



Baden-Württemberg

Getting ready to go...

Orientation: May 5–6, 2017

David Darby



- ▶ Project of government and universities of Ontario
- ▶ Dedicated, full-time office in Toronto
- ▶ 4 International student exchange programs



- ▶ Expert advising pre- and post-departure
- ▶ Close liaison with network of universities in Ontario and Baden-Württemberg
- ▶ Scholarship support for all eligible Ontario participants
- ▶ Large network of OBW alumni



Ontario Universities International

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OBW Program

- ▶ Consortium of 13 Ontario universities
 - Carleton, Guelph, Laurentian, McMaster, Nipissing, Ottawa, Queen's, Ryerson, Trent, Waterloo, Western Ontario, Windsor, York
- ▶ 9 Research universities in Baden-Württemberg
 - Freiburg, Heidelberg, Hohenheim, Karlsruhe (KIT), Konstanz, Mannheim, Stuttgart, Tübingen, Ulm
- ▶ Over 25 Years of successful cooperation
- ▶ Over 2,000 Ontario and Ba-Wü alumni
- ▶ Supported by universities and governments of Ontario and Baden-Württemberg
- ▶ Coordinating offices in Toronto and Konstanz



What is an Exchange Student?

- ▶ Full-time, degree-seeking (and fee-paying) student at home university in Ontario
- ▶ Working toward degree by taking courses or pursuing research at host university overseas
- ▶ Integrated academically and socially into student life overseas
- ▶ Supported by International Student Services office at host university
- ▶ Ambassador for your home university, OBW program, Ontario, and Canada



OBW Program and You

- ▶ What is the OBW program?
- ▶ The (academic) double life of an exchange student
 - Status at home university in Ontario
 - Status at host university in Baden-Württemberg
- ▶ Responsibilities of OBW Program
- ▶ Your responsibilities
 - To home university
 - To host university
 - To OBW Program



Setting personal goals

Why am I going on an academic exchange?

- › Adventure and experience?
- › Personal growth? Looking for a new challenge?
- › Educational value?
- › "Resumé Value"?
- › Seeing Europe from the inside?
- › Experiencing how other people live?
- › Becoming fluent in German?
- › Making new friends from around the world?
- › Doing something different from everyone else?
- › What else?



The bubble

- › Getting by in English? Great, but...
- › Making mistakes in German (think of it as fun -- mostly)
- › Your perception vs. other people's perception
- › What's really important?
- › Strategies for learning German – from Day 1!
- › Take the opportunities provided
- › Culture = language?
- › The story of Paul...



Topics for Session 1

- › Admission
- › Course selection / Learning agreements
- › Preparatory language course and orientation
- › Residence / accommodation
- › Visa? Residence permit?
- › Health insurance
- › Other kinds of insurance
- › Scholarships
- › Money
- › Travel arrangements



Admission/Zulassung

- › Role of OBW Office(s)
- › Role of Akademisches Auslandsamt (Auslandsreferat) at host university
- › Application for admission to host university
 - Wintersemester/Sommersemester
 - Mannheim: Herbstsemester/Frühjahrssemester
 - Non-degree-seeking student / Zeitstudierende(r)
- › Letter of admission (Zulassungsbescheid)
- › Timing of process



Setting Academic Goals

- › What do I want to learn?
- › What academic/scientific experience do I want to accumulate?
- › How will this experience contribute to my university education?
- › What do I see as the academic benefits and/or challenges of studying/researching in a completely new environment?
- › What contribution can I make to my host university?



Courses / Learning Agreements 1

- › What information on course offerings is available?
- › Vorlesungsverzeichnis
 - Wintersemester 2016/17 / Sommersemester 2017
 - Herbstsemester 2016 / Frühjahrssemester 2017 (Mannheim)
- › Kommentiertes Vorlesungsverzeichnis
- › Student Association (Fachschaft)
- › Further information???



Courses / Learning Agreements 2

- ▶ Information in Vorlesungsverzeichnis
 - Course number
 - Course title
 - Instructor
 - Type: Vorlesung, Seminar, Proseminar, Übung, etc.
 - Level (Bachelor/Master)
 - ECTS weighting (European Credit Transfer System)
 - Full time: 30 ECTS points per semester
- ▶ Other information
 - Course description
 - Reading list



Courses / Learning agreements 3

- ▶ How do you make your double (academic) life work?
- ▶ How do you get around not having full and up-to-date information?
- ▶ How many courses should you get approved?
- ▶ What challenges arise from the semester system?
- ▶ Translating course descriptions
- ▶ Good communication is crucial
 - Your role and responsibilities
 - Understanding expectations



Courses / Learning agreements 4

- ▶ Documentation
 - Schein (course certificate)
 - Transcript from host university
 - Course descriptions and reading lists
 - Copies of assignments and exams
 - Lecture notes
- ▶ Grades
 - German grading system
 - What happens to your grades at your home university?
 - What happens if you apply later to a graduate or professional school?



Setting Academic Goals

- ▶ Planning the academic program for your exchange
- ▶ Level of German skills
 - Options for summer courses before participation in OBW Program
 - Preparatory 4-week German-immersion course at host university (with scholarship support!)
 - Additional language courses for international students at German university
- ▶ Selecting courses
 - How many?
 - What will be considered equivalent to a full credit-load at my home university?
 - European Credit Transfer System (1 semester, full-time course load = 30 ECTS points)



Language Course / Orientation in Germany

- ▶ Arrival / move-in dates
- ▶ Course start and end dates
- ▶ Placement test and course levels
- ▶ Is an application necessary?
- ▶ Scholarship and course fees
 - Why is there a scholarship attached to this?
- ▶ What orientation is included?
- ▶ What else is included?
- ▶ Other language courses (DaF-Kurse)
 - Studienbegleitende Sprachkurse



Residence

- ▶ Why live in residence?
 - Lifestyle
 - Cost
 - Simplicity / convenience
 - Experience of earlier OBW students
- ▶ Application
- ▶ Studierendenwerk (who are they!?)
- ▶ Deposit (Kaution)
- ▶ Rent contract / lease (Mietvertrag)
- ▶ Responsibilities as tenant



Passport? Visa?

- ▶ Passport
- ▶ Issuing country
 - Canada?
 - Germany?
 - Other EU country?
 - Other non-EU country
- ▶ Visas/Residence Permits (what's the difference?)
- ▶ Visa
 - Do you need one?
 - If so, how and when do you get one?
- ▶ Entering Germany



Passport? Visa? Residence Permit? 2

- ▶ Residence Permit
 - ▶ Role of Host University's International Office
 - ▶ What papers will you need?
 - Passport
 - OBW Letter of acceptance
 - Letter of admission to university
 - Evidence of financial means (720€ per month!!!)
 - Recommended if poss.: Notarized letter from parents
 - Proof of scholarships
 - Rent contract
 - Proof of health insurance
 - Every important-looking piece of paper you can think of!
- ▶ What other formalities are there?



Health Insurance

- ▶ Conditions of OBW Travel Bursary
- ▶ Krankenkasse (Gesetzliche Krankenkasse)
 - Eg., AOK, DAK, Barmer Ersatzkrankenkasse
 - Cost
 - When to apply? When does it come into effect?
 - What does it cover, and how does it work?
- ▶ Private Krankenversicherung
 - Why do some students buy private insurance?
- ▶ Canadian travel insurance
- ▶ OHIP
- ▶ Pre-existing health issues requiring medication



Other Kinds of Insurance

- ▶ Temporary health insurance
- ▶ Health-related issues not covered by German health insurance
 - Airfare for caregiving relative
 - Repatriation with accompanying physician/nurse
 - Repatriation in case of fatality
 - Long-term disability
- ▶ Third-party liability insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung)
- ▶ Insuring your possessions against loss and theft



Scholarships, etc.

- ▶ OBW Travel Bursary
 - 2 semesters: \$3000
 - 1 semester: \$2000
- ▶ Scholarships from home university
 - Merit based scholarships? Study-abroad scholarships?
 - Department? Faculty? University?
- ▶ Preparatory Course Scholarship
- ▶ Baden-Württemberg-Stipendien
- ▶ OSAP



Finances

- ▶ Monthly basic living/studying costs (720€)
- ▶ Tuition fees in Germany (no!)
- ▶ Ancillary fees (Semesterbeitrag/Sozialbeitrag)
 - Residence
 - Mensa
- ▶ Health insurance
- ▶ Semesterticket
- ▶ Student discounts
- ▶ Working in Germany
- ▶ Recreational travel and generally having fun
- ▶ Bahncard



Travel preparations

- ▶ Booking flights
 - Price
 - Flexibility
 - Where to/from?
 - Baggage allowance
- ▶ Getting to your host university.... And what then?
- ▶ Travel documents
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ OHIP paperwork
- ▶ Canadian permanent residents (non-citizens)
- ▶ Power of attorney



Money....

- ▶ Getting Money to Germany
 - Travellers cheques
 - ATM cards and PINs
 - Credit cards
 - Wireless transfer
 - Bank partnership (Scotiabank / Deutsche Bank / Barclays / BNP Paribas, etc.)
 - Changing money
 - Bank account in Germany
- ▶ Carrying Cash
- ▶ How much will you need on arrival?



The Joys of Packing

- ▶ Don't overpack!
 - Know the baggage allowance for your airline (e.g., Air Canada now allows one piece of checked luggage, max. 23 kg.)
- ▶ Important paperwork (in hand-luggage!)
- ▶ Reminders of home and things to show
- ▶ Study needs
- ▶ Books
- ▶ Computers
- ▶ Phones
- ▶ Bikes
- ▶ Ongoing medications
- ▶ Attitude!



Arriving in Freiburg

- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt/Main
 - 2 hour train from airport to Freiburg (direct or change once)
 - German rail info: www.bahn.de
- ▶ Other airports
 - Basel
 - Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden (budget airlines, intra-European)
- ▶ Note: Do not confuse Frankfurt/Main with Frankfurt (Hahn)!



Arriving in Heidelberg

- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt/Main
 - Ca. 1 hour by train from airport (usually change in Mannheim), or
 - Lufthansa minibus from airport to Heidelberg



Arriving in Hohenheim

- ▶ Fly to Stuttgart
 - Taxi to Universität Hohenheim
- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt
 - Train to Stuttgart (ca. 1.25 hours), then public transit or taxi to Universität Hohenheim



Arriving in Karlsruhe

- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt/Main
 - Train from airport (1 hour), direct or with one change
- ▶ Other airport
 - Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden (budget airlines, intra-European)



Arriving in Konstanz

- ▶ Fly to Zürich
 - Direct train from airport, hourly, to Konstanz (ca. 1 hour)
 - Swiss rail info: www.sbb.ch
- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt
 - Train (1 or 2 changes) (4+ hours)



Arriving in Mannheim

- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt
 - Direct train from airport to Mannheim, every hour. 40 minutes.



Arriving in Stuttgart

- ▶ Fly to Stuttgart
 - Local train from airport to university or into city
- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt/Main
 - 1.25-hour train from airport to Stuttgart (direct or change once)



Arriving in Tübingen

- ▶ Fly to Stuttgart
 - Bus (828) from Stuttgart airport to Tübingen, or
 - Local train into Stuttgart, and then train to Tübingen
- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt
 - Train to Stuttgart (ca. 1.25 hours), then train to Tübingen



Arriving in Ulm

- ▶ Fly to Frankfurt/Main
 - Train from airport to Ulm (2.25 – 2.5 hours), direct or with one change
- ▶ Fly to Stuttgart
 - Local train into Stuttgart then direct train to Ulm (total 1.5 hours)
- ▶ Fly to München
 - Train into city, and then train to Ulm (2.5 hours or more)



Day one....

- ▶ At the airport
- ▶ How do you get to your host university?
 - www.bahn.de
 - Bahncard
 - ICE, IC, Regionalbahn (IRE, RE, RB, S)
- ▶ Travelling together, being met....
- ▶ Where do you need to go?
- ▶ How much money will you need immediately?
- ▶ What papers will you need?
- ▶ Carry phone number of AAA contact



Akademisches Auslandsamt / Auslandsreferat / International Office

- ▶ Administrative functions
 - Immatriculation / Registration
 - Responsibility for language courses
 - Academic advising
 - Transcripts
 - Frequent liaison with OBW office
 - Etc.
- ▶ Student services functions
 - Help in emergencies
 - General advising and problem solving
 - Advice on living in Germany, accommodation, etc.
 - Tandem-partner and/or buddy programs, etc.
 - Social events and excursions
 - Etc.



September in Ba-Wü! (August in Mannheim)

- ▶ Sprachkurs (Language course)
- ▶ Orientation
- ▶ Krankenversicherung (Health insurance)
- ▶ Immatrikulation (Registration)
- ▶ Semesterbeitrag (Ancillary fees)
- ▶ Ausländerbehörde
- ▶ Einwohnermeldeamt (Bürgeramt)



Das akademische Jahr (überall außer Mannheim!!!)

- ▶ Semester
 - Wintersemester (1. Oktober bis 31. März)
 - Sommersemester (1. April bis 30. September)
- ▶ Vorlesungszeit
 - Wintersemester: Mitte Oktober bis Mitte Februar
 - Sommersemester: Mitte April bis Mitte/Ende Juli
- ▶ Vorlesungsfreie Zeit / Prüfungszeit



Das akademische Jahr in Mannheim

- ▶ Semester
 - Herbstsemester 2017: (1. August bis 31. Januar)
 - Frühjahrsemester 2018: (1. Februar bis 31. Juli)
- ▶ Vorlesungszeit
 - Herbstsemester 2017: 4. September bis 8. Dezember
 - Frühjahrsemester 2018: 12. Februar bis 1. Juni
- ▶ Prüfungszeit
 - Herbstsemester 2017: 9. bis 22. Dezember
 - Frühjahrsemester 2018: 4. bis 16. Juni



Travel in Baden-Württemberg and beyond

- ▶ Semesterticket
- ▶ Trains (bahn.de)
 - Baden-Württemberg-Ticket
 - Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket
 - Bahncard 25 – on Flexpreis & Sparpreis (41 Euro)
 - Bahncard 50 – on Flexpreis only (127 Euro)
 - Sparpreis
- ▶ Bus (flixbus.de, aka meinfernbus.de, postbus.de)
- ▶ International office excursions (local and beyond)
- ▶ Budget airlines

