



**UNIVERSITÄT
ERFURT**

Willy Brandt School
of Public Policy

Academic Life at the Brandt School

October 11, 2024
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MPP Program Coordinator

Academic Life at the Brandt School: Contents

Studying in Germany, University of Erfurt, Brandt School

(Academic) Guidance

Academic standards: procedures and conduct

Studying in Germany: general

- Types of courses
 - Lectures, seminars and tutorials (*Übungen*)
 - degree of interactivity

- The “academic quarter” (of an hour) “c.t.” or “s.t.”

- Weekly, bi-weekly (or fortnightly; ▶ A- and B-weeks), block seminars

Studying in Germany: expectations (the “hidden curriculum” 1/2)

- Full time students \geq 36 hours/week
 - 6-8 courses/semester (30+ credits)
 - Don't underestimate block seminars (preparation, examination)
- Responsibility for managing your time: scheduling, reading, researching, studying, writing...
 - Preparation, attendance and active participation are expected for each class
 - Ca. 1/3 workload in class, 2/3 at home
 - Examinations usu. take place at the end of the semester
- **As a Master's student, you are expected to work self-responsibly and pursue your own research interests**
- Expectation that studying is your main occupation and priority
 - Punctuality
 - Avoid making other arrangements during class time
 - Notify the lecturer when having to abstain

Getting most out of your classes

- Take the time
- Prepare (esp. readings)
- Discuss with fellow students and lecturers
- Keep a critical mind and challenge what and how you learn
- Learning as 'co-creation' of lecturers and student

Studying the MPP: timeline

- Calendar of lecture periods in future semesters
- MPP-timeline
 - Feb 2025: Finishing Winter Semester classes, writing assignments
 - April 2025: Start of Summer Semester classes
 - July-Oct 2025: Designated Internship Period
 - Oct 2025: Start of Winter Semester
 - Feb 2026: Finishing Winter Semester classes, writing assignments, starting with thesis
 - Feb-July 2026: thesis writing, planning steps after graduation
 - July 2026: Farewell

Your Questions

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Whom to contact? (copy from the Academic Schedule)

Request	Contact
Academic Advice and Letters of Recommendation (course selection at the beginning of the term, etc.)	Lecturers, your Academic Mentor
Course Contents (syllabi, assignments, grades, exams)	Your respective course instructor or lecturer
Institutional Concerns	Andreas Goldthau
Institutional Concerns, Study Trips, Conferences, Events, Guest Lectures	Lena Kiesewetter
Administrative Issues, Tuition Fees, Letters of Confirmation (handing in assignments, payment of fees, etc.)	Grit Kaufmann
Student Inquiries, Program Concerns (examination concerns, proof of illness, grading etc.)	Jenny Wagner
Helmut-Schmidt- Program	Jenny Wagner
Course Offer, Course Schedule & Administration (course hours and venues, literature)	Christian Tischmeyer
Student Recruitment and Admissions	Florian Heintze
Alumni Affairs	Florian Heintze
Internships (esp. mandatory internship)	Florian Heintze
Marketing, Public Outreach and Social Media	Andrés Alberto Gallo

Contacts at the University

(copy from the Academic Schedule)

Administrative Staff	
E-Mail Accounts / E.L.V.I.S. Grades Database (Passwords, login data)	Computer Service Department rz@uni-erfurt.de
Mental Distress / Psychological Problems	Studierendenwerk Thüringen, Psycho-Social Counselling website psb-Erfurt@stw-thueringen.de
Discrimination, esp. based on gender and sexual harassment	Equal Opportunity Office gleichstellungsbeauftragte@uni-erfurt.de
Enrollment, re-registration, semester contribution „Semesterbeitrag“ payment, Student IDs	Registrar’s Department „D1: Studium und Lehre“ studierendenangelegenheit@uni-erfurt.de
Transcripts (certification thereof)	Registrar’s Dept. „D1: Studium und Lehre“ pruefungsangelegenheiten@uni-erfurt.de
Housing / Dormitories	Studierendenwerk Thüringen https://www.stw-thueringen.de/en/housing/information-for-tenants/rental-portal.html

Guidance in study-related matters

- Admin. Staff, esp. MPP Student Advisor during 'onboarding' Phase
- Lecturers know best about course-specific content and requirements
- From 2nd semester onward: Option to choose an Academic Mentor
 - Course selection and academic counselling
 - Potentially advice on internship areas and further career guidance
- During Master Thesis Writing period: Supervisor

Illness, chronic diseases, disabilities and neurodivergence

- In case you...
 - ... feel under the weather and cannot attend a class, just email the lecturer
 - ... are ill and cannot meet a deadline or a session with compulsory attendance (usu. Language courses): notification of illness (university form, signed by a doctor)
 - ... have a chronic condition that regularly keeps you from meeting requirements or expectations, ask for a 'compensation of disadvantage' (*Nachteilsausgleich*)
 - Applies to chronic diseases, disabilities and neurodivergence
 - Ask christian.tischmeyer@uni-erfurt.de

A few aspects on communication (the “hidden curriculum” 2/2)

- There are different norms of how to address people
- In (German) Academic Services: polite, clear and concise
 - what to mention to be on-point?
- ‘Normal’ response times?
 - When and how to phrase a reminder?
- University is structured into status groups:
 - Students, Admins, PhD-students, Researchers, Post-Docs, Professors
- All lecturers enjoy academic freedom (in research and teaching)
 - Also in grading
 - Nonetheless: lecturers must justify their grades – and good ones value constrictive feedback, too.

Studying at WBS: Guidance (addition)

- Your co-students, senior students, student government might know/have figured out clues to your queries
- [Moodle Information Desk](#) provides general clues
- Also [Brandt School](#) or [University Website](#) might have the info you are looking for...

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Academic Procedures: Academic Writing

- Re-take an exam(ination) when:
 - a) submitted and failed
 - b) Ill on the day of exam, before deadline
 - Applies to all formats: written exam, written assignment, oral exam

- AI in teaching and assignments:
 - [Guide](#) on Moodle Info Desk
 - In essence: make use transparent
 - Otherwise „undeclared aid“ => deception(!)

Academic Conduct: Academic Writing

- A social scientist's tasks: Coping with complex and diffuse social reality
 - Systemic search for insight/ knowledge
 - Comprehensible to others
 - Accurate and reproducible (→ validity)

- Assessment of your papers:
 - Structure (relating your work to the scholarly debate)
 - Format (e.g. referencing, also spelling, grammar... also tone(?))
 - Substance (concepts, theories)

We are offering an academic writing course in your first semester – do visit it!

Academic Conduct: The Academic Code of Honor

- Based on UE's Master Examination Regulations (M-RPO-2019 section 14, paragraph 3): <https://www.uni-erfurt.de/en/brandtschool/studies/current-students/rules-regulations>
- Academic Dishonesty :
 - Cheating
 - Using of undeclared aids (also LLM, AI)
 - Fabrication of data
 - Multiple submissions
 - Facilitating academic dishonesty (by others)
 - Plagiarism (next slide)

Academic Conduct: Plagiarism

- Meaning: “[The] us[e] someone else’s words, ideas, or data as if they were one's own [...]. This includes representing part of or an entire work produced by someone else as one’s own – either with the intent to mislead or by omitting the true source and making slight alterations which leave the represented content identifiable” (Academic Code of Honor)
- We regularly run papers and every single thesis through a plagiarism check software

Academic Conduct: Consequences of academic dishonesty/deception

- Shortcomings in academic standards (less severe cases)
 - Downgrading or failure of the examination

- 1st severe violation of the academic conduct
 - Automatic failure, exclusion from re-take
 - Notification of the department of *Studium und Lehre* and the Examinations Committee

- 2nd severe violation of the Academic Code
 - Automatic failure, exclusion from re-take
 - **Withdrawal of the right to take examinations at the University of Erfurt → ex-matriculation without a degree**

Avoiding (unintentional) plagiarism

- Cite the actual source and make it clearly identifiable
 - Insert/ manage your references while you read and write
 - write notes, comments, summaries to collect and reflect your readings
 - Reference manager software (EndNote, [Citavi](#) , Zotero, etc.)
 - Clearly distinguish between your own ideas and the ideas of other authors
-
- Start early to avoid time pressure
 - In doubt, consult your lecturer

Your Questions

Studying in Germany/ at WBS: Conclusion

- You are required to organize your studies to a large degree by yourself
- But there are many helpful information and contacts (see slides, [Moodle Information Desk](#), [WBS Website](#))
- Proactively talk about issues that you might face
- In good time before deadlines

Master of Public Policy Orientation Week 2024

(as of Oct. 4, 2024)



mandatory

optional

Monday, (Oct. 7)

08.00-09.00

Meeting Point
08.40 @ Uni entrance

09.00-10.00

**MPP Welcome
Session**

09.00 - 11.00
@ C19.00.02

10.00-11.00

Campus Tour
11.00 - 12.00

11.00-12.00

12.00-13.00

13.00-14.00

Info on Health
Insurance

14.00-16.00
@ C19.00.02

15.00-16.00

16.00-17.00

Welcome
Get Together (StuRa)

16.00 - Open End
@ On Campus

17.00-18.00

18.00-

Tuesday, (Oct. 8)

Consultation Hour:
Florian Heintze

09.00 - 11.00
@ C19.02.01

StuRa Introduction
11.20 - 12.00 - KIZ/ HS 2

**Introduction to the
MPP Program**

12.00 - 14.00
@ C19.00.02

International Offers

15.00 - 16.00
@ HS 7

MPP Get Together
(Stud. Gov.)

20.00 - open end
@ Café Nerly

Wednesd., (Oct. 9)

City Registration
07.30- 10.00
@ Uni entrance

Consultation Hour:
University Accounts

10.00 - 12.00
@ C19.00.02

**Student Life at
Brandt School**

14.00-16.30
@ C19.00.02

Pub Crawl (StuRa)

open end
@ t.b.a.

Thursd., (Oct. 10)

Helmut Schmidt
Programme (Meeting)

11.00- 12.00
@ C19.00.02

MPP Specializations

14.00- 15.00
@ C19.00.02/hybrid

Pub Crawl (StuRa)

open end
@ t.b.a.

Friday, (Oct. 11)

City Registration
07.30- 10.00
@ Uni entrance

Academic Life

11.00- 13.00
@ C19.00.02

Welcome City Tour

14.40- 18.00
@ Domplatz Nord

BBQ (Stud. Gov.)

18.00- open end
@ Uni Campus



mandatory

optional

Further Activities and Events

Sunday, October 13: Trip to Weimar "Zwiebelmarkt" (10.00-16.00, @ t.b.a.)

Tuesday, October 15: Consultation hours: Setting Up University Accounts (14.00-16.00, @ C19.02.40)

Friday, November 1: Diversity workshop pt. 1; invitation with details follows

Tuesday, November 5: Consultation hours: ELVIS Course Registration (14.00-16.00, @ C19.02.40)

Wednesday, November 6: Welcome Lecture (18.00-20.00, @ C19.00.02)

Thursday, November 7: Consultation hours: ELVIS Course Registration (10.00-12.00, @ C19.02.40)

Wednesday, November 13: Internship Info Session (14.00-16.00, @ C19.00.02)

Thursday, November 28: Diversity workshop pt. 2 ; invitation with details follows

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Thank you for your attention!