

This guide is intended to help students prepare for the visa process. Please note that visa requirements and procedures can change with little or no notice. The Center for Global Study & Engagement (CGSE) strongly recommends reviewing this guide before applying to study abroad to ensure that visa timelines and requirements do not conflict with other academic, travel, or personal commitments.

Visa requirements may differ based on your citizenship status. If you are an international student or hold dual citizenship, please consult CGSE early to understand how this may affect your visa process.

How to use this guide

This is a planning tool to help you understand the general visa process. Once accepted into a program, you will receive a detailed visa guide including key dates, deadlines, required documents, and action items specific to your program via email and through the program's D2L Brightspace pre-departure course.

Visa Requirements

U.S. Passport Holders and EU citizens are not required to have a visa before participating in this program. You must obtain a residency permit (Aufenthaltstitel) in Bremen within the first three months of your stay in Germany. The cost of the permit, approximately €100, will be reimbursed by the program (save your receipt). Please bring a biometric passport picture with you which you will need for the residence permit.

If you are a U.S. citizen, you will enter the Schengen area as a tourist and can stay visa-free for up to 90 days. You will apply for a residency permit once you begin your coursework at the University of Bremen, which will permit you to stay in Germany for the remainder of the program.

- For the fall semester, students typically complete the residency permit process in October.
- For the spring semester, students typically complete the process in April.

If you plan to travel within the Schengen area before the program starts, you are responsible for ensuring that your stay as a tourist (including program days) does not exceed 90 days, as you will be considered a tourist until your residency permit is issued.

ETIAS

Beginning in late 2026, the ETIAS process is expected to go into effect. ETIAS travel authorization is an entry requirement for visa-exempt nationals travelling to any of these [30 European countries](#). It is linked to a traveler's passport. It is valid for up to three years or until the passport expires, whichever comes first. If you get a new passport, you need to get a new ETIAS travel authorization.

If you are a US citizen, or an international student from a visa-exempt country, you may need to apply for an ETIAS. Once the ETIAS has gone into effect, you will need to fill out an application online and pay 7 Euros. You can fill out the application form using either this official ETIAS website or the ETIAS mobile application before arriving in Germany. More information will be shared once this goes into effect, but you can find additional information on the official [ETIAS website](#).

International Students

If you are not a US or EU citizen, you may be required to obtain a visa. Please check with the appropriate Consulate that serves your jurisdiction regarding the student visa process. In most cases, international students can apply in the US. If you are planning to travel to your home country during the break and will need your passport over the summer, you will need to apply for a visa in your country of citizenship. Check the German Consulate's website in your country for visa requirements. The CGSE and the Dickinson in Germany team will supply documents as needed, but it is your responsibility to confirm what documents are required and to communicate your plans with both the CGSE and the Dickinson in Germany team.

If applying in the US, the German Consulate General of New York has jurisdiction over Pennsylvania. Refer to the [consulate website](#) for the most accurate information.