

FREIBURG, GERMANY

CATHERINE KOSS

Program: Academic Year in Freiburg (AYF)

Catherine's Major: German; Communication Sciences and Disorders

Academic Life: AYF is a language immersion program that allows you to challenge yourself by offering a variety of classes offered at different language-levels; AYF-courses that are geared for the students in the AYF program, Sprachlehrinstitut (SLI) courses that are designed for international students, and university courses designed for German students. I took a mixture of all of them, primarily focusing on German language, literature, and culture! The system is very different than in the U.S., mainly because there's not much in-class contact time, little to no homework, but high-stakes exams and term papers at the end of the semester which will determine your grade.

Memorable Experiences: My most memorable experiences have probably been the satisfaction felt after completing my many 10-15 page research papers, all written entirely in German as well as successfully presenting information to the class. Although I felt very nervous, I was very proud of myself after completing the course and earning a good grade!

New Perspectives: Living in Freiburg for a year opened my eyes to different ways of thinking about a situation; I had multiple friends from different parts of the USA and the world as a whole, so it was interesting to discuss topics varying from Donald Trump to green living to Fußball! One thing I've noticed since I've been back has been how I've picked up on German habits, such as wearing house shoes or shaking someone's hand, regardless of formalities. I've also picked up on the "green" habits that come from living in a green city, particularly recycling!

Benefits of Study Abroad: The ability to speak another language is always a good skill to have, but studying abroad regardless of language of instruction shows future employers that you are, to a point, fearless. You are independent and you are a leader. Studying abroad shows signs of a certain strength in an individual that not everyone has.



Catherine hiking outside of Freiburg.

“Studying abroad for the year truly allows you to get to know your city and make it a home.”

