

Academic Bulletin for Tü-VIPP, Germany Spring 2021

Introduction

The Academic Bulletin is the CSU International Programs (IP) “catalog” and provides academic information about the virtual “Tübingen – Virtual Intercultural Pre-Package” (Tü-VIPP) program offered through the University of Tübingen, Germany. This bulletin supersedes any previous bulletin(s) published.

CSU IP participants must read this publication in conjunction with the *Academic Guide for CSU IP Participants* (also known as the “*Academic Guide*”). The Academic Guide contains academic policies which will be applied to all IP participants while abroad. Topics include but are not limited to CSU Registration, Enrollment Requirements, Minimum/Maximum Unit Load in a Semester, Attendance, Examinations, Assignment of Grades, Grading Symbols, Credit/No Credit Option, Course Withdrawals and other policies. The *Academic Guide* also contains information on academic planning, how courses get credited to your degree, and the academic reporting process including when to expect your academic report at the end of your studies abroad.

To access the *Academic Guide*, go to our website [here](#) and click on 2020-21. For general information about this program, refer to the CSU IP website under “[Programs](#)”.

Academic Program Information

The virtual “[Tübingen – Virtual Intercultural Pre-Package](#)” (Tü-VIPP) program is offered through the University of Tübingen, Germany for international students. Courses are considered part of the spring term which:

- Starts April 26, and
- Ends July 2, 2021.

Courses are ten weeks in length and are two units each. Students are expected to attend class sessions via Zoom, actively participate in courses, conduct private and independent study, prepare projects and take examinations as scheduled by the instructor (e.g., written test, oral presentation, and/or essay).

Students may enroll in up to three courses, depending on course availability. Students who sign up for the Tü-VIPP Buddy Program (see below) can take a maximum of two courses.

Student will receive a letter grade for each course taken. An academic report will be provided to the student and the student’s home campus approximately two months after the program is completed. Units and grades earned for each course will appear on the student’s CSU academic record as part of spring term.

Tü-VIPP Buddy Program

To support students during their virtual experience and to promote an intercultural exchange, the University of Tübingen has set up a Buddy program. In this Buddy program, a student of the University of Tübingen teams up with a participant of the Tü-VIPP. The Buddy Program aims to initiate a cultural exchange between international students and the Tübingen students, to expand one’s own cultural horizon, as well as the strengthening of intercultural skills and competences. The Buddy Program will allow students to get to know German student life first-hand and to make friends. No credit is given to participants of the buddy program.

Grading and Units

Below is the grade conversion table that is used to convert grades earned for Tü-VIPP courses.

| Tü-VIPP Numeric Grade | CSU Letter Grade |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1,0 | A |
| 1,3 | A- |
| 1,7 | B+ |
| 2,0 | B |
| 2,3 | B- |
| 2,7 | C+ |

| | |
|------------------|----|
| 3,0 | C |
| 3,3 | C- |
| 3,7 | D+ |
| 4,0 | D |
| 4,3 – 5,0 (Fail) | F |

*The CSU grade of WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized) may be given in some circumstances, e.g., for uncompleted courses. Refer to the *Academic Guide* for additional grade information.

Courses must be taken for a letter grade only.

Course Withdrawal Policy

Students who withdraw from courses with permission from CSU IP will receive a grade of “W” if the course withdrawal occurred after two weeks of instruction. Refer to the [Academic Guide for CSU IP Participants](#) for complete information about the course withdrawal policy.

Unit Conversion Guidelines

Courses are worth two semester units of credit. To convert the value of CSU semester units into CSU quarter units, multiply the CSU semester units by 1.5.

Course Offerings

Below are shortened course descriptions taken from the University of Tübingen’s [website](#) for the courses that will be offered. Each course below is given two units of credit. For more information about the courses, refer to the website.

Welcome to Tübingen - Digital German Class. Students covers all aspects for German needed for conversations and communication routines in everyday life. Lessons are lively and communicative, connecting intensive language training with general knowledge of Germany and Tübingen. The language levels offered are part of the reported course titles. See below.

- **Digital German Class A1.1.** This course is a beginner’s class in German. European Framework of Reference: A1 level. Lower division.
- **Digital German Class A1/A2.** This course assumes some knowledge in the German language at the elementary level. European Framework of Reference: A1/A2 level. Lower division.
- **Digital German Class A2.** This elementary language course follows the A1/A2 level. European Framework of Reference: A2 level. Lower division.
- **Digital German Class B1.** This course is equivalent to a high intermediate/lower advanced German language course at the CSU. Upper division.

Access Tour Germany. In this course, we will tour the most exciting places in Germany and discuss the most interesting topics of contemporary Germany. Using different media, we will explore topics regarding politics, society, economy, and the refugee situation. Through group and class-wide discussions, we learn about the effects the Cold War had on Germany, virtually visit the student city of Tübingen, understand Germany’s plan to exit the use of fossil fuels, and discuss political strategies on national and European levels. This course is a great opportunity for you to learn about Germany, dig deeper in a specific topic, present to your classmates, and draw comparisons to your home country. Upper division.

Exploring Cultures, Expanding Perspectives: A Virtual Voyage into Each Others’ Worlds. What makes your culture unique or different? What principles does your culture share with other cultures? How do we reconcile when our perspectives clash with others? Investigate the views, perceptions, and characteristics of your culture and explore those of your classmates. This course is a collaborative online international learning (COIL) model, that is project-based and student-driven. Lower division.

Germany – NOW! This course takes you on a virtual tour of Germany in the 21st century: people, places, politics, popular culture. What is the German nation debating? You will discover that some debates are shared in your home countries whereas others seem to get more attention in Germany, or even only there. Using different media, we will explore (in self-study, in small group discussions and in the plenary forum) the historical, geopolitical and cultural reasons for this. Some key words here: monetary (dis)union, the new extreme right, xenophobia/racism, a new global

player, the Green Party paradigm, regional vs. federal. You may pick what is offered or you can bring your own ideas to the table. There will be readings, images, and clips to analyze, and presentations given by you. Upper division.

Intercultural Communication “Insight Germany – (Ex)Change your Perspectives”. Intercultural competence has become an important skill for students in both academic and professional contexts. In this course, we will focus on living and studying in Germany (e.g. university system, types of courses, teaching and learning styles, student life). We will also take a closer look at models and theories for describing culture and intercultural communication and how these are reflected in the academic culture and day-to-day interactions among students and between students and instructors. Topics will include: how does culture influence our perception? What role do verbal and non-verbal elements play in intercultural communication? What constitutes intercultural competence? Participants will have the opportunity to reflect their own cultural background, gain valuable insights into new cultures and countries and share their perspectives with international classmates and Tübingen students. Lower division.

Living and Studying Internationally: An Intercultural Exploration. In this course you’ll start with an introduction into intercultural topics, review necessary conversation management devices, and then embark on a journey of self-guided discussions in small groups of two or three students from different countries and cultural backgrounds. You’ll be provided with suggested talking points for discussion for each meeting as well as authentic short articles or other sources. At the end of the course, you’ll get back together and present your observations and outcomes from your group followed by a Q&A session. English language level B1/B2. Lower division.

Think Globally: International Tridems on Global Issues. This course is designed as a hands-on intercultural English course that brings together students from multiple countries to exchange ideas in virtual teams on issues of global importance. While practicing academic and intercultural communication skills, the tandem (or tridem) teams will discuss topics such as sustainability, public health, equal opportunity, freedom of speech, and economic growth. In addition, we will reflect on effective communication in an international academic environment. Developing such global skills is a prerequisite for tackling urgent global concerns. English language level C1. Upper division.

Waging Peace through Intercultural Understanding. The course provides students with a unique opportunity to develop a global diversity perspective in communication and dialogue. Students will explore their own identity and positionality in the world in a way that allows them to develop empathetic skills that are critical to developing a more secure, healthy, and just world. Utilizing the skills of appreciative inquiry, appreciative curiosity and a variety of dialogic techniques, students will be able to engage some of the world’s most compelling issues: immigration, poverty and development, extremism, xenophobia/racism, sexism, religious, cultural, and political divisions. Upper division.

Without interference and regardless of frontiers: Freedom of Expression in Europe Today. (Reported course title: Freedom of Expression in Europe Today.) What is freedom of expression? How is it being endangered today in Europe? This course focuses on the importance of freedom of expression as a basic human right and as a core value of democratic societies and of today’s Europe. After a short introduction to the European Human Rights protection system, the students will be confronted with authentic cases of violation of freedom of expression and will discuss the problems occurring when trying to limit it. Upper division.

For questions about CSU IP academic policies or academic program requirements, email IPacademics@calstate.edu.