



Pre-Departure Handbook

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What to Expect Moving Forward

Now that you have been accepted to the AJY Program you will start receiving Pre-Departure Information from AJY Staff in Germany. The most pertinent information can be found in this handbook, the Guide to Course Offerings, the Internship Guide and our website, but make sure to check your emails regularly for updates from us!

Meet the AJY Staff!



Martin Kley, Ph.D.

Resident Director

mkley@heidelberg.edu

Martin Kley studied at the universities of Augsburg, Pittsburgh, and Texas at Austin. Following his Ph.D. in German Studies, he was Assistant Professor of German at Gettysburg College from 2008 to 2013. Upon returning to his native Germany, Martin served first as Academic Director and then Center Director for CIEE's Global Institute Berlin. Combining his pedagogical and scholarly background with administrative experience in the field of international education, Martin works with AJY participants in various capacities – as teacher, academic advisor, mentor, and liaison to the University of Heidelberg.



Cara Meysen

Assistant Director of Student Life

cmeysen@heidelberg.edu

Cara Meysen has been working at AJY since 2018 and has since received her BA and MA in Geography from the University of Heidelberg. She spent a high school semester abroad at the Conserve School in Wisconsin and a year abroad at St. Mary's College of Maryland. In her capacity as Assistant Director of Student Life, Cara is responsible for a smooth transition into German university life for all students, both concerning paperwork and extracurricular activities. She enjoys sharing her hometown with the students and showing them all the possibilities a semester abroad in Heidelberg can bring them.

AJY Staff also includes **Program Assistants** Darlene Rieth, Julia Pinkow and Tom Drechsler, as well as several adjunct faculty. To read more about their backgrounds, visit the [AJY website](#).

Contact the ...	if you have questions regarding ...
American Office: Tel. +1 (419) 448-2953 Email: ajy@heidelberg.edu	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Your application- Pre-Departure Forms- Payment & Billing
German Office: Tel. +49 6221 23874 Email: ajy@uni-heidelberg.de	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Your semester in Heidelberg- Academics and courses- Your room and what to bring- Internships and extracurricular activities

What Do I Still Have to Do Before My Departure?

✓ Submit your confirmation form and deposit (**if applicable**) to the AJY office in Tiffin, Ohio by the deadline stated on your acceptance letter.

✓ Submit all Pre-Departure Paperwork on [Slate](#):

- Transcript with current semester grades
- Transfer Credit Approval
- Disciplinary Clearance
- Medical History
- Liability Release
- Passport (scan of the picture page)
- Housing Questionnaire
- Arrival Information

✓ Make sure you have a valid passport! US citizens do not need to apply for a visa prior to their arrival in Germany. Non-US citizens should contact the German consulate to find out their visa requirements.

✓ Talk to your physician about any medication you are taking and make sure to bring enough for your entire semester abroad. Some medication might not be available for refill in Germany.

✓ Book a flight to Frankfurt Airport (FRA) and a return flight home. You can find your semester's arrival and departure dates on the AJY website.

- If you are arriving on Arrival Day, please make sure your flight arrives in Frankfurt between 8-10 am, otherwise a pick-up at the airport by AJY Staff cannot be guaranteed.
- Early arrival before the official start of the semester can be arranged and is beneficial as it gives you a few days to settle and get over jetlag before orientation and classes start.
Please contact AJY staff before booking a flight if you would like to arrive early!
- Due to visa requirements, your return flight should be before December 31st (Fall Semester) or July 31st (Spring Semester). Students need to move out of their dorms by the end of December (Fall Semester) or the end of July (Spring Semester).

✓ For safety reasons, AJY requires you to have a smartphone with a working phone number. Talk to your cellphone provider about a possible international plan. If unavailable, AJY staff can help you buy an inexpensive pre-paid German SIM card.

✓ Figure out your banking situation. A lot of places in Germany do not accept credit cards, therefore most AJY students rely on cash. Alternatively, you can create a multi-currency account using [Wise](#).

What Will Be Taken Care of by AJY Staff?

Before your departure, AJY will ...

- enroll you at the Universität Heidelberg,
- place you in a room in one of the student dormitories,
- sign you up for health insurance with a German healthcare provider,
- assist you in finding internship opportunities (if applicable).

After your arrival, AJY will ...

- assist you in registering as an official resident of Heidelberg,
- complete the paperwork for your student visa,
- buy you a public transportation pass for use throughout all of Germany
- advise you on academic placement and course selections,
- help you with any other needs you may have to facilitate a smooth transition into life as a study abroad student.

Of Note: Health Insurance Coverage

AJY arranges comprehensive health insurance coverage for you, which is recognized in both Germany and Europe. Coverage includes doctor's visits, prescription medicine, hospital care, routine dental and eye care, physical therapy, and psychological counseling. Coverage starts on the date the program begins and ends on the last day of the last month of the program. If you plan to arrive early or to remain in Europe after leaving the program, you are responsible for your own insurance. You are also responsible for adding any insurance policies regarding medical evacuation, repatriation of remains or personal liability.

Of Note: Physical Address in Germany

Upon entry into the EU, customs and border patrol agents at the airport might require you to provide proof of enrollment at the university of Heidelberg. Please make sure to have your **Acceptance Letter** with you. They might also require you to provide an address in Germany, you may use the address for the AJY Study Center:

Your Name
c/o American Junior Year
Hauptstraße 133
69117 Heidelberg, Germany

Each student has a mailbox at the Study Center, which they can have mail sent to throughout the semester. We advise against receiving packages from the U.S. (such as care packages sent from your family), as you will have to pay an exorbitant customs fee upon their arrival.

How Can I Prepare for My Semester in Heidelberg?

- **Familiarize yourself with AJY's Academic Calendar**

The Academic Calendar for your semester can be found on [AJY's website](#). Make sure you are aware of when the semester starts and ends, as well as when your classes start and when your breaks are.

- **Start reading and listening in German**

The best way to prepare yourself for your full-immersion experience is to brush up on your German language skills. AJY students often listen to German podcasts, read German newspaper articles, or watch YouTube videos about life in Germany. You can also check out our Instagram page for recommendations by AJY Staff!

- **Talk to your Academic Advisor**

AJY Staff is fully capable of helping you choose and register for courses once you arrive in Heidelberg. However, talking about your credit requirements with your academic advisor at your home university is strongly recommended. AJY's Guide to Current Course Offerings should help you get an overview of what classes will be offered during your semester in Heidelberg.

- **Look through the AJY Internship Guide**

AJY students are not required to do an internship while in Heidelberg. If you are interested, however, it is good to start planning in advance. Please contact AJY staff as soon as possible so we can talk through the details and find you an internship position with one of our local partners!

Of Note: Tandem Partner Program

Tandem partnerships allow you to practice your German with German native speakers outside of a classroom setting. Every semester the AJY Program facilitates tandem partnerships for AJY students at the advanced level. The Tandem Program has been very successful in the past, and many AJY students have become close friends with their tandem partner. It has also helped significantly improve AJY students' German skills. Although not mandatory, AJY Staff highly recommends participating in the Tandem Program, as it will be helpful when it comes to navigating University and life as a student in Heidelberg. If you are interested in the tandem partner program, please send an email to tdrechsl@heidelberg.edu.

Of Note: Stammtisch

The AJY Stammtisch is a weekly conversation group for all AJY students, but specifically geared for those at the intermediate level. Students meet every week to discuss different topics, read journal articles together or play games. Participation is voluntary and no registration is required.