

University of Potsdam Credit Transfer Information

Full-time credit load (undergraduate)

Students will register for their classes upon arrival at the University of Potsdam. Potsdam uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Students should enroll in 30 credits per semester, transferring as 15 UM credits. A minimum full time load per semester is 24 ECTS credits, which will transfer as 12 UM credits.

Grade conversion

German Grade		U.S./UM Equivalent
1-1.5	Sehr gut	A
1.6-2.5	Gut	B
2.6-3.5	Befriedigend	C
3.6-4.0	Ausreichend	C-
4.1-4.3	Mangelfhaft	D
4.4-6	Ungenuegend	F

Upper division

Upper division credit may be granted upon approval by your advisor/department chair upon your return to The University of Montana. Save your coursework and class syllabi to earn such approval.

Other notes

German universities do not issue a record of your academic study while on an exchange. Procedures for obtaining credit are outlined below.

German universities do not have centralized or departmental registration, primarily due to the law governing the protection of personal data. In addition to the lack of centralized registration, there is no centralized recording of grades and transcripts are not automatically produced at the end of each semester. To obtain a transcript containing a record of courses taken and grades earned, you need to follow the procedures outlined below and any specific procedures required by your host institution. **It is extremely important that you complete all the required steps before you leave your host institution.** Transcripts cannot be prepared after you have left the campus. The process includes two essential steps:

1. collect "*Scheine*" for your coursework from professors
2. obtain a transcript

Earning a *Schein*:

To receive credit for courses taken at a German institution, you must earn a *Schein* in each course. At the beginning of the course, the professor will explain what is required to earn a *Schein* in that particular course. The requirements may be different for each course:

You may have to submit a paper, or *Referat*, at the end of the course or at the beginning of the next semester (usually six weeks later). You may also be asked to present your paper in class. Often several students join together to prepare a single *Referat*, with each student responsible for a particular section. In most cases, the paper accompanying the speech must be at least 10 pages long.

You may be required to take a final exam. This is often the case with foreign-language courses. The final exam may be oral or written.

You may be required to prepare a *Hausarbeit*, or term paper. Although group efforts are sometimes permitted, as with a *Referat*, a *Hausarbeit* is usually written by one student. The information presented in a *Referat*, however, often serves as a foundation for the *Hausarbeit*. Frequently, the paper is not due immediately at the end of the term. Many German students work on their *Hausarbeit* during the semester break.

Please keep in mind that students at German universities are expected to do independent reading during the course of their studies. If required to take an oral or written final exam, you may be expected to be more conversant in the topic than is possible from just memorizing lecture notes. Ask the professor for a suggested reading list to complement the course in order to prepare for the exam.

A *Schein* is not usually awarded in a lecture course, or *Vorlesung*, but the professor will administer a final exam or allow a student to submit a paper if a request is made. You should therefore explain that, as a U.S. exchange student, your performance in class must be assessed in order to allow you to receive credit at your home institution.

Obtaining the *Schein*

Once you have completed the requirements for a course, you must obtain the *Schein* yourself, directly from the secretariat of the appropriate faculty. When you pick up the *Schein*, it should already have been signed by the professor. The secretary will validate it with the university seal.

The *Schein* will contain the following information:

- your name
- course title
- your professor's name
- year and semester
- number of ECTS credits earned
- number of hours per week
- how you earned the *Schein* (e.g., by term paper, final exam, etc.)
- your grade (may be on a pass/fail basis, or on a German scale, where 1-4 is considered passing)

Obtaining a Transcript

After you have obtained all of your *Scheine*, complete the transcript form provided by your host institution coordinator and present this, along with your *Scheine*, for verification and validation by your host institution coordinator. This form will serve as your official transcript, and will be sent by your host institution coordinator to The University of Montana. Please keep a copy for yourself along with the original *Scheine*. Please note that the transcript is not intended to replace *Scheine*. It is designed as a mechanism whereby record of your academic work is reported through official channels back to your home institution. Even with a properly validated transcript, you should produce *Scheine* for back-up verification at your home institution.