DAAD Orientation Meeting
Section ST24 - Western, Northern and Southern Europe

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Naomi Truan
Freie Universität Berlin

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First:
Congrats & Welcome to Germany!
You’re welcome to **live tweet** during the talk if you want.

You’re welcome to **ask questions any time** during the talk (it doesn’t have to be at the end of the presentation).
Background

- **Franco-Swiss** (e.g. no visa / EU)

- **PhD Candidate in Linguistics** (Humanities)

- Long and **regular contacts with Germany before** the DAAD scholarship

- Career prospects: **research**, preferably in Germany or Europe
The Specificity of the *Cotutelle*: Always In-Between

- Regular stays both in my home country (France) and in Germany, alternatively

- Often in Germany, but also often... not there: How to keep in touch with what’s going on?
Where to Get Information?  
[Student Life]

- **Activate your university email account** and turn on automatic forwarding (or check at least 3-4 a week)
- Subscribe to all the **newsletters** of your university and *read* them > fellowships, workshops, talks, etc.
- **Archive** the relevant information / Find yourself a system
- On your first rounds at university, **make pictures of posters, small ads**, etc. (maybe you think you’ll remember, but you probably won’t)
- Go to **information meetings** (not only for the information you’ll get, but to meet new people and to know who your contact persons are)
How to Get Involved? [General]

- Go to *Stammtische* (e.g. Meetups), but not only to international ones!
  - To meet people with common interests: [https://www.meetup.com/](https://www.meetup.com/) (and obviously Facebook)
  - To meet your neighbours: [https://nebenan.de](https://nebenan.de)
How to Get Involved? [Student Life]

- You can engage in student life (e.g. General Students’ Committee (German: *Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss*) or AStA)

- Most application procedures to hire professors (*Berufungsverfahren*) are open to students: you are allowed to go and listen to the talks + participate in the didactic examination (*Lehrprobe*)
Professors, Chairs & Forms of Address

- Organised around a chair (Lehrstuhl) = a professor
  - Know how to address your professors: ‘Dear Professor X’ / ‘Sehr geehrte Frau Professorin X’ (first time) / ‘Lieber Herr Professor X’ (after a few encounters and/or if the person replies with ‘Liebe/r Y’)
  - If someone has a doctor title, mention it in the form of address as well: ‘Liebe Frau Dr. Z’ (people from the administration, too!)
  - When you select your classes, try to alternate between all kinds of statuses: professors, teaching assistants/lecturers (Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiter*innen)
  - Do not necessarily try to write all your essays (Hausarbeiten) with professors; they are generally busier and less likely to devote you some time if you are struggling with your first writings
How Not to Piss Off Your Professors

- DON’T ask questions to your professors and lecturers regarding your student status, enrolment, etc.
  - It’s not their job and they do not have access to the information!

- The Information Centre of your university is the first place to go (e.g. Info-Counter Student Services Center at the Freie Universität)
Where to Get Information?

[University]

- For information regarding your grades or study requirements, go to the Studienbüro/Prüfungsbüro (exam office) of the faculty/academic division (Fachbereich)
- For information regarding the specificities of your Institute, go to the secretary of the chair (Lehrstuhl)
- To make an appointment with a professor during office hours, don’t email them directly unless they specifically asked you to do so!
  - Email the secretary and/or
  - Enrol on a sheet on their office’s door and/or
  - Just show up during office hours
Office Hours aka *Sprechstunden*

- Note that all lecturers, professors, and administrative staff usually have **office hours (NOT 9-17!) aka Sprechstunden**
  - Usually **2 to 4 hours / week**, so if you have a seminar at the same time, you may need to leave early or come late...
  
  - If you want to **talk face-to-face**, enrol for the office hours (you’ll usually have about 15 minutes, so **prepare** the meeting!)
  
  - If you need to **call**, do it **outside of the office hours** (otherwise nobody will answer)
What Can You Ask Professors and Lecturers? (1/2)

- If you have questions related to a talk you’re going to give or your essay, the best way to approach your teachers remains... to go to the office hours
  - Preparation of an **upcoming task**
  - Difficulties related to the **content of the seminar**
- You can email them for small questions requiring a short answer [ALWAYS specify which class you’re talking about]
  - Need for a **deadline extension**
What Can You Ask Professors and Lecturers? (2/2)

- In-between (may be willing to help, may consider that it’s not their job):
  - **How to write an essay?** There are usually workshops, sometimes even crash courses during lunch break > go early in the semester to know what to expect
  - **How to combine courses?** It should be in the *Studienordnung/Prüfungsordnung*, so they may consider that you have to read it first.
Practicing German
[Some Tips that Worked for Me]

- **Talking in German all the time**, even with non-native speakers
- Always having a **notebook to write down new words / expressions quickly**...
- ... And then **re-read them in the bus/subway/tram** and try to use them in the days after

- **Asking to be corrected**; many people are not willing to at first, but if you explicitly say you’d like to be corrected, they are usually glad to help
  - (and this way you won’t be mispronouncing a word or saying something that does not exist for two years before realising it...) 😊
If you’re still learning German, you can follow the news regarding Germany, even in another language!

You’ll have an idea of the tendencies, debates, people, etc. before you turn to radio/newspapers in German and you’ll be less lost in terms of content

A tip for French speaking people: Press review of the French embassy in French on German politics https://de.ambafrance.org/Wochentlicher-deutscher (check if the same service exists in your embassy / in languages you already speak) [Update on 22 Jan. 2019: Unfortunately this doesn’t exist anymore]
Some Resources

- *Langsam gesprochene Nachrichten der Deutschen Welle* (news uttered in a slow pace):
  https://www.dw.com/de/langsam-gesprochene-nachrichten-deutsch-lernen/a-2902081

- *Tagesschau in 100 Sekunden* (daily TV news in 100 seconds):
  https://www.tagesschau.de/100sekunden/
Enjoy!

Viel Spaß!

Email: naomi.truan@fu-berlin.de
Twitter: @BerLinguistin
Academic Blog: https://icietla.hypotheses.org/