



## {The University of Bonn Program}

Ripon College's Bonn program assists students, regardless of their academic majors, in understanding Germany and its culture. Students with sufficient language skills can take courses in almost any field, while others enroll in intensive German language courses. Students may enroll for either the fall or spring semesters or they may opt for a full-year program. In either case, Bonn University's Akademisches Auslandsamt ensures that students are fully integrated into university life. Since the Bonn Program is an international program, you will use German to communicate with students from all over the world. In the words of Bonn program participant Samantha Petroski (Ripon 2015): "Not only did studying abroad in Bonn improve my German speaking skills tremendously and provide me with a multitude of travel experiences that I will never forget, but it also revealed to me the importance of being a productive member of the global community, an aptitude that is becoming ever more valuable as the process of globalization continues."

### **LOCATION**

Bonn retains much of the charm of a small town in Germany, but it served for more than 40 years as the capital both of Germany's first successful democracy and the world's fourth-largest economy. Its university is one of the country's foremost centers of learning and the city's cultural activities, including two major museums, provide rich offerings for students. Of course, there is all the student life one associates with a large university community. Bonn is situated along the Rhine River, only 20 minutes from Cologne and an hour from Düsseldorf. Travel through the region is free with a Bonn University ID, and students have ample time to explore both Germany and Europe.

### **COURSES AND CREDITS**

All students start their semester in Bonn with a month-long orientation course. Besides orienting students to life in Germany, the course includes intensive language training. Depending on individual needs, language training continues throughout the semester, and the Akademisches Auslandsamt coordinates students' coursework

to ensure that they receive credit for their language courses and for regular courses at the University. Ripon College grants full credit for all successfully completed courses.

## **LIVING ARRANGEMENTS**

To help students familiarize themselves with German life, they are placed in University dormitories. Because no residence contains more than 10 percent non-native Germans, housing is one way to ensure that students are fully integrated into the university. Every attempt is made to not house Ripon students in the same facility. Students have cooking facilities in their dorms, and they receive a generous monthly allowance for food. The Akademisches Auslandsamt also offers regular activities for foreign students.

## **EXCURSIONS**

There are numerous possibilities for travel in the area surrounding Bonn, and the Akademisches Auslandsamt organizes a variety of excursions throughout the year. Highlights have included a trip to Berlin and tours of local castles, breweries, and a chocolate museum. Students can also take advantage of free concert tickets once they are registered in Bonn.

## **PREREQUISITES**

Students should have sophomore or junior standing at the time of their arrival in Germany. The minimum requirement for the program is one year of college-level German (or its equivalent). Four semesters of college German are, however, recommended. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required, with particular attention paid to students' German courses. The program requires recommendations from two faculty members, including the student's German instructor and academic advisor.

Fall orientation is in September with Bonn University courses beginning in October and running until late January. Spring semester begins in March and ends in July. (Special arrangements can be made to accommodate the academic calendar of the student's home institution.)

## **TRAVEL INFORMATION**

Every U.S. citizen traveling in Europe must have a valid passport. It can take up to six weeks to get a passport, so be sure to apply early. Germany does not require a visa to enter the country, and students will be assisted with obtaining a residency permit once they are in Bonn.

Although the program fees are comprehensive, you will need additional money for books and travel, if you intend to make longer trips on weekends or during vacations. The most practical way to access money is to use an ATM card from your home bank. The card must be connected to a checking (not a savings) account. Withdrawing cash from an ATM offers a far better exchange rate than for cash or traveler's checks. Check with your bank to see what they charge for using the card abroad. It is usually the normal withdrawal fee plus a 3% transaction fee. Students will need a German bank account for deposit of the food allowance, but they are free for students.

Postage in Germany has become very expensive, so you may prefer to rely on email and Skype to communicate with family and friends. Some calling cards available through the internet offer the same rates (2-4¢) for calls to or from Germany. Another option is to purchase a cell phone in Germany.

For more information, please see the following link to University of Bonn: [www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de](http://www.studyabroad.uni-bonn.de)