

JLU

NEUE WEGE. SEIT 1607.

JUSTUS-LIEBIG-  
 UNIVERSITÄT  
GIESSEN

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE | JUSTINTERNATIONAL SERIES

# NAVIGATING GERMAN UNIVERSITY CULTURE : INSIGHTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

# CONTENTS

- German Academic System
- Creating your Time-Table
- Academic Expectations
- Communication with Professors
- Practical Insights for a better start
- A – Z Guide

# TYPES OF UNIVERSITIES IN GERMANY

Over 400 universities in Germany, out of which 75 percent are public institutions. In these universities, students are expected to pay semester contributions which covers the cost of semester ticket as well as other administrative costs.

- Full University / Technical University
- University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule)
- Art Academies

# TYPES OF UNIVERSITIES IN GERMANY

Justus Liebig Universität Gießen is a state-run, full university that offers courses in:

- Law
- Economics
- Natural and Life Sciences (including Medical Sciences)
- Humanities
- Cultural and Social Sciences
- Teacher Training

All regular degree programs are tuition-free but you have to pay a small [semester contribution](#)

# FACULTIES AT JLU

01 – Law

02 – Economics and Business Studies

03 – Social Sciences and Cultural Studies

04 – History and Cultural Studies

05 – Language, Literature, Culture

06 – Psychology and Sports Sciences

07 – Mathematics, Computer Sciences, Physics and Geography

08 – Biology and Chemistry

09 – Agricultural Sciences, Nutritional Sciences and Environmental Management

10 – Veterinary Medicine

11 – Medicine

# DEGREES FOR FULL-TIME STUDENTS

- Bachelor Programs
  - ✓ 6 semesters (3 years)
  - ✓ many different programs from almost all fields of study
  - ✓ e.g. Biology, Business Studies, Psychology, Anglophone Studies, ...
- Master Programs
  - ✓ 2-4 semesters (1-2 years)
  - ✓ can be studied after completing a Bachelor program
  - ✓ many different programs from almost all fields of study; e.g. Democracy and Governance, Choreography and Performance, German Studies, ...

# DEGREES FOR FULL-TIME STUDENTS

- State Examination programs
  - ✓ between 6 and 13 semesters (3-7 years), depending on the program
  - ✓ Law, Medicine, Teacher Training

# CURRICULUM

In Bachelor, Master and some State Examination programs, classes are offered as part of modules

- Modules bundle together classes sharing a thematic and/or methodological approach.
- Modules usually consist of two or three different classes.
- Module contents, kinds of examinations and learning goals are codified.

**International students studying an entire program at Justus Liebig University must pay attention to module structures in order to successfully complete their studies.**

# CURRICULUM

- For each class, there is a pre-defined workload. The workload for a class is the sum of the hours of work spent for the respective class. It includes class participation and preparations for classes and examinations.
- 30 hours of work = 1 CP / ECTS point
- Credit points thus measure the *quantitative* workload students must spend for their classes.
- Additionally, for a successfully completed class, you will be awarded grades, which measure the *qualitative* success of a class.

# INFORMATION ON DATES AND TIMES

- Winter Semester : 01.10 - 31.03
- Summer Semester : 01.04 – 30.09
- Re-registration every semester
- 10 am c.t. ☞ 10:15 am
- 10 am s.t. ☞ 10:00 am
- Lectures and seminars at Justus Liebig University usually start **c.t.**, which is why this is often not explicitly stated.

A detailed video on this topic can also be found on the [OWIS-Website](#).

# LECTURES & SEMINARS

- In a lecture (Vorlesung), the **lecturer delivers information** the students need to know. **Several hundred students** often sit in the lecture hall at the same time or attend the lecture as an online event. Students are not expected to participate orally.
- A seminar (Seminar), on the other hand, is **discussion-oriented** and takes place in a **smaller setting** with a maximum of about 50 students. In this type of course, students are expected to **actively participate** in the discussion.

# TUTORIALS & EXAMS

- To deepen understanding and apply the material, tutorials (Übungen) are offered.
- After you have found the desired courses in the electronic course catalog (eVV), register for your **exams** (MAP, etc.) **via Stud.IP and/or FlexNow**. You will be informed by your course **instructor** in good time should there be any changes. Please always observe the **[registration and de-registration deadlines](#)**.

# GRADING SYSTEM

Percentages for the evaluation of part examinations	Grades	Oral assessment
≥97	15	Very good with distinction
≥92	14	Very good
≥87	13	Very good
≥82	12	Good
≥77	11	Good
≥73	10	Good
≥68	9	Satisfactory
≥64	8	Satisfactory
≥59	7	Satisfactory
≥54	6	Sufficient
≥50	5	Sufficient
≥45	4	Fail
≥38	3	Fail
≥32	2	Fail
≥21	1	Fail
≥0	0	Fail

# GRADING SYSTEMS - LAW

sehr gut:  
eine besonders hervorragende Leistung  
= 16 bis 18 Punkte

gut:  
eine erhebliche über den durchschnittlichen Anforderungen liegende Leistung  
= 13 bis 15 Punkte

vollbefriedigend:  
eine über den durchschnittlichen Anforderungen liegende Leistung  
= 10 bis 12 Punkte

befriedigend:  
eine Leistung, die in jeder Hinsicht durchschnittlichen Anforderungen entspricht  
= 7 bis 9 Punkte

ausreichend: eine Leistung, die trotz ihrer Mängel durchschnittlichen Anforderungen noch entspricht  
= 4 bis 6 Punkte

mangelhaft:  
eine an erheblichen Mängeln leidende, im ganzen nicht mehr brauchbare Leistung  
= 1 bis 3 Punkte

ungenügend:  
eine völlig unbrauchbare Leistung  
= 0 Punkte

# GRADING SYSTEMS - MEDICINE

<b>Notenstufe</b>	<b>Notenspanne</b>	<b>Definitlon</b>	<b>Definitlon</b>
A	1,0 - 1,5	Excellent	Hervorragend
B	1,6 - 2,0	Very good	Sehr Gut
C	2,1 - 3,0	Good	Gut
D	3,1 - 3,5	Satisfactory	Befriedigend
E	3,6 - 4,0	Sufficient	Ausreichend
FX/F	4,1 - 5,0	Fail	Nicht Bestanden

# CREATING YOUR TIME-TABLE

- Please refer to your **study plan (Studienverlaufsplan – SVP)** and **module descriptions** for the modules/courses you need to take.
- In the [electronic course catalog \(eVV\)](#) you will find an overview of the courses currently offered and the corresponding direct link to Stud.IP.
- For some courses you have to register additionally via [FlexNow](#). Please always observe the **registration** and **de-registration [deadlines](#)** by your [faculty](#).

# ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

## Self-Responsibility and Independence

- **The "Leistungsnachweis":** Most courses rely on a single final exam or paper at the end of the semester. Continuous homework is rare.
- **Scientific Rigor:** Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously.
- **Active Participation:** In seminars, you aren't just a listener. You are expected to contribute to discussions and challenge ideas.

**Self-Study (Selbststudium):** For every hour spent in a lecture, expect to spend 2–3 hours in the library.

# COMMUNICATION WITH PROFESSORS

## **Professional, Formal, and Direct**

- **The Golden Rule of Titles:**

Always use formal titles in emails.

- **Email Etiquette:**

Use your university email address.

Be concise and get straight to the point (no long "hope you are well" intros).

Include your matriculation number and the specific course name.

# COMMUNICATION WITH PROFESSORS

- **Office Hours (Sprechstunden):** Check the faculty website to see if you need to book a slot via a sign-up sheet or online tool.
- **Feedback:** Feedback is often direct. If you receive a critique, don't take it personally.

# PRACTICAL INSIGHTS

- **The Paperwork "Paper Trail"**

Germany is still very much a paper-based society. Keep every contract, insurance document, and university certificate. You will need original hard copies for almost every administrative appointment (*Behördengänge*).

- **Postal Mail:** Important official news (from the bank, the city, or the university) will come via physical mail, not email. Check your mailbox daily!

# PRACTICAL INSIGHTS

- **The Quiet Rule:** Avoid loud housework (drilling, vacuuming) or loud music on Sundays; it is legally protected "quiet time."
- Sunday is "Ruhetag" (Rest Day)
- Almost all supermarkets, shops, and pharmacies are closed on Sundays.
- **Plan Ahead:** Do your grocery shopping by Saturday evening. Only shops in major train stations or gas stations remain open.

# PRACTICAL INSIGHTS

- **Cash is (Still) King**

**"Nur Barzahlung"**: You will frequently see signs saying "Cash only" in bakeries, small cafes, and traditional restaurants.

**The "Girocard"**: Many places that take cards only accept the local German *Girocard* (EC-Karte), not international Visa or Mastercards. Always carry at least €20 in cash.

# Quick "Cultural Hacks"

**Punctuality:** 5 minutes early is on time. Late is unacceptable.

**Pfand (Bottle Deposit):** Never throw away plastic bottles or glass bottles.

*(Most supermarkets have automatic machines that scan your bottles and give you a receipt. You can use this receipt to get cash at the checkout or reduce your shopping bill.)*



# Quick "Cultural Hacks"

**Waste Sorting:** Germans are world champions at recycling. There are usually four different bins (Paper, Plastic/Metal, Bio, and Rest).



# Quick "Cultural Hacks"

**Where to Find Glass Recycling Containers:** [Altglascontainer in Gießen](#)  
[/ Stadt Gießen](#)

**Note:** The color of the organic waste bin may vary between brown and green depending on the city.

# A-Z GUIDE



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## Studying at JLU from A to Z



In this A-Z guide, you will find everything you need to know about studying at JLU – from admission to working while studying. Each entry includes brief explanations and useful tips to help you organise your daily student life in Giessen.

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

**A**

### Accommodation

JLU students can apply for a place in a hall of residence through the Studierendenwerk Giessen. It is recommended that you apply early and search the private housing market at the same time, as places are limited. Information on rental contracts, shared flats, halls of residence and rental costs can be found here on the website: [Where to Live in Giessen – JLU](#)

### Administrative procedures

International students should complete important administrative procedures before and after their arrival, such as registering with the city office, contacting the Immigration Authorities, or applying for health insurance. Further information can be found here: [Necessary Visits to the Authorities Before and After Arrival – JLU](#)

### Admission

Admission will be granted once your application documents have been reviewed and all admission requirements have been met. If you have any questions about the application and admission process for international students, please contact: [international.admission@uni-giessen.de](mailto:international.admission@uni-giessen.de)

### Admission requirements

To study at JLU, students need to provide certain documents, such as a recognised school-leaving certificate, proof of language skills, and, if required, subject-specific qualifications. The subject-specific requirements can be found on the website of the respective degree programme under the "Application" tab. For questions, please contact: [international.admission@uni-giessen.de](mailto:international.admission@uni-giessen.de)

### Application

Information on the application process for international students and the application deadlines can be found here: [Application for Admission to JLU](#)

## Impressum

### International Office

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**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!**