
2014-15 Field Notes

Field Notes from Abroad: Person to Person

12-8-2014

Person to Person in Germany

Andrea Pakula
Linfield College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/intl_fieldnotes_1415

Recommended Citation

Pakula, Andrea, "Person to Person in Germany" (2014). *2014-15 Field Notes*. Essay. Submission 5.
https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/intl_fieldnotes_1415/5

This Essay is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It is brought to you for free via open access, courtesy of DigitalCommons@Linfield, with permission from the rights-holder(s). Your use of this Essay must comply with the [Terms of Use](#) for material posted in DigitalCommons@Linfield, or with other stated terms (such as a Creative Commons license) indicated in the record and/or on the work itself. For more information, or if you have questions about permitted uses, please contact digitalcommons@linfield.edu.

Mid-Semester Assessment, IDST 031

NAME: Andrea Pakula COUNTRY: Germany Date: 12/8/2014

One of the best parts of living in Germany has been, at least so far, getting to know my German roommates. My dear friend and roommate, Felicitas, let me take up an hour or two of her time for me to ask her about differences between the United States and Germany for this assignment from Linfield. Of course, I learned about many differences between these two countries myself, having lived in Germany for a few months now, but there are some things that other people find more distinct in cultural differences than I do.

For instance, the biggest difference I've seen between Germany and the US while living with Felicitas is that German university students have much longer work days, so to say, than the US. Felicitas, who is a pre-law student, starts classes at about 8:00 or 9:00 every day and usually doesn't come back to our apartment until 7:00 or 8:00 at night, depending on which classes she has that day. This is also true with a molecular biology friend of mine, and I'm constantly amazed at how hard they work. German higher education is also different from that in the United States because most German universities are tuition-free, and students just need to pay for books and housing, all of which are considerably cheaper than in the States. Germans also start college at about 19 or 20, depending on if they took a year off or not, as opposed to Americans who usually start at about 18.

Felicitas, having now lived with two American roommates, says that she likes having us around just because we're always so friendly and open to talking about anything, no matter what time it is. According to her, and other Germans that I've met here in Heidelberg, Americans defy the bad stereotypes that they are given, but all of the positive stereotypes are completely correct. Americans are seen as friendly, open, polite, and eager to meet new people and try new things. The funniest thing about being an American in Germany, though, is the fact that very few people will pick you out as an American before you tell them. I've been mistaken as being British, Canadian, Dutch, Swedish, Austrian, and even German by various people, and few of them believed me at first when I told them I was from the United States. In any case, it's a universal truth that if one just acts polite and remembers the manners their mother taught them, they'll give off a good first impression that can color a better picture of their country for someone of a different nationality.