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program, at the discretion of the program director.

Useful Websites

Berlin Tourism Homepage: <http://www.visitberlin.de/en>
Lonely Planet: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/germany/berlin>
A View on Cities <http://www.aviewoncities.com/berlin/berlinattractions.htm>
Spiegel International: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/>
Slow Travel Berlin: <http://www.slowtravelberlin.com/>
The Ex-Berliner: <http://www.exberliner.com/>
AndBerlin: <http://andberlin.com/>
Art ConnectBerlin: <http://www.artconnectberlin.com/>
Berlin Reified: <http://www.berlinreified.com/>
Unlike Berlin: <http://unlike.net/berlin/>
Digital Cosmonaut: <http://digitalcosmonaut.com/>
Digital in Berlin: <http://www.digitalinberlin.de/>

THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Jody Kleinberg Biehl is the head of the UB journalism program and the adviser to UB's award-winning student newspaper, *The Spectrum*. She spent five years living and working as a reporter and editor in Berlin. She worked as a European correspondent for *The San Francisco Chronicle* and as an editor at *Der Spiegel*, Germany's largest news magazine. She speaks fluent German and has extensive contacts in the German and American media. She is an enthusiastic lecturer and a fast walker.

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM

During this three-week program, students will transition from foreign tourists to international journalists. The moment they arrive in Berlin they start learning about the city and will be encouraged to write about it and the cultural differences they encounter.

Their assignments will force them to interact with the city and its inhabitants, confront language and cultural barriers and come to terms with the stories of a city and a nation indelibly marked by 20th century history. Students will attend classes, visit historic sites, meet and interview residents and successful expats about their experiences in the city as well as cover current breaking news and cultural events. Students will also meet and interact with foreign correspondents from major American news organizations, freelance journalists living in Berlin as well as several English-speaking German journalists.

Berlin is the center of the reunified Europe and a pulsing dynamic metropolis that provides an ideal teaching opportunity for young journalists, particularly those interested in international reporting.

Course Specifics

The course will consist of regular (three times per week/3 hours) class sessions (at Michelsheim, where students will live). Classes will include journalism training as well as overviews of German/Berlin history, lectures by historians and discussions of current events.

Students will take at least three organized tours of the city (one by bike) and travel as a group to Sachsenhausen, the former Nazi concentration camp which the Soviets used during the Cold War. There will also be organized tours of media offices and conversations with foreign correspondents and freelance journalists living in Berlin as well as successful ex-pats living in the city.

Concurrently, students will be working on assignments that require them to interact with the city and interview its residents. Students may choose to write an article about one of the people they meet on the organized tours or an event happening in the city and discussed in class or they may choose their own topics (with the approval of the director).

Students will also learn about the changing role of journalists today, what it means to cover a culture other than your own and how to report ethically and responsibly.

Objectives

In this class, students will learn to:

- Navigate a foreign country with ease
- Find and formulate story ideas quickly
- Compose basic news and feature stories
- Sharpen prose and remove clutter from writing
- Notice and contemplate cultural differences
- Write on deadline
- Work in teams

Assignments

Students will be evaluated on tests and on written assignments and on a final piece. The assignments will be two pieces of journalism focusing on the city, a person, a local or international issue or an upcoming event plus, a "travel" or "memoir" piece in which each student discusses his/her experiences in Berlin.

Text: Students will read "The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape," by Brian Ladd. Students should purchase the book and bring it with them to Berlin. We will also be reading articles written by the journalists we meet. The director will send a list of articles before each meeting.

Grading and Conduct

Students will receive a grade on each of the assignments and on each test.

Assignments 1-2 will count for 50 percent of the student's grade.

Tests will count for 30 percent

Attendance/participation will count for 20 percent

The following grading scale will be used:

94-100 A
90-93 A-
89-86 B+
85-83 B
82-80 B-
79-76 C+
75-73 C

72-70 C-
69-66 D+
66-60 D
60 and below F

Plagiarism

The university takes plagiarism – the unattributed copying of ideas, sentences or paragraphs from another source – seriously and so do I. Any documented instance of plagiarism from a published article will result in automatic failure.

Suggested Books about Berlin/Germany (not required)

- Berlin, a modern history, David Clay Large
- Berlin: coming in from the cold, Ken Smith.
- Berlin Wall today: cultural significance and conservation issues, Polly Feversham and Leo Schmidt .
- Goldapple Guide to Jewish Berlin, Andrew Roth and Michael Frajman
- Jewish Berlin. Culture, Religion, Daily Life Yesterday and Today, Bill Rebiger
- The Stasi: myth and reality, Mike Dennis
- Stasiland: stories from behind the Berlin Wall, Anna Funder
- My German Question: growing up in Nazi Berlin, Peter Gay
- The past is myself, by Christabel Bielenberg [An Englishwoman's account of life in Nazi Berlin. She and her (German) husband were friends of people involved with 1944 plot against Hitler]
- Berlin Diary: journal of a foreign correspondent 1934-41, William L. Shirer [Shirer wrote "Rise and fall of the Third Reich"]

Articles about Berlin and the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall

- <http://www.travelandleisure.com/articles/adventures-in-the-new-berlin>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/germany/berlin/8238659/Berlin-Germany-a-cultural-guide.html>
- <http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/berlin-wall>

Lodging

Students will spend the first four nights in a youth hostel in former East Berlin. Students will have breakfast at this hostel, but no other meals. From here, we will have easy access to tours and to sights and students will get a strong sense of the city.

Then, we will move to St. Michelsheim, a large youth hostel/hotel in western Berlin where we will settle in. The hostel is large and situated near the Free University of Berlin. Students will share a room with one or two other students and will have a shared bathroom down the hall. Sheets, pillows and bedding will be provided. Students can either bring their own towels or pay 1 euro per towel. All breakfasts and a few group dinners will be included.

Class sessions will be held in seminar rooms in the Michelsheim and in scattered places throughout the city. The classroom will be open to students at all hours and will have Wifi. Only some of the rooms at

Michelsheim have good Wifi (depending on their proximity to the server). We will try to secure these rooms, but we cannot promise that students will get them.

Students will receive a list of class times on the first day, although class times may shift depending on the availability of speakers and tours.

TENTATIVE DAILY ITINERARY

Tentative Itinerary – please note, the schedule may change depending on weather (for the tours) and on the availability of some of the speakers students will meet. Many are foreign correspondents and need to rush off to cover stories with little notice. Students will be given as much notice as possible when the schedule changes. This is just meant to give students an idea of the daily schedule.

Students will receive a more specific itinerary on the first day of class.

WEEK 1 - Berlin History and Tours/Finding Story Ideas

Jan. 4: Arrival and orientation (times to be determined)

Jan. 5 Class 1 p.m. Get to know the city day

Jan. 6: Class 10 a.m. Bike tour afternoon

Jan. 7 Assignment 1 Lecture: Germany/Berlin before and during WWI. Reichstag tour

Jan. 8: Class 10 a.m. Lecture: World War II Tour 2 Nazi Berlin Topography of Terror/Monument to Murdered Jews of Europe visit

Jan. 9: Class meets at 2 p.m. test Germany/Berlin during Cold War; Visit East Side Gallery, Soviet Monument, GDR museum,

Jan. 10: Work on Assignment 1 Trip to Treptower Park. Early evening film: "The Lives of Others"

WEEK 2 - Life as a Foreign Correspondent

Jan. 11: Class 10 a.m. Assignment 1 progress check due. Germany/Berlin today lecture. Tour of Kreuzberg Freelance journalist speaker.

Jan. 12: Media Tour – Wall Street Journal. Jewish Berlin, walk through Mitte and visit Neue Synagogue, Museum Island art galleries.

Jan. 14: Class 10 a.m. Media Tour Deutsche Welle, Optional visit to Jewish Museum

Jan. 15: Class 10 a.m. Freelance journalist talk. Media Tour Der Spiegel Optional visit to Pergamon Museum.

Jan. 16: Class 10 a.m. Test. Trip to Sachsenhausen concentration camp

Jan. 17: Students work on Assignment 2

Jan. 18: Optional Olympic Stadium visit

WEEK 3 - Digging in to Assignments

Jan. 19: Class 10 a.m. Assignment 2 work. Lecture about current German topics. Visit to Agence France Presse Dinner in the dark (optional)

Jan. 20: Morning free. Media tour/speaker Evening activity TBD

Jan. 21: Class 10 a.m. Editing assignments

Jan. 22: Class 10 a.m. Editing assignments

Jan. 23: Departure

We will be meeting correspondents from the following news agencies (and more!)

Wall Street Journal, Agence France Presse, NPR, Deutsche Welle, Der Spiegel

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Arrivals: All students should arrive in Berlin on Jan. 4. The first day of class will be Jan. 5.

We encourage students in the group to travel together, but it is not required. When booking your flight, please note that many overseas flights are overnight, i.e. leaving the US late in the evening and arriving early morning the next day. Please make sure to check the departure date, i.e. leaving the US, and

compare it to the date of arrival in Berlin. You must arrive in Berlin on Jan. 4 and be ready for class on the morning of Jan. 5.

The program director will meet all groups/individuals at the airport and accompany them to our first week accommodations. Once you have booked your flight, please complete the Flight Information section of the UB Study Abroad online application and upload an electronic copy of your detailed itinerary.

Departures: The last day of the program is Wednesday, Jan. 24. Students will need to leave Berlin this day or make arrangements to travel/stay elsewhere.

Students will take taxis or public transportation to the airport on their own or in groups. The program director will stay until Jan. 25 to make sure all students have boarded flights home.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

Guiding Principles:

- Only pack what you can carry without outside help! You will need to carry your bag up stairs.
- Plan on carrying the luggage with you on board to ensure you and your luggage arrive together.
- Check with your airline for baggage allowances and carry on regulations (particularly in terms of fluids, etc.)
- Only bring what is necessary.
- Dark clothing may be easier to keep clean.
- Technically you only need 2-3 outfits. Anything else is extra. Remember you don't need to impress anyone and you will be in a different place every day, so no one will know or care that you are repeating outfits!
- After you finish packing, pick up your luggage and go up and down a flight of stairs. If you can't do it with ease or if it is cumbersome, rethink your packing until you are self-sufficient. There will be no porters assisting you once you are abroad.
- You are representing your university and your country abroad, so do your best to not create situations that will inconvenience you and the rest of the group!

Additional Observations:

- Winter in Germany is cold and could get colder (or warmer.) Plan to dress in layers, have comfortable weatherproof boots and a good outer layer (coat, hat, scarf, and gloves.)
- You must bring your own towels. Sheets however will be provided.
- Plan on bringing something that says UB! A shirt, a hat, etc., so you can take photos for the UB Study Abroad Annual Photo Contest proudly displaying our colors and logo.

Recommended Clothing:

- Warm jacket!!!
- Hat or at least earmuffs!!!
- Scarf!!!
- Gloves!!!
- Socks, long underwear, tights
- Shirts long sleeves, T-shirts, turtlenecks, etc., for under layers
- Sweaters for over layers
- Jeans/long pants
- Shoes/preferably boots, weatherproof because it will be cold and wet, and that are comfortable for extended walking (No high heels please! No dress shoes! at least for our walks/excursions.)
- Re-read the guiding principles above

Personal Care:

- Travel size toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, moisturizer and other creams, etc.)

- Antiperspirant
- Make-up, shaving needs, if needed
- Vitamins, and other medical needs
- If you wear prescription glasses, bring a 2nd pair in case you lose or break your 1st pair.
- Contact lenses and contact solution, and your glasses for when you are not using contacts. Actually it is best not to travel on a plane with contact lenses on because eyes dry out very much. Use your glasses for the flight instead.

Other Necessities:

- Your UB student ID
- Don't forget to pack towels!
- Neck wallet that hangs inside your shirt to hold passport, etc.
- Important addresses and phone numbers for contacting friend and relatives
- Camera/i-device/
- Small folding umbrella, but then again they sell them in London too and they make a great souvenir.
- Prescription medication in original container carried on plane with you. Depending on the prescription you may need a doctors' note to import prescribed drugs or medical equipment in Ghana. If in doubt check directly with the Consulate General of Germany.

ADVICE ON MONEY, COMPUTERS, PHONE, ETC

Germany is very much a cash-based economy: credit cards are hardly ever used to pay for small value items, and when Germans want to pay using a card, they'll usually whip out their EC card, a kind of debit card linked to their current account. For everything else, cash will be the best option.

Luckily, there's a huge network of around 53,000 ATMs (cash machines, in German Geldautomat) providing easy access to cash. Most ATMs are contained inside the bank itself, and outside of opening hours you'll have to insert your card into a slot in the door to gain access. It's very rare to find a "hole-in-the-wall" type of ATM directly on the street. However, in Berlin many U-Bahn stations now boast an ATM on the platform.

Virtually all ATMs will allow you to withdraw cash from a foreign bank or financial institution, either by credit card or using a bank card which is compatible with the Plus, Maestro and / or Cirrus networks. **BE SURE TO CONTACT YOUR BANK REGARDING INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES.**

Every bank is different, so please ask before you leave. In addition, contact your bank and credit card company to let them know you are traveling overseas.

Computers and Personal Electronics

German and most other electrical outlets in Europe are 220 volts. If you are bringing rechargeable electronic devices such as computers, ipads, or cellphones, you will need to buy a converter. Outlet converters are available at Wal-Mart, Target and most electronics stores.

Phones

Calling while abroad is expensive. Ask your provider before you go for the best option for your phone. Students find it useful to have a working phone to communicate with each other and to call sources to arrange interviews etc.

The most economical way to use your US or Canadian phone (if it has the correct bands) is to remove the SIM card (the chip in the phone giving you service) and insert a new, German SIM card. You can get a local SIM card in Germany once you arrive, or prior to your departure. It may be more convenient to get it

before you leave, since you will then have the new number to give to people before your trip. Your phone will then operate like a German phone.

You can also purchase Pay As You Go cards, depending on your phone and plan. Several telecom companies in Germany offer Pay As You Go plans using scratch cards or "top-up" cards. These "Cards" are available in many locations.

Some students prefer not to use their phones much and instead to use Skype to talk to their families.

Time

In January, there is a 5-hour differential between Germany and the US Eastern time. That means that noon in Buffalo will translate to 5:00pm in Germany.

Water

Tap water in Berlin is clean and safe to drink.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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Medical Emergency/Accident Services Tel. 112

Fire Brigade Tel. 112

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