

**ROMANISCHES
SEMINAR**



**UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG**
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

Student Guide

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SUMMARY

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I. Academic year at Heidelberg University

The academic year at Heidelberg University follows a semester system. More specifically, it is divided into two semesters: the winter semester (from October to February) and the summer semester (from April to July). The exact lecture periods (*Vorlesungszeit*) and semester breaks (*Vorlesungsfreie Zeit*) may be consulted on the on the following website: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/studium/studienorganisation/termine-und-fristen/weitere-semesterzeiten>.

It is important to note that each semester has public holidays. For example, in the months of May and June, there are many "Feiertage" such as *Christi Himmelfahrt* and *Pfingstmontag*. The professor will normally inform you about classes being cancelled on these days in addition to potential "catch-up" sessions. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to look at the state of Baden-Württemberg's calendar where the different *Feiertage* (public holidays) are indicated: <https://im.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/service/feiertag>.

II. Administration

Enrolment (*Immatrikulation*)

Once you have received your letter of acceptance to the Master's degree programme, you can start the process in enrolling to the university. Your enrolment process begins on the new online platform, HeiCO. Read the following steps to know what documents to prepare:

1. First of all, you must set-up an online account by clicking on "Hier kommen Sie direct zur Online-Bewerbungen". Fill out your personal information and provide your e-mail address. Afterwards, click on "Daten bestätigen".
2. You will receive a confirmation e-mail that will include a verification link. Once you have clicked on the link, you will be able to create a new password. Now, your account is ready to go!
3. You can submit your application by clicking on "Meine Bewerbungen / Neue Bewerbung anlegen".

4. You will be prompted to fill in a series of questions regarding your semester of enrolment (1. Semester), the kind of degree (Master's degree) and the name of the respective programme of study ("Literaturen und Sprachkontakte im frankophonen Raum"). You must enter "1" under the heading "Einstiegsemester" followed by "Konsekutives Masterstudium" if it is the first Master's degree programme that you are doing. Finally, you will be given the choice to select the *double degree* variant with Montpellier, and if you fall under this category, you must check the last box ("Ich möchte mich auf ein Partnerstudium bewerben"). In the latter case, the next step will be to validate the Master's official title: "Transcultural studies. Literature and Language Contact in the Francophone Area".

5. Next, you simply follow the instructions and enter your personal details (nationality, place of birth, current address, address in your home country and telephone number).

6. In the "Hochschulberechtigung" tab, you will be asked for information about your *Abitur* (high school) diploma. If you have a German *Abitur*, you can tick the first box, but if not (e.g. you have a French *baccalauréat*, a Canadian high school diploma or an *IGCSE*), tick the second box. If you have a French *baccalauréat* or another diploma that proves the successful completion of your secondary school studies, select the category, "Ausländische Allgemeine Hochschulreife".

7. After, you must complete a section concerning all of your other previous studies (from your high school diploma to now). Click on "Studiengang hinzufügen" to add another level to your educational background and fill in the required spaces.

All registration steps are carried out on the HeiCO platform. If you encounter any difficulties, please contact the student administration department 2.1 at the following e-mail address: studierendenadministration@uni-heidelberg.de.

Once you have registered, you will receive a *Zulassungsbescheid* (letter of admission) from the administration.

Studentenausweis (student card)

As soon as your enrolment to the university has been approved, you will receive your student card, also known as a *Studentenausweis* or Uni-ID, by mail. This card carries the following information that allows you to access various aspects of student life:

- matriculation number (*Matrikelnummer*), also known as a "registration number": This number corresponds to your name and will be used in administrative affairs, such as signing up for courses, registering for exams, etc. Always remember to include your matriculation number in the subject when e-mailing the central administration or different institutions at the university.
- digital ID (Uni-ID) : This number corresponds to your personal ID and allows you to access HeiCO (the online administrative platform), your e-mails (<https://sogo.uni-heidelberg.de/SOGol/>), your wallet for the university cafeteria (*Mensa*), your library account, etc. It is linked up with a password that you will have chosen.

For more information regarding your student card, please see the following page on the university's website: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/study/management-of-studies/student-id>.

Validating your *Studentenausweis*

When you receive your student card, it is not yet valid. You must go to the central university administration building, *Carolinum*, in order to activate it. This is done by inserting your card into one of the machines on the left-hand side of the foyer. The building is located at Seminarstraße 2, which is across from the *Romanisches Seminar*. If you have paid your tuition fees for the semester, it will be recognised by the machine and so, your card will be stamped with a date that confirms its validity. This step is important because without having a valid date written on the back of your card, you will not be considered a legally enrolled student. For example, if you take the tram during the student hours and a conductor asks to see your card, you will have to pay a fine if your card has not been validated. However, once you have gone to the *Carolinum* and punched your card, you're good to go!

Re-enrolment (*Rückmeldung*)

For each semester, you must go through a couple of administrative steps in order to maintain your status as an enrolled student. Near the end of a semester, a reminder will be sent to your university account that explains the process to re-enroll. For the summer semester, the re-enrolment period goes from 15 January to 15 February, while the winter semester goes from 15 June to 15 July: (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/studium/studienorganisation/rueckmeldung>). This step is necessary in order to inform administration that you are indeed still a student at the university.

It's a matter of paying next semester's tuition fees, which can be done by transferring the money from your bank account to the university's official bank account or through the heiCO website. All information regarding this topic can be found here: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/studium/studienorganisation/beitraege-gebuehren/studienbeitraege>. As soon as the fees have been paid and your payment has been received by the university, you may once again validate your student card at the *Carolinum* building.

Point of contact

If you encounter an administrative problem, you can contact someone who works for the university administration (*Zentralverwaltung*), which is located in the *Carolinum* building. More precisely, you should contact the department that handles student administration (*Studierendenadministration*): https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/institutionen/administration/education/d2_1.html. In the case of the Double Degree that is a joint programme between Heidelberg and Montpellier, Mrs. Kristina Koturic is the person to contact.

The *Prüfungsordnung* (examination regulations)

All details and rules concerning the Master's degree "Transcultural studies. Literature and Language Contact in the Francophone Area", can be found in Heidelberg University's official manual, which is called the *Prüfungsordnung*. You will often hear this word used due to its importance. For example, the initial documents required to be

accepted to the Master's programme, the language skills for the completion of studies, the description of the international variant of the study programme and the requirements for the Master's thesis are all explained here. You may consult the requirements as well as the standard aspects of this programme of study by clicking on the following link: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/rose/studium/master/spo_ma_franzoesisch_transk_2022.pdf.

The *Vorlesungsverzeichnis* (university course calendar)

Before registering for your courses, and even before receiving your student card, you have the possibility to browse through the university's course calendar (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*). The course calendar for the upcoming semester is typically published at the beginning of the semester break. That being said, you may also take a look at course calendars from previous semesters. It is important to note that the course and lecture themes change significantly from one semester to the next. Therefore, it should not come as a shock when, for example, one semester offers a literature seminar on Flaubert and the next semester offers a literature seminar on the contemporary writer, Marie NDiyae (please refer to the chapter 5 for further information).

The list of courses are accessible online on the LSF website or on the university website where you may download the course calendar as a PDF document (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/studium/imstudium/vorlesungen/>). In addition, the courses offered by the Department of Romance Studies can be found beneath the heading "Neuphilologische Fakultät", which translates to the "Faculty of Modern Languages".

Registering for courses and for exams

At the Department of Romance Studies, the registration for courses and the registration for exams are two separate things. Some students decide to participate in a course during the semester without necessarily needing the ECTS points in the end. The difference between registering for a course and registering for an exam will be explained in the following bullet points, but to give you an idea, even if you are registered in a course, you can consider this to be a grace period since you can test the course out

before committing yourself to writing the final exam or paper. Sometimes the content of the course does not suit your interests and therefore, you may decide not to register for the exam, which means that you will not receive the ECTS points for the course. This flexibility that comes along with enrolling and participating in courses is a unique feature in the German university system and it is one that must be managed wisely! When in doubt, it is strongly advised that you contact the person who is responsible for your choice of studies (https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/rose/seminar/ansprechpartner_am_rs_neu.html).

- **Course registration**

Course registration is done on the LSF website (<https://lsf.uni-heidelberg.de/qisserver/rds?state=user&type=0>). During the semester breaks (*Semesterferien*), the LSF portal will launch a registration phase (*Belegfrist*) that lasts about four weeks. During this time frame, you may select the courses that you wish to participate in. The exact dates for the course registration window will always be indicated on the department's website (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/rose/>). However, to facilitate the process, you may also follow the steps outlined here:

1. Log into (*Anmeldung*) LSF with your Uni-ID and password.
2. Click on "Veranstaltungen" → "Vorlesungsverzeichnis" → "Neuphilologische Fakultät" → "Romanistik".
3. The tab "Master of Arts – Kontakt" has a dropdown menu with a list of all of the possible courses that are offered for your course of studies.
4. Once you have reached the page with the course listing, you can simply click on "Anmeldung" to sign up.

- **Exam registration**

After signing up for the course, your name will be added to a list of participants. However, this step represents only one of two steps since, as we mentioned early, course registration and exam registration have separate functions. Every student must register for the exam at the end of the semester for each course. The word "exam" may be misleading if the course does not include an exam. Nevertheless, even if the course is evaluated by submitting a final paper rather than writing an exam, this second step

(*Anmeldung zur Prüfung*) is still required in order to validate the course and receive the appropriate credit points.

Nota Bene: The central administration has put together a series of videos that aim to better equip international students to understand the various administrative procedures at the university. These helpful videos can be found here: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/studium/service-beratung/angebote-fuer-internationale-studierende/workshops-und-tutorien/wie-funktioniert-die-uni-orientierung-fuer-internationale-studierende-0>.

III. Housing

Heidelberg is said among Germans to be a “university town” (*Universitätsstadt*), and so, as you can imagine, there are many students living here and the housing market is quite competitive. Fortunately, there are solutions to help with your housing search. However, even if there are solutions, don’t drag your feet and start looking for an accommodation as soon as possible in order to avoid possible hiccups.

Finding an accommodation in Heidelberg

- The first possibility is to live in *Studierendenwerk* student housing (an organisation that provides university halls of residence), which offers private apartments or communal apartments. The latter consists of individual bedrooms and a shared kitchen/living space, that houses up to four or more students. There are a few student residence buildings in the *Altstadt*, but most of them are located in *Neuenheimer Feld*, in the northwest of the city, or in *Rohrbach*, in the south.

The advantage of this option is that the cost of rent in a *Studierendenwerk* accommodations is set at an optimal price (below the market price of private housing). The disadvantage is that these accommodations are in high demand and therefore, it is advisable to apply early enough to optimize your chances - at least six months before the desired start of the lease. The process can be done very quickly online:

https://www.stw.uni-heidelberg.de/de/wohnen_online_bewerbung. It is strongly recommended to apply to all residences in order to increase your chances of getting a spot somewhere.

- The *Studierendenwerk* can also act as a midway point to find a student room rented by private landlords. You can better inform yourself by visiting the office at the *ServiceCenter*, which is located at the entrance of the *Triplex-Mensa*. More information can be found here: https://www.studentenwerk.uni-heidelberg.de/de/privater_wohnungsmarkt.

- The website <https://www.wg-gesucht.de/> is another way to find a place to live. A *WG (Wohngemeinschaft)* is the word for "flat share" or "shared apartment" and this website in particular is very well-known in Germany when it comes to looking for an accommodation. It is not restricted to flat sharing albeit the name. When browsing through the housing advertisements, you must act fast since ads get snatched up by students quickly. However, if all goes well, you will be invited to a short interview with the flatmates and/or the landlord, so that they can come to a decision regarding the vacant room.

- There are also real estate agency websites, such as *ImmoScout24* (<https://www.immobilienscout24.de/Suche/de/baden-wuerttemberg/heidelberg/wohnung-mieten>).

- The *Montpellier-Haus* is a building that is a part of the twinning committee between Heidelberg, Germany and Montpellier, France and is located at the heart of the city, right next to the *Romanisches Seminar*. It is possible to rent a student room here (<https://montpellier-haus.de/die-raeumlichkeiten-im-haus/>).

In some circumstances, students will have not yet found an accommodation upon their date of departure/arrival in Heidelberg. If you fall into this category, it would be wise to look for a temporary accommodation for the first few weeks (a *Jugendherberge*, also known as a "hostel", a hotel, an Airbnb etc.) and to visit the places/have interviews in person. Direct contact with the roommates or the landlord can speed up the process.

If you are looking for an accommodation through the *Studierendenwerk*, it is a good idea to contact the staff directly (either by e-mail wohnen@stw.uni-heidelberg.de, by phone call +49 6221 54-5400 or by paying a visit to the *Altstadt* office, which is the *ServiceCenter* by the *Universitätsplatz*). It is important to stress the urgency of your application. This way, you can be put on a wait list and be informed as soon as there is a vacancy somewhere.

Die Anmeldung (declaring your residency)

Once you have found a place to live, there is an administrative step that is necessary in Germany: the *Anmeldung*, i.e. declaration of residence at the local town hall, the *Bürgeramt*. There are several Heidelberg town halls in the *Altstadt*, in *Bergheim*, in *Neuenheim*, in the *Bahnstadt*, in the *Weststadt* and in the *Südstadt*. The one that you choose to go to will depend on the district in which you live. By bringing your *Mietvertrag* (lease agreement) and your identity card, the city hall will register and file your name in an official folder. This step is mandatory and free of charge. It must be done within two weeks after moving into your new place.

Nota Bene: Another particular rule of the German's residential system is regarding your post box and mail. In order to receive letters and packages to your new address, you must have your full name written on your mailbox. It can be an unpleasant surprise when you realize that you haven't been receiving important letters because of your unlabeled mail box.

Mandatory television fee

A few weeks after the *Anmeldung*, you will receive a letter from the *Beitragsservice von ARD, ZDF und Deutschlandradio*, also known as *GEZ*. This organization is responsible for collecting TV and radio fees from private individuals in Germany. You will need to register on their website (<https://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/>). If you live on your own, you will receive a new number (*Beitragsnummer*), but if you live in a *WG*, your roommates will probably already have a number for the apartment that you will have

to send to the *GEZ*. The fee for each apartment is €18.36 per month (subject to change).

IV. Health

When you have reached the enrolment step to the university, you will be asked to provide proof of your health insurance. In the case of being an Erasmus student or an exchange student from the European Union, you will be insured by your health insurance from your home country and will therefore need your valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This means that if you are treated by a health service, whether that be a general or specialised practice or a hospital, you will need to show this card in order for your health expenses to be covered by the respective social security company. However, the costs of minor treatments such as dental cleaning or new glasses are typically not be covered.

In the latter case, since you are not required to register to a new health insurance company in Germany, you will be asked to enclose proof of your health insurance from your home country, i.e. a "*Bescheid zur Befreiung von der Krankenversicherungspflicht*". You can simply go to a German health insurance company (AOK, Techniker, DAK etc.) with your EHIC and ask for this document.

For students who are not from the EU (European Union) or the EEA (European Economic Area), it is less likely that the health insurance from your home country will be accepted by a legal health insurance company in Germany. Therefore, it is important to inform yourself about the different possible health insurance companies and select a medical insurance provider that is best for the duration of your studies. As a student, health insurance costs about 118-125 € per month.

In the following document, you will find a list of health insurance companies in Heidelberg and other relevant information: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/studium/in->

[teresse/checkliste_krankenversicherung_dt_ss_18.pdf](#) or https://backend.uni-heidelberg.de/sites/default/files/documents/2023-04/krankenversicherung_eng_SS%202023.pdf (in English).

Note Bene: AOK Baden-Württemberg, a well-known provider of statutory medical insurance health in Germany, also offers advice in English through their AOK International Service hotline (<https://www.aok.de/pk/kontakt/servicenummern/>).

V. Course overview

Attending courses at the *Romanisches Seminar*

Each semester offers a diverse selection of courses that are constantly changing. It is therefore important to keep in mind that the course content proposed in linguistics, literature and culture can vary significantly from one semester to the next. So, when you are in the midst of selecting a course to fulfil a module for cultural studies, for literary studies or for linguistics, be sure to choose the course that interests you most wisely, as it will in all likelihood, not be offered the following semester. To give you an idea of the courses offered during the current semester and past semesters, you have the ability to browse through course catalogues (*Vorlesungsverzeichnisse*) on the following page: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/studium/imstudium/vorlesungen/>.

If you are still struggling to decide in between two courses that are being offered, it is worthwhile to look at whether the course could be validated for another module. Sometimes, it is indicated in the course description by the professor that the course, for instance, can be considered as a literature seminar or a cultural studies seminar. Although you must complete all of the modules stated in this study programme, the exact courses are not lined out for you, which means that you have the freedom to choose the courses that suit you best when fulfilling the programme's requirements. That being said, there are also introductory courses - such as the lecture course "Introduction to Transcultural Studies" - that are only taught in the first semester and are mandatory for students in the Master's degree in Contact Studies at the Department of Romance Studies.

For further information regarding the structure of the Master's degree, *Études trans-culturelles. Littératures et contacts linguistiques dans l'espace francophone*, the teaching methods as well as the mapping out of your studies, you can check out the following PDF file: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/rose/aktuelles/structure_ma_fra.pdf.

Different types of courses

Although the official document linked above presents a complete overview of the Master degree's academic structure and provides a list of the different types of teaching styles offered at Heidelberg University with the French equivalents, it is most likely that you will use the German expressions when speaking with your classmates and professors. The following passages aim to help you decipher the terms of the German university system and prepare you for your first semester as a German university student.

Hauptseminar (HS)

These courses bring together a group of max. 35 students who are in the final semesters of their Bachelor's degree or are completing their Master's degree. The *Hauptseminar*, also known as a "main seminar", lasts 90 minutes and usually takes place once a week. Students are expected to participate in discussions, to give a presentation on a topic or a reading (*Referat*) and to hand in a final paper of 20 to 25 pages (not including the cover page and bibliography). The *Hauptseminar* is organised in a way that students will write their final papers during the semester break. This is done so that students can devote their attention to the readings and their presentation (*Referat*) when the semester is in full swing. The dedication and effort made towards the weekly sessions help lay the foundation for the final written assignment.

Proseminar+ (PS+)

These courses bring together a group of max. 35 undergraduate and graduate students. The methods, theories and concepts covered in this type of course are designed for beginner Master's students. A *Proseminar+*, also known as a preparatory course,

follows a similar structure to a *Hauptseminar*, as the duration is 90 minutes, the frequency is weekly, and the course requires active participation. The framework and the argument that you plan to present in your final paper must also be approved by the professor and the assignment is due during the semester break. However, for a *Proseminar+*, the final work is slightly shorter with a length between 15 and 20 pages (not including the cover page and bibliography).

Nota Bene: *Hauptseminar* and *Proseminar+* courses can also be offered as block seminars (*Blockseminar*). Rather than having class every week, the seminar takes place over less frequent, but longer sessions. A *Blockseminar* nevertheless adheres to the expectations and the general content of a *Hauptseminar* and a *Proseminar+*.

Vorlesung (VL)

This type of course is equivalent to a "lecture" in English. A *Vorlesung* is open to everyone and, contrary to a HS or a PS+, has no seat limit. Due to the number of participants, students are more likely to listen to the professor as opposed to actively participating. To accommodate the course's many participants, the *Vorlesung* often takes place in a lecture hall in the *Neue Uni* building or in the Centre for Asian and Cultural Studies (CATS). The final exam can consist of a written exam (*Klausur*) or an oral exam (*mündliche Prüfung*).

Tutorium (T)

A *Tutorium*, or a "tutorial" in English, is a type of course that is not independent, but accompanies a lecture, such as the course, "Introduction to Transcultural Studies". The teachers that lead the class are strong academic students who have already taken the class and are advanced in their studies. A *Tutorium* is designed to review fundamental aspects of the readings and to help students develop their academic skills in reading, writing and rhetoric.

Übung (Ü)

This type of course is equivalent to an exercise class that is made up of a small group of students (approximately 20 participants). You will most likely come across this type

of course when signing up for an *ISP* (*Integrierte Sprachpraxis*) course. The small class size creates a comfortable and dynamic atmosphere for learning a new language. An *ISP* course usually has a written and/or oral exam at the end of the semester. In other cases, the professor may decide to mark various assignments and/or projects over the course of the semester that will be used towards the final grade. The exact criteria regarding the course evaluation will be presented during the first session.

Course time slots

In the German university system, classes usually start 15 minutes later and end 15 minutes earlier than the official time that is indicated online (e.g. it is written that the class will run from 9:00-11:00, which then becomes 9:15-10:45). Even if the time slot indicates that the class starts at 9:00 am and continues until 11:00 am, it is understood that it conforms to c. t. time - an abbreviation of the Latin phrase "cum tempore", which translates to "a quarter late". The reason behind this is to give students ample time to get to their next class.

***Leistungspunkte* (LP)**

The German word, "*Leistungspunkte*" and its abbreviation, LP, refer to the ECTS credit points that are attributed to the student upon the completion of a course at the end of the semester.

Course evaluations

In order to fulfil the *Leistungsnachweis* requirements (also known as a *Schein*), there is a plethora of possible assessments. However, as mentioned in the previous subsection, each type of course has predefined requirements. For example, a *Proseminar+* and a *Hauptseminar* usually expect the student to give a presentation and always require the submission of a final paper, whereas a *Vorlesung* requires a student to write a final exam (*Klausur*) or attend an oral exam (*mündliche Prüfung*), which count as the final evaluation. For a better understanding of these evaluations, please read the following list.

- ***Presentation (Referat)***

During the first session of a course, a portion of the time will be devoted to dividing topics and presentation dates. Each class session will draw on different readings, critical thinkers and theories, and the presentation will then correspond with the “topic of the day”. The length of a presentation is approximately 20 minutes and, if the time has been well managed, the presenter can end on a reflective note by asking a question or questions to the students. In addition, the presenter may be invited to answer questions asked by the professor or their fellow students. The marking scheme and criteria for a *Referat* depend on the professor and are often flexible. For example, you may have the option to use a PowerPoint presentation or to speak freely, like a monologue. In any case, you will normally be expected to prepare a handout, which includes the main ideas of your presentation and a bibliography with primary and secondary sources. Therefore, a well-established and clear structure is an indispensable part of a successful presentation. It is a very good idea to attend the professor's office hours to discuss your presentation's format. The presentation is meant to prepare you for your final paper, so don't be afraid to speak up, ask questions and engage critically with your topic.

Nota Bene: Although presentations are often expected of students, it is not mandatory or the rule. There are other possible evaluation methods that may be elaborated by your professor.

- ***Term paper (Hausarbeit)***

As we mentioned above, it is necessary to write a final term paper (*Hausarbeit*) for HS and PS+ courses. The final term paper draws on one of the themes that was touched upon during the course and the student must hand it into the professor at the end of the semester. More specifically, the *Hausarbeit* is a personal reflection that focusses on one research topic and has a strong theoretical base, which you will establish by incorporating a number of secondary sources. Before beginning the writing process, it is strongly advised that you visit your professor during his or her office hours. This one-on-one time with your professor gives you the opportunity to present your term paper's table of contents, scholarly sources and overarching theme. The submission

date depends on the professor, but it is always after the final session. On another note, the Department of Romance Studies' website has uploaded numerous documents that will come in handy when completing the preliminary and the final stages of your term paper. A good place to start is the guide, "*Leitfaden zum Anfertigen einer wissenschaftlichen Arbeit in der romanischen Sprachwissenschaft – Formalia und Konventionen*", which clearly outlines the structure and the contents that exemplify an excellent term paper. In addition, the guide explains the citation rules and illustrates the bibliography style that adheres to the department's standards: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/rose/studium/leitfaden_sprachwissenschaft.pdf. Finally, when you submit your term paper to your professor, you must include an anti-plagiarism statement: www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/rose/aktuelles/antiplagiatserklaerung_rs_2016.pdf. Moreover, similar to the submission date, depending on the professor, some may ask for a hard copy while others may prefer an electronic copy (or both!).

- ***Written exam (Klausur)***

Today's the day! It's time to write the final exam. How should you prepare? First off, the professor will have already gone over what material will be tested in the exam and what the format will look like (e.g. multiple-choice, short-answer items, essay questions, etc.). However, for lectures, there are also student assistants who are available to help you. For instance, a more in-depth review often takes place in the tutorials that are adjacent to the main lecture. A written exam lasts the same length as a regular class (90 minutes). If you are writing an exam for a language course (e.g. *ISP*), you will often have the option to bring a dictionary. Don't forget to bring enough pens, a water bottle and your student card. It is mandatory to show your student card to the professor in order to be able to write the exam.

A written exam can also be completed as a take-home exam ("take-home-Klausur"). In this case, you will have a certain number of days to write and submit your exam online. This type of written exam normally consists of several essay questions.

- **Oral exam (*mündliche Prüfung*)**

An oral exam differs from a written exam in that it lasts an average of 20 minutes. Despite the shorter time frame, the tested material remains the same in both evaluations. For instance, if the professor announced that particular questions and subjects that will appear in the *Klausur*, these same aspects will be brought forward during the oral exam.

- ***Schein/Leistungsnachweis***

When you successfully complete a course, you will receive a final grade as well as the expected ECTS credits. The professor will be the one to register your grade into the LSF system. However, if it is a course taught at another department or institute (for example, at the central institute, the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies), this will not be possible. Professors from other departments or institutes can only enter marks for students from their own department or institute. In the case where you complete a course outside of the Department of Romance Studies, you will receive a *Schein*, also known as a "certificate", from the professor or their secretary. This official, paper document includes the name of the course, the semester that you completed it, your final grade and the respective ECTS credits. You can then send this certificate to the person that oversees everything related to exam administration (*Prüfungsverwaltung*) at the *Romanisches Seminar* (hispos@rose.uni-heidelberg.de, currently Ms. Silvia Montaña) who will then enter your grade and the credits into LSF.

It is this same person who can edit your transcript of records; the official document that is stamped by the *Romanisches Seminar* to certify the courses that you have completed as well as the total of ECTS credits that you have received.

Teacher-student relationship

A professor at the Faculty of Modern Languages and the Department of Romance Studies is not only a teacher, but also a researcher, and is often responsible for a specific course module (for example, there is a professor who is in charge of French linguistics). That being said, the professor that stands in front of you each week to

teach is not meant to frighten or intimidate you. On the contrary, the professor is there to answer your questions, guide you and even inspire you. Don't hesitate to write your professor an e-mail, set up a meeting or go to their office hours. Here is a list of the professors' office hours who teach at the Department of Romance Studies, which includes their contact information: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/rose/aktuelles/sprechstundentermine_semester.html. A little heads-up: the professors' office hour times change during the semester breaks, and so, it is a good idea to keep this in mind when thinking about when you'll meet with your professor to discuss your final paper.

VI. Master's thesis

Congratulations! You have now reached the final chapter of your studies as a Master's student, which is the research and writing of your Master's thesis. First things first, you must find a professor who will be your primary thesis advisor (*Erstgutachter:in*). The role of this person is not only to supervise your work, but also to guide you. This thesis advisor will also be the main assessor regarding the evaluation of your thesis as well as your defence. Once you have chosen one professor to act as your thesis advisory, another decision must be taken: you must now select another professor (*Zweitgutachter:in*) who will act as a second evaluator and a potential guide for your thesis. In order to find the right teacher to accompany you in your research project, please consult the CVs on the *Romanisches Seminar* website (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/rose/personen/>). This will allow you to become acquainted with the professors' fields of research. After, you can make a list of professors who you would like to work with and contact them.

Your Master's thesis will fall under a certain discipline of study, for example, literature, linguistics, or cultural studies, and will deal with a principal research question. How do you formulate a research question or come up with a topic? Here are a few suggestions: you can leaf through readings and notes from previous courses that you participated in, read up on current events and their relation to one of the three strands of

study (literature, linguistics, or cultural studies), or ask your professor for their knowledge on the state of research and for recommendations.

Before you start the registration for your thesis, you will need to write a short research proposal (between 2 and 5 pages) that presents the structure of your thesis, which includes a general description of the envisioned thesis, the respective social/historical/geographical context, your research question(s), your methodology and a bibliography with primary and secondary sources. On top of the proposal, you should also submit a projected timetable to demonstrate how you intend to organise your research and writing over the next few months. This timetable can also include dates when you plan to submit parts of your thesis to your supervisor or when you plan to meet with your supervisor. Over the course of this final stage in your Master's degree, it is crucial to stay in touch with your supervisor and with your peers to discuss your ideas, doubts and discoveries. Once your proposal has been approved by your supervisor, you can proceed to the administrative stage.

- ***Signing up your Master's thesis***

A Master's thesis (*Masterarbeit*) is considered to be a type of examination and therefore, it must be registered. However, when you register your Master's thesis (*Anmeldung zur Masterarbeit*), it is not done through the *Romanisches Seminar*, but through the *Gemeinsames Prüfungsamt (GPA)*, which is the examination office that issues all diplomas at the end of a study programme (e.g. Bachelor, Master). As stated in the examination regulations (*Prüfungsordnung*), it is necessary to have already obtained at least 48 ECTS credits before registering for your Master's thesis. In addition, the registration must take place within no later than 8 weeks after the completion of your final graded work: the date of the last written exam (*Klausur*) or the date indicated on your last term paper (*Hausarbeit*). The exact steps and forms regarding the Master's thesis registration have been assembled into one PDF document published on the *Romanisches Seminar* website: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/neuphil/formulare/master_anmeldung_2012.pdf. Here, it states that you must:

1. Fill in and sign the document "*Antrag auf Zulassung zur Master-Abschlussprüfung*". This application form is required in order to register for the final Master's examination,

i.e. your thesis. Remember to enclose the six requested documents: your CV, your high school diploma, your high school transcript (if you have it), a copy of your Bachelor's degree, proof of your current enrolment at Heidelberg University (*Studienbescheinigung*) that can be downloaded from heiCO, proof of linguistic competencies in an ancient language (if this applies to you).

2. Fill in your name and your thesis topic on the second page of this PDF document and the name of your advisor. Your advisor must sign the document. Finally, you can fill in the name of the second person who will evaluate your work (*Zweitgutachter:in*). If you are taking part in a cotutelle (joint degree programme), then the second name will be the name of your second university (one advisor is from your home university and the other is from the guest university).

3. Fill in your name and the title of your Master's degree programme on the third page entitled, "*Bescheinigung zur Vorlage beim GPA*". This document, signed by the director of the Department of Romance Studies, confirms that you meet the required, completed number of ECTS points in order to begin your research paper. You must therefore attach a list of the credits and marks that you have already obtained during your Master's degree by providing a copy of your "*Notenspiegel*", an unofficial transcript printed from your heiCO account. In the third space, you must list any outstanding credits that you will acquire by the end your Master's degree. It's possible that you have not yet handed in your last *Hausarbeit* or that you are waiting for a paper to be graded. This document must be done twice.

4. Sign the document called, "*Erklärung*". This is a sworn statement that claims that you have taken note of the examination regulations (*Prüfungsordnung*), you are aware of the deadlines, you have not yet obtained a Master's degree in this discipline and you are not taking part in any other parallel examination procedure.

These five documents must be filled out and sent to the *Gemeinsames Prüfungsamt* (gpa-ma@uni-heidelberg.de) before starting to write your thesis. Once the GPA has received these documents and has sent you a confirmation e-mail, you have officially six months to submit your thesis. With all of this in mind, be careful not to send your *Anmeldung* too early because the clock starts ticking once you have registered your Master's thesis.

The two documents under the title, *Erklärung*, declare that the following statements are true:

1. Your Master's thesis is entirely a work of your own, and all ideas are your own, apart from direct quotations, terms and theories that come from other sources, which are cited as such.
2. You give full permission to the *GPA* to transmit your work to the Department of Romance Studies and to allow the office to save your thesis in their archives, which also means that your work could be cited by others in the future.

Once you have finished writing and editing your Master's thesis and the deadline has arrived, you will send it directly to the *GPA* (gpa-ma@uni-heidelberg.de), as stated above, and they will take charge of sending it to your main thesis advisor (*Erstgutachter:in*) and to your second evaluator (*Zweitgutachter:in*).

- ***Signing up for your thesis defence***

Before entering this final stage, it is important to note that in order to be eligible to register for your thesis defence, the paper itself must have been already submitted and, for students in the Double Degree programme, a language certificate validating an A2 level in German must also be presented. The date of your thesis defence, also known as a "*mündliche Abschlussprüfung*" in German, is agreed upon by you, your thesis supervisor and your second evaluator (*Zweitgutachter:in*). Even though the decision regarding when the defence will take place is done privately, you still need to fill out a form and send it to the *GPA* to make the date official. This form is called a "*Bescheinigung zur Anmeldung der mündlichen Abschlussprüfung beim Gemeinsamen Prüfungsamt der Philosophischen und der Neuphilologischen Fakultät*" : www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/neuphil/formulare/anmeldung_2022_mp_mit_datum.pdf. As soon as the person in charge at the *GPA* office receives this document, they will send you a confirmation e-mail and wish you, "*viel Erfolg für die Prüfung!*".

- **Thesis defence**

The final step of your Master's thesis is the defence. On the day of this oral exam, your thesis supervisor (*Erstgutachter:in*) as well as your second evaluator (*Zweitgutachter:in*) will be present. Once you have settled into your seat, you will have time to present your work (your research question(s), the steps you have taken and their outcome). This presentation should last approximately 10 minutes and after you have finished speaking, the professors have 10 minutes to ask specific questions about your thesis. In the final 30 minutes of the defence, the evaluators will ask you questions on two out of three themes that are related to your thesis' academic discipline: linguistics (*Sprachwissenschaft*), literary studies (*Literaturwissenschaft*), or cultural studies (*Kulturwissenschaft*). So, before the defence, you are expected to put together a document entitled, "*Themenvorschlag zur mündlichen Prüfung im Master Kontakt*" and send it to both your supervisor and your second evaluator. There is no official format that you need to follow. The only requirement is that you have three separate topics with respective bibliographies. Your *Prüfungsthemen*, or "exam topics", can be based on your courses from previous semesters. And once again, don't hesitate to discuss the details of this final oral exam with your supervisor, as the expectations may vary from one professor to another.

Nota Bene: If you are enrolled in the joint degree programme with Montpellier, the criteria for the Master's thesis defence differ from the latter. The final step for this variant of the *Études transculturelles* study programme requires only a 30-minute thesis defence. In addition, the defence will be examined by one examiner from Heidelberg and one from Montpellier, and will be conducted entirely in French. Please refer to the *Prüfungsordnung* for further information: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/rose/studium/master/spo_ma_franzosisch_transk_2022.pdf.

- **Master's Degree Certificate (Abschlusszeugnis)**

Now, it's the moment you've been anxiously waiting for, which is receiving your Master's diploma! Normally, the examiners have 6 to 8 weeks to correct your thesis. Once it has reached the 8-week mark, you can send an e-mail to the *GPA* and ask for a "*Nachweis über bestandene Prüfung*", which is a provisory certificate. This is useful if

you cannot wait any longer and you would like to have proof that you completed your Master's degree while the university prepares your official diploma (*Abschlusszeugnis*) to be delivered by mail. The *GPA* office can simply provide you with an official scan (*vorläufige Bescheinigung*), which will help you in the meantime.

VII. Technology

As a student, you have many portals and technological tools at your fingertips.

- ***Free and reliable wifi***

Supposing that you will be spending a lot of time on campus in Heidelberg, and possibly on other university campuses, you will be delighted to learn about the high-speed wi-fi service *eduroam*, which stands for "education roaming". With your Uni-ID and the appropriate password, you will be able to surf the web all over campus. This means that you can access free and reliable wi-fi when moving in between different departments, libraries, and cafeterias. In addition, if you find yourself in another city for a research visit, for a study abroad or for pleasure, you will still be able to connect to *eduroam*.

The tech team provides a more detailed description of the service and how to download it onto your laptop or tablet here: <https://www.urz.uni-heidelberg.de/de/service-katalog/netzwerk/wlan-ueber-eduroam>.

- ***Educational platform (Moodle)***

Each course at Heidelberg University has a corresponding online page where information regarding the course's contents will be published, such as articles and book excerpts to read, PowerPoint presentations, a schedule of deadlines, evaluation rubrics for presentations and final papers, etc. These course webpages can be found on the website called, "Moodle": <https://moodle.uni-heidelberg.de>. A list of participants can also be viewed here, which can be useful when you want to contact a fellow student for reasons related to class assignments or pure social interaction. To log into Moodle, you simply need to input your Uni-ID and password. Once you have logged in, you can

find your courses the same way that you found your courses on LSF. If a password is required to access the course's online page, it will be provided by the professor.

Nota Bene: Moodle not only lends itself to accessing information concerning your courses, but it also has a second function. Are you wondering what it is? Well, in March 2023, an online tool called "COMMUNITY" was created to facilitate connections and exchanges between students at Heidelberg University. Would you like to discover Heidelberg and its surrounding regions with someone? Would you like to have a study buddy? Have you lost something on campus or left something in a classroom? Are you an international student and are you looking for tips and tricks? You can ask these kinds of questions on COMMUNITY. You can learn out about the different ways to use this platform and find the link to the Moodle page here: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/node/38149>.

- ***Cloud storage service (heiBox)***

HeiBOX is a free and secure storage and sharing service for students at Heidelberg University. Once you have downloaded your documents, presentations or entire folders onto the cloud, you can easily access and share them as well. You can even let people who do not have a Uni-ID to download, read or edit your files, which is a bonus. The university's webpage highlights additional features that are unique to heiBOX and provides a link to access heiBOX: <https://www.urz.uni-heidelberg.de/de/service-katalog/collaboration-und-digitale-lehre/moodle>.

VIII. Transportation

In Heidelberg proper, and in its surrounding areas, there are two main ways to get around: by public transport or by bike.

***Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel* or *ÖPNV* (public transport)**

As alluded to above, the entire city of Heidelberg and its suburbs are well connected by public transport, whether it be buses, streetcars (*Straßenbahn*) or suburban trains

(*S-Bahn*). You can download the *Deutsche Bahn* or the *Rhein-Neckar-Verkehr* (RNV) app to find your route from point A to point B.

If you are planning to use public transport on a daily basis, it may be worthwhile to get yourself a seasonal or an annual pass.

There are three types of passes that are offered:

- The "*VRN-JugendticketBW*" is available for people under the age of 27. This ticket costs €365 for the year and allows you to access unlimited travel on regional transport (*Nahverkehr*, i.e. *Straßenbahn*, *S-Bahn*, *Bus*, *RegionalBahn*, but not *ICE* or *IC*) throughout the state of Baden-Württemberg for 12 months. You can order it on the *Deutsche Bahn* website: <https://www.dbregiobus-bawue.de/tickets/vrn-abo/vrn-abo-bestellung>.

This subscription can be cancelled 6 months after the purchase was made.

- The "*Semester-Anschluss-Ticket*" is available for people over the age of 27. It costs €225.60 per semester (6 months) and entitles you to use all means of regional transport within the *VRN-Verbundzone* (excluding the western zone). You'll find a map of this area on the *VRN* website: <https://www.vrn.de/liniennetz/Wabenplan/index.html>. You may order this ticket on the website <https://www.vrn.de/tickets/ticketuebersicht/index.html> or buy it in person at the VRN store (in front of the *Hauptbahnhof*).

- The "*Deutschland-Ticket*" is a monthly pass, which costs €49, and allows for unlimited travel on regional transport throughout Germany. For more information or to order the pass online, visit the *Deutsche Bahn* website: <https://www.bahn.de/angebot/region/deutschland-ticket>

Bikes

Heidelberg is a very "fahrradfreundlich" city, as the Germans say, which means it's a very bike-friendly place. Some streets have a lane made specifically for bikes whereas others are completely reserved for bikes (e.g. the *Plöck* street in the *Altstadt*). As you can see, you have no reason to be worried when riding your bike to get around!

Getting yourself a bike is fairly easy. For example, since there is a high turnaround of exchange students, many will sell their bikes at the end of the semester, which is convenient for those who are just arriving. That being said, it is possible to buy a bike at any given time (used or new). Regarding second hand bikes, you can shop around by looking at ads posted on eBay or on Facebook groups. Don't be afraid to look at bikes that are being sold on the outskirts of Heidelberg since the ones listed close to the centre sell very quickly. It may be easier to buy a bike from a little further away, as there is less competition. Sure, you'll have to make a short trek to pick it up, but you are likely to ride home with a bike!

Your semester fees (*Studienbeiträge*) also include a subscription to *Nextbike*, the city of Heidelberg's self-service bicycle organisation. By registering on the *Nextbike* website (<https://www.nextbike.de/>) and downloading the app, you will be able to use these bikes for 30 minutes free of charge and as many times as you like within a single day. After 30 minutes, you will be charged, but you can always drop your bike off at a stand before you reach the half-hour mark and then take out another bike to maximize your student subscription. The *Nextbike* stands can be found throughout the city.

IX. Miscellaneous

The university is not solely focussed on offering excellent seminars and lectures, but it also offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and services. Below, you will be able to discover a bit more of Heidelberg's non-academic and literary world:

- **The *Mensa* (university cafeteria)**

If you're in the *Altstadt*, it's easy to find a healthy, affordable meal at the *Mensa*. To be precise, there are three university cafeterias in the city centre: the *Triplex-Mensa* (overlooking the main university square called the "Uniplatz"), the *Marstall-Mensa* (by the Neckar River) and the *Marstall-Café* (right next door). For further information, you can take a look at the *Studierendenwerk* website (<https://www.stw.uni-heidelberg.de/de>) under the headings "Essen & Trinken" and "Mensen" and "Cafés". In the *Triplex-Mensa*, you can enjoy the (vegetarian) dish of the day for €2.50 or you can help yourself to the buffet, which is also available at the *Marstall-Mensa*. All three university cafeterias allow you to pay with your *Studentenausweis* (student ID card), which also acts as your *CampusCard*.

It is possible to reload your *CampusCard* at the automated machines located in the different *Mensen*, at the cash register, at the *ServiceCenter* with a *Studierendenwerk* employee or through Paypal. If you choose the Paypal option, you will need to connect to the *CampusCard-Aufladeportal* (<https://www.stw.uni-heidelberg.de/aufladen>) in order to transfer money from your Paypal account to your *CampusCard*. To set up your login and password, you must:

- Send an e-mail with your Uni-ID to the following address: aufladen@stw.uni-heidelberg.de.
- Change your password once you have received a temporary password by e-mail.
- Reload your *CampusCard* account by transferring money with Paypal.

Nota Bene: If you live in a *Studierendenwerk* residence building, the *CampusCard* will also allow you to use the laundry facilities (washing machines or dryers). In addition, it permits you to photocopy or print in the main library (*Unibibliothek*), at the

Romanisches Seminar or at other university libraries. The amount of money you have transferred via Paypal will only appear on your card once you have inserted it into one of these machines on campus.

- **Libraries**

Although each department or institute has its own library, some books are only available at the central library, the *Unibibliothek* or *UB*, which is located just a few steps away from the *Romanisches Seminar* and the *Uniplatz*.

The Department of Romance Studies' library is not only a place where you can study and consult many books and articles, but it is also a place where you can print, scan and use the computers. If you wish to take out a book that is listed as being accessed in person only, there is an exception to that rule. You are allowed to borrow books from one day to the next. This means that you have to check the book out in the evening, once the library has closed, and return it the next morning. Another option is to take out a book over the weekend, from Friday evening to Monday morning.

You can also study in the *UB* where there are various rooms, such as the *Medienzentrum* with its many computers and a large reading room, the *Lesesaal*. The main library also has printers and photocopiers.

Nota Bene: Since the books stored in Heidelberg University's libraries are not electronically secured, students are not permitted to bring jackets or bags into these spaces. For this reason, you will always find lockers (*Schließfächer*) at the entrances to the libraries, so that you can safely stow away all of your personal belongings, backpack, etc. Since you're not permitted to bring an ordinary bag into the library with you, you can buy a transparent bag for €7.99 at the *Informationszentrum* in the *Unibibliothek* or at a vending machine on the lowest floor of the main library (-1). This way, students can easily carry their reading material, laptop and writing utensils while the staff can ensure that nothing has been stolen. The lockers at the *UB* do not require a key, but

function with your student card. That being said, the lockers at the *Romanisches Seminar* require you to temporarily place a coin into the locker in order to receive a key and lock away your belongings.

- **The "HEIDI" catalogue**

To look up a book, an article or a manual, you can use the "HEIDI" online catalogue (<https://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/helios/kataloge/heidi.html>), by searching in the "Schnellsuche" tab.

Once your search has been successfully completed, you can simply click on the title that interests you most and a new page will open that outlines the key information regarding the respective work:

- It is available at one of the university's institute or department libraries (e.g. the *Romanisches Seminar* library) and you can reference it on site.
- It is available at the "*Hauptbibliothek Altstadt/Freihandbereich*" and is available for loan (*ausleihbar*), so you can borrow it from the *UB*. Click on "3D-Plan" to see which floor of the library it's located on.
- It is located in the *UB* or another university library, but it is not stored on a viewable shelf since it is archived in the *Tiefmagazin*. Nevertheless, you can order the book to borrow by clicking on "bestellen", which translates to "available for request". The book will be placed for you on the first floor (*1. Etage*) of the library in the *Freihandbereich* area. You will receive an e-mail or a notification upon ordering the book that indicates the time and date of pick-up. The book will generally be available a few hours after your request has been submitted. All requested books are organised in alphabetical order based on the different Uni-IDs. If you don't want to take the book home, you can also bring it to the *Lesesaal* and read it on site.
- It has already been borrowed from the *UB* (*entliehen*), but you can reserve it (*Vormerken/Bestellen*) in order to be given priority when it has been returned. You'll be notified by e-mail when the book is available and can find it on the first floor (*1. Etage*) where the other requested books are placed.
- It is available online (*online aufrufbar*).

- It is available for reference at the *UB*, but you can only consult it on site in the *Lesesaal (Präsenznutzung)*.

- **"Theater-Flatrate"**

For several years now, Heidelberg University has been partnering with the city's theater, which offers free tickets for students. The programme can be consulted online (<https://www.theaterheidelberg.de/de/kalender/>) and here, you can reserve your free ticket 5 days before the performance of your choice. All you have to do is order a standard, full-price ticket, but type in "FlatrateUni" into the *Aktionscode* field. When it's time to head to the play or the musical number, don't forget to bring your valid *Studentenausweis* with you!

You can also reserve your tickets by contacting them via e-mail at tickets@theater.heidelberg.de, by calling them (+49 06221 / 5820 000) or by going directly to the theatre's box office (Theaterstraße 10).

- ***Unisport***

If you'd like to take part in a physical activity during the semester or semester break, then you will be happy to know about the programme offered by *Unisport*. This programme offers many sport and fitness classes that you can check out on the <https://www.hochschulsport.issw-hd.de/> website by clicking on the "Sportangebot" tab. Once the portal for the semester or the semester break opens, you can sign up for one or a few courses. The registration dates vary depending on the sport. That being said, as soon as you are able to register, you need to do so fairly quickly since some course's fill up within a few minutes.

- ***Montpellier-Haus***

The *Maison de Montpellier*, is an actual place that exemplifies the vibrant partnership between the city of Heidelberg and the city of Montpellier. Here, one can learn about, and participant in, a wide variety of activities devoted to Franco-German relations, such as meetups with fellow French and German speakers and presentations, readings

and concerts held by renowned French names. For more information, visit <https://montpellier-haus.de/>.

In addition, tandems, for instance, are organized on a regular basis, and are curated especially for students and young people. Pairing up with a German or a French speaker is a great way to meet someone new and practise your second or third language.