

## Information for Incoming Students

by Meryll Rebello, Erasmus+ Coordinator at the Classics Department of the University of Göttingen

This brochure is addressed to future Erasmus+ incoming students and others who would be interested in studying at our department. **Please read it carefully** before contacting me, since it might already answer some of your questions. You find my contact details at the end of this document.

### The Classics Department: Latin and Ancient Greek

The Göttingen Classics Department (*Seminar für Klassische Philologie*) is a middle-sized department (about 300 students) offering the subjects Latin and Greek. They can be studied together or each in combination with one other subject from most of our other faculties. All relevant information addressed in the following can also be found on our website: [www.klaphi.uni-goettingen.de](http://www.klaphi.uni-goettingen.de)

We offer the following courses: B.A.s (with the objective to become a teacher or a scholarly focus), a Master of Education (M.Ed.) and a Master of Arts (M.A.). The module catalogues (*Modulverzeichnis*) for these courses can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/ba-med-ma-studieng%C3%A4nge-und-ordnungen/48356.html>

Greek and Latin are closely linked with other subjects such as Ancient History (Alte Geschichte), Archaeology and Mediaeval and Neo-Latin (Mittel- und Neulatein). When looking for information on the web, e.g. browsing course catalogues, please bear in mind that they run their own departments in Göttingen.

### Before coming to Göttingen

Before coming to Göttingen, you should make yourself familiar with our website (see above). You will also need to make a first Learning Agreement before coming to Göttingen. Please note: Even though your home university might not ask you to sign a LA before your stay starts, we strongly recommend you to make the first LA *before* coming to Göttingen. You may change this first LA within the first weeks of the term once you are here (Revised Learning Agreement).

For several reasons, it is advisable to come to Göttingen some time in advance, i.e. before lectures begin. Firstly, Studium International offers a Welcome Week in which they provide lots of help with the registration and other important issues – you should not miss this chance! Secondly, this gives you enough time to see me in my office hour so that we can have a look at your study plan and I can advise you on which courses to choose, especially if (for some reasons) you do not yet have a Learning Agreement!

Please avoid coming to see me in the first or second week of the semester only, since this is a very busy time and I might only be able to offer you a very short "emergency" briefing. It is much wiser to plan your studies well in advance.

### **Which courses can I choose?**

All courses can be found in UniVZ, the university course catalogue: <https://univz.uni-goettingen.de> Please select the applicable semester and *Vorlesungsverzeichnis > Philosophische Fakultät > Klassische Philologie (Latein/Griechisch)*

The UniVZ is usually up to date 1-2 months before lectures resume. If you contact me via e-mail I might be able to provide you with a catalogue of courses offered at our department beforehand.

In principle, Erasmus students can study whatever they are interested in at our department. However, there are options which make more sense than others. For example, in all our retroversion training classes (*Stil-Übungen*) students practice the translation from Latin or Greek into German, which requires quite a good knowledge of the German language. I would not categorically rule these out when advising you (since some Erasmus students have actually benefited from attending these courses), but if you have been learning German for less than 2 or 3 years, it might be more sensible to opt for different courses instead.

Another very specific type of seminar is *Fachdidaktik*. Since most of our German students study to become teachers of Latin and/or Greek, the department offers seminars on didactics, but they are adapted to the German educational system. Again: You might be interested in the cultural differences between your home country and Germany and therefore might find the *Fachdidaktik* seminars very interesting (especially if you study to become a teacher yourself). However, it might not make much sense to replace a similar class offered by your home university with *Fachdidaktik*, since the Classics might be taught differently Italy, Greece, Switzerland etc.

Most of the other courses are equally suitable for both Erasmus incoming students as well as German students. If you need advice e.g. on which level of Greek or Latin will be required, feel free to contact me. Together we can put together a study programme that suits your needs best.

### **Alternating topics each semester**

Each semester our lectures on literature (i.e. the ones who do not focus on language training) are concerned with one of the six topics mentioned below. This concept guarantees that Bachelor students cover the whole range of Greek and/or Latin literary genres within the 6 semesters of their undergraduate studies.

Please note: The winter terms focus on prose texts, whereas the summer terms deal with poetry.

- SS I *Kleinere poetische Formen*: Smaller poetic forms, e.g. love elegy, odes, satires
- WS II *Formen narrativer Prosa*: Narrative prose, e.g. historiography, biography, fiction/novels
- SS IIIa *Größere poetische Formen* Large-scale poetry, part a: Drama (comedy and tragedy)
- WS IV *Formen philosophischer und theologischer Prosa*: Philosophical and theological prose
- SS IIIb *Größere poetische Formen*: Large-scale Poetry, part b: Epic
- WS V *Rhetorik in Praxis und Theorie*: Theory and practice of oratory: handbooks on rhetorics, but also speeches

N.B. The summer term 2015 started with part I (Kleinere poetische Formen).

### **German university teaching: *Vorlesung, Seminar, Übung***

German university teaching can take the form of a **lecture** (*Vorlesung*), a **seminar** (*Seminar*) or a **training class** (*Übung*). A lecture is usually held by a professor and often attended by many students of various levels, whereas a seminar normally consists of a group no larger than 30 students. In a seminar you are expected to actively get involved in the discussion; it is less teacher-centered than a lecture. The German *Übung* resembles a seminar in that the groups are small and you are encouraged to contribute your own ideas, but it usually focuses on more practical aspects, for example the translation of Latin or Greek texts into German.

### **Examination methods: Oral exam (*mündliche Prüfung*), written exam (*Klausur*), term paper (*schriftliche Hausarbeit*)**

The exam method for each module is defined in the module catalogue. All exams are held in German. As an incoming student from a European university, you are certainly familiar with written and oral examinations. There are no major differences with regard to these exam methods in Germany.

Since some of our lecturers are fluent in English, Italian or Modern Greek, we can usually arrange for someone with knowledge of your native language to be present at your oral exam if you feel insecure. However, by the end of their first semester, most Erasmus students have learned enough German to master their oral exams.

If you are required to write a term paper (*schriftliche Hausarbeit*), please note that it is slightly different from an *essay*. Please ask the lecturer if he or she can provide you with information on how to write a term paper. Usually, you write your term paper in German.

### How can I work on my German?

Once you are in Göttingen, there are several possibilities on how to work on your German. You can, for example, find a student who is interested in learning your native language and become their tandem partner. You can also take one of the German classes offered by the *Lektorat Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (German as a foreign language): <http://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/7710.html> They offer a wide range of classes, addressing different levels and focusing on various skills such as reading, writing, speaking, or listening comprehension. Please be sure to register well in advance, since the courses are very popular with exchange students.

### Contact details

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### General info and common abbreviations

Unless indicated otherwise, German university lectures last 1,5 hours, starting at quarter past (see below)

SS or SoSe = Sommersemester (summer term)

WS or WiSe = Wintersemester (winter term)

c.t. = *cum tempore* (with academic quarter, indicating that a lecture starts at quarter past, e.g. 14 Uhr c.t. means it starts at 14.15 )

s.t. = *sine tempore* (without academic quarter, lectures starts at 14.00 sharp)

KlaPhi – a blend word formed from *Klassische* and *Philologie*