Master-Inform #0 2021

Inform

Magazine of the CS student body

fachschaft.info

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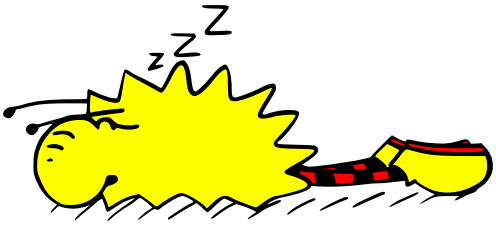

Editorial

Welcome to the Computer Science and Life Science Informatics program at the University of Bonn!

You probably have many questions regarding your degree, your course of study, life in Germany, especially in Bonn, how the University of Bonn works and how the Coronavirus pandemic affects all of this. But don't worry, we all have been there and therefore can hopefully answer some, if not all of your questions. Those questions that still remain after reading this can and will be answered by us, so do not hesitate to ask us anything you want!

The current pandemic is challenging for all of us, whether concerning our private lives or our course of study. You will probably not be on campus during the summer semester and will have online lectures instead. Not seeing other students will make definitely it harder to get to know one another. We know this far to well, so we will try to help you and have planned a few get-togethers to overcome the loneliness that's created through online lectures.

Regardless, we hope that you will have a good time while beginning your study and throughout working towards your degree. Keep in mind that you are never alone: You can (and should) communicate with your classmates and your lecturers. Additionally, you can always write us an email at `fs@fachschaft.info`. We are there to help you and answer your questions regarding your classes, regulations, social events and everything in between.

Your student body council

The Institute for Computer Sciences and B-IT Center at Friedrich-Hirzebruch-Allee 6-8

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Information on the Corona Virus

As you might have guessed, the COVID-19 pandemic has a large impact on the life at the university. Therefore, your first semester will be a bit different. Due to rapid changes in legislation and the situation overall, it is a bit difficult to predict how and when this will change again. Still, we try to make an educated guess and explain what might or will be different in your first semester and what you can expect.

Enrolling in a course

To enrol in a course you have to use eCampus (see p. 14). Most courses have a corresponding eCampus course that you can find in BASIS (see p. 17). If not, they usually specified a website that you can visit for further information.

Online lectures

Due to the current legislation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, it is impossible to give lectures in person. Instead, lectures, as well as exercises are taking place online. The university has established **Zoom** as the primary provider for online streaming. The company behind Zoom is being criticised due to its stance regarding data protection and privacy, but it is one of the few providers that can cope with the demand.

To use Zoom, you do not have to install it on your computer. Instead, you can use the web client in your browser. It does not work quite as well, but it certainly is enough for the lectures.

Some courses also might use different systems. The Institute for Computer Science has set up its own conference system, **BigBlueButton (BBB)**. You can log in to it with your **computer science account** to create your own rooms (see p. 14). To visit the lectures, you do not have to be signed in.

Most courses provide all information as well as the exercise sheets via their own website or eCampus.

Examination regulations

Some of the rules that we will explain later on are being overruled, either by the **Corona-Epidemie-Hochschulverordnung** (Corona Epidemic University Regulation) by the state Northrhine-Westphalia or the **Resolution of the Rectorate** that is based on the former. They relax many of the rules and provide the basis to ease some of the problems and hardships that students might have in the current situation. For example, failing an exam right now will not count towards your examination attempts.

Keeping up with the Regulations

As these rules change fairly often, it does not really make sense to explain them in detail; instead, if you have a question, you can write us an email. Also, we will try to gather all important changes in regulations and give this information to you. If you want to receive this information, you can

- subscribe to our email newsletter **fs-news**: `https://sympa.fachschaft.info/wws/subscribe/fs-news`,
- join our Discord server, and
- visit our website `https://fachschaft.info`.

Weblinks `https://www.fachschaft.info/en/links`

- `https://bbb.informatik.uni-bonn.de`
- `https://ecampus.uni-bonn.de`

The Student Body

Whats a “Student Body"?

The student body (Germ. Fachschaft) is actually two things: Firstly, all students enrolled in programs at the Institute of Computer Science and B-IT are the student body – so you are a part of it too! Secondly it is a group of students who are doing committee work in the name of the student body. By the way, *Fachschaft* in German does not only mean these two, it also refers to our office, which most students also call the "Fachschaft".

What Does the Student Body Do?

For starters, the magazine you are reading right now it part of our First-Semesters welcome program. We organize (online) meetups, game nights and parties so you can get to know your peers. We are there for you when you have a question or a problem regarding your program. Normally we have daily office hours where you can give us a visit and ask us anything straight away, but for the time being you can write us an e-mail at `fs@fachschaft.info`. We provide a bunch of services to you at our office:

Student Exam Protocols We have a growing collection of protocols from old exams that you can lend to have a look at. It is really handy to be able to know what kind of questions or tasks an exam might contain. The collection only exists because of students who provided their protocols to us, so it is up to you to expand it. If you and your friends each memorize a question and write it down after the exam, we will quickly have another protocol that we can provide for the next students who take the course.

Drinks At our office, we have a fridge we regularly refill with different types of *Fritz* lemonade and cola, as well as *Clubmate* and bottled fizzy water. You can (once the pandemic is over) get the beverage of your choice for a small donation. We also have coffee and tea which are free for everyone who brings a cup.

Stationery Like any normal office we have staplers, hole punchers, pens, scissors and an assortment of glues all of which you can lend if you are in a pinch. We also have a laminator and a binding machine for up to 200 pages that you can use. You will only have to pay the material costs.

Committee Work

Last but definitly not least, the student body represents you in many committees. We try to represent the voice of our student community. We fight for good conditions regarding the exam regulations at the Examination Board, have a say in which new professors are appointed to the Institute at the Faculty Advisory Committee on Tenure and we even decide who gets funds for their teaching at the Committee for the Improvement of Quality of Teaching. If you are interested to be a part of these committees, let us know!

Student body sound cool? Wanna help? Come to our weekly meeting where we discuss current topics and problems we want to solve. You don’t have to participate right away, you can just listen if you want to. The link to our online-meeting-room can be found on our website.

Your Student Body Representatives

Lara, LSI

Lennart, CS

Gemma, LSI

Benedikt, CS

The Institute of Computer Science

The Institute of Computer Science is organized in six departments. Each of them is led by a professor and has a rough research focus. Within each department there are smaller research groups, each again led by a professor and more specialized on a particular part of the field (see table below).

If you are studying in the Master of Computer Science program, in order to start a Master Thesis you will have to find a supervisor from the research group that is most closely related to your topic. It is good to familiarize yourself with the different research groups early on, so you can try to focus your choice of lectures, seminars and labs on the department that you are the most interested in.

Sometimes there is the chance to be hired as a student assistant (WHF, wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft) by a department of the institute, usually as tutor for exercise groups or as programmer. The payment is usually 11 € per hour, which is not as much as for most other programmer jobs, in exchange your workplace is close by and you gain practical experience related to your studies. Besides the employer will be more considerate about your studies, so you can adjust your work hours to your lecture schedule and often even take a break during exams to then catch up on that work in the semester break.

Sections and Research Groups

Computer Science I	Prof. Dr. Petra Mutzel	Computational Analytics
Computer Science II	Prof. Dr. Reinhard Klein	Computer Graphics
Visual Computing	Prof. Dr. Matthias B. Hullin	Digital Material Appearance
	Prof. Dr. Thomas Schultz	Visualization and Medical Image Analysis
	Prof. Dr. Andreas Weber	Multimedia, Simulation and Virtual Reality
	Dr. Eduard Zell	4D Reconstruction
Computer Science III	Prof. Dr. Stefan Wrobel	Data Analysis, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence
Information Systems and	Prof. (em.) Dr. Armin B. Cremers	Artificial Intelligence Foundations
Artificial Intelligence	Prof. Dr. Jürgen Gall	Computer Vision
	Prof. Dr. Elena Demidova	Data Science and Intelligent Systems
	Prof. Dr. Rainer Manthey	Intelligent Databases
	Prof. Dr. Jens Lehmann	Smart Data Analytics
Computer Science IV	Prof. Dr. Peter Martini	Communication Systems
Security and	Prof. Dr. Michael Meier	IT Security
Networked Systems	Prof. Dr. Matthew Smith	Usable Security And Privacy
	Prof. Dr. Frank Kurth	Audio Signal Processing
	Priv.-Doz. Dr. Wolfgang Koch	Sensor Data and Information Fusion
	Priv.-Doz. Dr. Volker Steinhage	Intelligent Vision Systems
	Christoph Strelen	Operating Systems and Stochastic Modelling
Computer Science V	Prof. Dr. Heiko Röglin	Theoretical Computer Science
Theoretical Computer Science	Senior Prof. Dr. Marek Karpinski	Efficient Algorithms, Combinatorial Optimization and Complexity
	Prof. Dr. Anne Driemel	Computational Geometry
	Prof. Dr. Thomas Kesselheim	Theoretical Computer Science
Computer Science VI	Prof. Dr. Sven Behnke	Autonomous Intelligent Systems
Intelligente Systeme	Prof. Dr. Maren Bennewitz	Humanoid Robots Lab
und Robotik	Prof. Dr. Joachim Anlauf	Technical Computer Science
	Dr. Dieter Engbring	Didactics of Computer Science

Course of Study

In your masters degree you will have four different kinds of modules. Those modules are lectures, seminars, labs and your master thesis.

Lectures

Lectures usually take place in an auditorium. Smaller lectures may also be given in seminar rooms.

They usually work like this: The lecturer stands in the front and talks. The students mostly listen, but may (and should!) ask questions at any time. This is important, because if you can not follow what the lecturer is telling you, listening is rather pointless. Don't worry about embarrassing yourself: Chances are that if you don't understand it, there most probably are other students who don't understand it aswell, but are to shy to ask.

The lectures also prepare you for the exercise sheets. Usually you have an exercise sheet in each lecture every week, though some lectures might have larger ones every other week or even fewer. They are accompanied by exercise groups, which also usually will be held weekly. Regular attendance in both the lectures and the exercises is highly recommended, though there are no mandatory attendance rules for either.

In most lectures you have to earn at least 50 % of the points of the exercises in order to be admitted to the exams. The exact conditions are published by the examination office before the first lecture. Many lectures also allow you to complete the exercises in groups of two or three students. Completing these exercises prepare you for the exam at the end of the semester, but are not relevant to your grade; at most, they may give you bonus points in your exam. We do not hold midterm exams.

Seminars

Seminars will advance your knowledge of scientific work. The goal is to learn how to research a specific topic, how to then write it up in a paper and give a presentation. You must have at least one seminar in your course emphasis area or main track and can at most have ten credit points of seminars. In practice, this means that you can have at most two seminars worth four credit points each, totalling eight at most.

The seminars are offered in many different areas of research. You should choose one that you find interesting and where you think that you could write a masters thesis about. Another part of the seminar may be reviewing and critiqueing other students' papers, and usually you also listen to the other students' presentations, similar to a small conference.

Labs

Whereas the seminars teach you the theoretical aspects of scientific work, labs will teach you the practical part. Usually over the course of one semester, either alone or in a small group you will try to implement a small project. This comprises researching related projects, deciding on what you want to do, planning the implementation, executing it and, finally, writing a paper as well as giving a presentation, similar to your seminar.

Due to implementing a project being more time consuming than just theoretical research, each lab is worth nine credit points. You also have to have one lab in your main track and can at most have two labs, bringing you to a total of 18 credit points.

Master's Thesis

Usually in your last semester, you start working on your master's thesis. As the high number of credit points suggest, the amount of work alone is enough to fill a whole semester. Having another lecture while working on your thesis may work for you, but you should really try to reduce the number of other modules besides your thesis as much as possible, so try to complete all other parts of your degree before the last semester.

During the course of your study, you will probably find out what field of research interests you the most. You should have done most of your lectures, and you also must have completed a seminar as well as a lab in this field. This also means that you usually have close contact to the work group that is most closely related to the topics that are interesting to you. In order to start a thesis, you have to find a supervisor in this work group. They will be your main contact, and working closely together with them will certainly make it easier and will probably result in a better grade.

After you have worked out the exact topic of your thesis, your supervisor will submit it to the examination office. The topic is usually accepted, giving you the day on which your time starts and, thereby, the end date of your thesis. Now you may start your work on the thesis.

The exact procedure of your thesis will vary due to your topic, the work group and your own choices. If you have questions, you should contact your supervisor. They all have done their own theses and usually are involved in active research, so they can tell you what they have experienced and how you should proceed.

After submitting your thesis and giving your final presentation, if you have completed all the needed modules, have 120 credit points and have passed your thesis, you are finished! You can now call yourself a ”Master of Science”! Congratulations!

Reading all this, it may seem as if the goal, your degree, is so far out of reach. But you should not be afraid; every great change comes in small steps. And during your journey towards this goal, we will support and help you, should you ever have problems or questions!

Entrance to the Institute for Computer Sciences at Friedrich-Hirzebruch-Allee 8
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The NAO robots of department IV in front of the institute
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Course of Studies: Computer Sciences

As most of you are probably already familiar with, the M.Sc. Computer Science program is comprised of modules you need to pass in order to get your degree. With each module, you will earn a certain amount of credit points. In order to earn your master's degree, you will have to earn 120 credit points. Small lectures are worth six credit points, large lectures are worth nine. through each lab you will be able to receive nine credit points, seminars are worth four credit points, and your master thesis is worth 30+2 credit points.

Each credit point should be equal to 30 hours of work. This varies with each student, but it should give you a rough estimate of the time each course should take up in you schedule. The module handbook specifies how much of this time is spent in attendance and how much time you spend on your own.

Each semester, you are encouraged to earn around 30 credit points; this way, you would earn 120 credit points in four semesters, which is the recommended time of study. Both the four years as well as the 30 credit points per semester are only recommendations. You can earn as much or little credit points as you want, but of course earning fewer credit points than recommended will increase your study time.

Each module finishes with some form of exam. For lectures, this usually takes the form of a written or oral exam. Seminars and labs finish with a paper as well as a presentation, both of which are graded. The thesis also closes with a presentation that is worth 2 credit points; the other 30 credit points are awarded for your thesis.

Tracks

Now you know: To get your masters degree, you will need to collect 120 credit points. Your thesis and corresponding seminar will grant you 32 CP, the mandatory lab and seminar will add 9 and 4 CP. This leaves 75 CP to be made in whichever courses you find interesting. But wait! There are some rules on how to choose. The course selection of the Computer Science program is divided in four **tracks**: the Algorithmics track, the Graphic, Vision and Audio track, the Information an Communication Management track and the Intelligent Systems track. Each track offers a variety of lectures, labs and seminars that fit the topic. During your degree, you will have to choose a **main track**. Your thesis, at least one lab and one seminar as well as a minimum of 18 additional CP have to come from your main track. The rest of your credit points can come from any of the other tracks. You can take a look at some examples of courses of study on page 11.

How to Study

Here at the Institute of Computer Science, you don't have to sign up for lectures to attend them. You can simply attend the first lecture and get all necessary information there. The lecturer will tell you the modalities of the lecture, such as how to enroll in exercise groups, how to access the course materials and what you have to do in order to be admitted to the exam. You can find the lectures that are held each semester by looking into the course catalog in BASIS (p. 17).

For labs and seminars you usually have to apply before the start of the semester. Every working group handles this a bit differently, so take a look at the BASIS entry to find out how to apply. If there's no entry in BASIS, don't be afraid to ask the work group.

Exam Application

To be able to take the exams at the end of the term, you will have to fulfill the requirements published by the examination office and you have to apply for the exams on BASIS, our digital platform for course overview and exam application.

The applications are usually opened around mid-semester. You can apply for as many or as few exams as you like and you can step down from an exam until one week before without any explanations needed. Due to the nature of labs and seminars, you can only step down from them until you are assigned a topic.

Every semester, two exams are offered for every module. If you pass the first one, you can use the second one for your improvement-exam (see below), but else, you do not have to take it. If you did not pass or did not attend the first one due to sickness or other reasons, you can go to the second one. Both exams are linked together, you can not register for the second one individually, even if you know you will not take the first one.

It is possible to get a disadvantage compensation for written exams (e.g. for dyslexia) in form of a time extension. You can check with the examination office if you are eligible. If you fall sick and can't take an exam, you have to get a doctor's note saying that you are inable to take the exam and hand it

in within three days to the examination office. With that you will not lose an attempt for the exam.

You Shall (not) pass!?

You took your written exam, you have a great feeling about it, but then BASIS shows a grade you weren't expecting. Don't worry, there are things you can do. Whether you failed or pass, the first thing you should do is go to the post-exam review. There you can have a look at you exam, see where you went wrong and ask the tutors and lecturer about it. Sometimes you can even find an error in the correction and get the points that are due to you. Most of the time, the lecturer will organize a date for everyone, but if you can't make it, don't hesitate to ask for a different date. If the lecturer does not organize a central date and also does not want to schedule individually with you, you can always get you post-exam review at the examination office.

Failed Exam Alright, you know where you went wrong, but the exam is still failed. If you failed the first, you can take the second exam without applying again. And even if you fail that one too: Each lecture can be repeated 3 times until you terminally fail it. This means that you can take each exam 6 times. And *even if* you fail something 6 times, that doesn't mean the end of the program for you. It does mean you can't pass this course anymore, but as long as there are enough other courses to finish your degree, you can continue. Even labs and seminars can be taken up to three times before terminally failing.

Bad Grade You passed your exam with a grade that you aren't happy with and the post-exam review brought insight, but no missing points. No problem, you can fix that! For three of the courses you pass in you first two semesters, you can apply for an improvement-exam. You have up until three months before the next exam of this course to apply. If you passed the first date and would like to improve in the second, you can apply until two weeks after you have got your grade. To apply for improvement, you have to fill out a form by the examination office. The form can be found on the institute's website. Note that you can only improve grades of written or oral exams. Labs, seminars and the thesis cannot be improved.

With this information, you should be able to get through your exams. A warning at the end: If you are caught cheating in an exam, you automatically fail it. Depending on the severity of you cheating, you might even be exmatriculated and have to pay a fine of up to 50 000 €, so don't cheat.

Nils from department IV working with a robot

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Course of Studies: Examples

Since the Computer Science program doesn't have any mandatory courses and no specific order in which to take the elective courses, we collected some real life examples of courses of study from real students. These are by no means the "right" way to study, they should only illustrate what a degree here in Bonn could look like. Some of them aren't complete since the students are still working towards their degree.

To safe some space, we colour-coded the tracks: Algorithmics, Graphic, Vision and Audio, Information an Communication Management and Intelligent Systems.

Example 1: Algorithmics

Technical Neural Networks	6 CP
Scientific Communication and Writing	4 CP
Intelligent Information Systems	9 CP
Foundations of Graphics	6 CP
Cryptography	9 CP
Artificial Life	6 CP
Computer Animation	9 CP
Algorithmic Game Theory	9 CP
Discrete and Computational Geometry	9 CP
Seminar Algorithmic Game Theory	4 CP
Advanced Algorithms	9 CP
Lab Advanced Algorithms	9 CP
Masterarbeit	32 CP

Example 2: Algorithmics

Technical Neural Nets	6 CP
Knowledge Graph Analysis	6 CP
Mobile Communication	6 CP
Algorithmic Game Theory	9 CP
Usable Security and Privacy	6 CP
Dynamically Reconfigurable Systems	6 CP
Spanish B2.1	
Erasmus	
Cryptography	9 CP
Program Analysis and Binary Exploitation	6 CP
Pattern Recognition (1)	9 CP
Spanish C1.1	

Example 3: Computer Graphic and Audio

Foundations of Graphics	6 CP
Technical Neural Nets	6 CP
Artificial Life	6 CP
Game AI	9 CP
Advanced Topics in Computer Graphics 1	9 CP
Cryptography	9 CP
Advanced Topics in Computer Graphics 2	9 CP
Deep Learning for Visual Recognition	6 CP
Advanced Deep Learning for Graphics	6 CP
Lab	9 CP
Seminar	4 CP
Thesis	32 CP

Example 4: Computer Graphic and Audio

Computer Vision I	9 CP
Discrete and Computational Geometry	9 CP
Foundations of Graphics	6 CP
Deep learning for Visual Recognistion	6 CP
Artificial Life	6 CP
Advanced Topics in Computer Graphics I	9 CP
Game AI	9 CP
Computer Vision II	6 CP
Advanced Topics in Computer Graphics II	9 CP
Introduction to Sensor Data Fusion	6 CP
Lab	9 CP
Seminar	4 CP
Thesis	32 CP

Example 5: Intelligent Systems

Cryptography	9 CP
Learning from Non-Standard Data	6 CP
High Performance Networking	6 CP
Intelligent Learning and Analysis Systems: Machine Learning	6 CP
Recognised Module (Scientific Visualization)	9 CP
Intelligent Information Systems	6 CP
Computer Animation	9 CP
Network Security	6 CP
Usable Security and Privacy	6 CP
Temporal Information Systems	6 CP
Artificial Life	6 CP
Humanoid Robotics	6 CP
Physics-based Modelling	6 CP
Seminar Humanoid Robots	4 CP
Lab Sensor Data Interpretation	9 CP
Technical Neural Nets	6 CP
Advanced Logic Programming	6 CP
Thesis	32 CP

Example 6: Information an Communication Management

Foundations of Audio Signal Processing	6 CP
Intelligent Information Systems	6 CP
Program Analysis and Binary Exploitation	6 CP
Network Security	6 CP
Mobile Communication	6 CP
Lab IT Security	9 CP
Seminar Selected Topics in IT Security	4 CP
Cryptography	9 CP
Introduction to Sensor Data Fusion	6 CP
Technical Neural Nets	6 CP
Pattern Recognition (2)	6 CP
Thesis	32 CP

Example 7: Information an Communication Management

Usable Security and Privacy	6 CP
Scientific Communication and Writing	4 CP
Mobile Communication	6 CP
IT Security	6 CP
Temporal Information Systems	6 CP
Principles of Distributed Systems	6 CP
Intelligent Information Systems	6 CP
Lab IT Security	9 CP
Computer Animation	9 CP
Network Security	6 CP
Seminar Selected Topics in IT Security	4 CP
Physics-based Modelling	6 CP
Cognitive Robotics	6 CP
Knowledge Graph Analysis	6 CP
Thesis	32 CP

Master of Life Science Informatics

The M.Sc. Life Science Informatics is affiliated with the Bonn-Aachen International Center for Information Technology. Life Science Informatics is offered jointly by the University of Bonn and RWTH Aachen in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institutes at Sankt Augustin near Bonn. The program combines the natural sciences with computer science and is taught in English.

Lectures

There is a catalog of compulsory subjects that must be completed. From a selection of elective subjects, it must also be possible to accumulate a certain number of credit points over the entire course of study. Unlike other degree programs, the university provides a timetable for each semester, which includes the suggested division of subjects.

1. Semester

Mathematics for Life Scientists	3 CP
Computer Science for Life Scientists	9 CP
Bioinformatics I	3 CP
Biological Databases	6 CP
Biology and Chemistry	7 CP
LSI Tutorial (lab, optional)	6 CP

The LSI Tutorial is a programming tutorial that is meant to help students from a background in natural sciences to improve their programming skills. It starts at a very basic level and accompanies the Computer Science Lecture.

2. Semester

Visual Computing in the Life Sciences	6 CP
Molecular Modeling and Drug Design	6 CP
Biomedical Data Science and AI	6 CP
Programming Lab I	8 CP
Scientific Presentation	4 CP
Introduction to Machine Learning Tutorial (optional)	6 CP
Advanced Methods in Biomedical Data Science and AI (optional)	4 CP
Machine Learning Hands-on (optional, after the regular lecture period)	4 CP

3. Semester

Programming Lab II	8 CP
Knowledge Discovery	6 CP
optional courses from the module catalog	18 CP

4. Semester

Master thesis	30 CP

Another difference to other degrees lies in the administration of the course. Most lectures aren't available on e-campus and the registration for exams and lectures is done paper-based. Information is provided by the LSI exam office in time, so don't worry about that!

Due to the small group size, the mentoring is much more intensive than in degrees with 100 or 150 students!

The program's website provides a lot of information regarding the study course and administrative information as well (`https://www.b-it-center.de/b-it-programmes/msc-in-life-science-informatics/description`).

Entrance to B-IT Center at Friedrich-Hirzebruch-Allee 6

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Tools and IT-Services

Two different accounts

Upon enrollment you have received a general account from the university that all students get. In your semester documents you can find your **Uni-ID**, which will look a bit like this: „s6xyabcd“ and a random initial password. To activate this account you have to enter these at $GOsa^2$ (`https://gosa.gosa.uni-bonn.de`). There you will also be able to change your password. Your Uni-ID will be your login for all centralized services, like BASIS (see page 17) and eCampus (see below). With this account you can manage your studies in general.

On top of that, you get a CS account, which is needed for VPN (see below) and computer pools (also called CIP-Pools, see next page). To apply for one you have to follow the instructions here `https://gsg.informatik.uni-bonn.de/doku.php?id=en:accounts:students:manage`. With this account you get access to a few services specific to computer science.

Your E-Mail-adress

Your uni-account is linked with an e-mail account. The adress is *s6xyabcd@uni-bonn.de* with your uni-ID respectively. We suggest checking this inbox frequently, as you will receive official information from the uni there. To read your mail in a browser go to `https://mail.uni-bonn.de/`.

eCampus

The university hosts a central eLearning platform called eCampus, where lecturers can upload all relevant data for their courses, including slides, exercise sheets, etc. During the pandemic the systems use has increased more and more. Often you will even hand in your finished exercise sheets through uploads onto the eCampus system.

Many CS lecturers prefer using their own homepage instead of eCampus. In these cases you will then be able to either find a link to their page in the eCampus course or it will be provided during the first lecture. **Important**: For many of those sites, slide downloads will be password secured. Be sure to either take note of that password during the first lecture or get it from fellow students at the beginning of the semester.

TVS - exercise assigning system

A lot of lecturers at CS use TVS, a system that helps assigning students to excercise groups. At `https://tvs.cs.uni-bonn.de` you can register using your matriculation number and then pick your preferences for the exercise timeslots (seperately for each course). The system will automatically create a distribution, meeting as many preferences as it can, while making sure you won't get the same time slot for two different courses. In some courses you might be able to form small groups in advance that share the same preferences and will be assigned together. This way you can assure you and your study group will be in the same exercise group.

Internet access: WLAN here, WLAN there

Everyone with a laptop, smartphone or other mobile device might ask themselves: How can I access the web on campus?

First you will of course need a WLAN (or Wi-Fi) connection. Depending on exact location, the networks have different names: bonnet, bonnet-stw, eduroam, eduroam-stw, eduroam-cs and eduroam-math are few of the common ones.

Some of these are open, unencrypted access points, which everyone is allowed to connect to. However, this does not automatically give you an internet connection. For that, you will need a VPN client. (see next section)

An exception to that are the eduroam networks. These are encrypted with WPA Enterprise. To connect to them you have to log in with your uni account, but do not need a VPN client. (see page 18)

VPN . . . if it's working

At the uni Bonn you need VPN (Virtual Private Network) for two different things:

- Accessing the internet via WLAN
- Accessing the universitys intranet from home

What makes it a bit confusing is that the uni and the CS institute are (again) using two different VPN systems. In most cases it should not matter which of the two you are using, unless trying to access information specifically for CS only. If you are having trouble with the VPN for web access we recommend trying the eduroam WLAN (see page 18) instead.

Uni-VPN: The uni uses a system by Cisco, on which there are various opinions. Some students connect through it without any problems, while others experience frequent errors and suddenly lost connections. Another issue is that there is no Cisco client available for some systems (e.g. many smartphones).

The website of the HRZ (link box below) offers client downloads for Windows, Mac OS and Linux. There you will also find detailled tutorials for each OS. Once the client is installed, enter either `https://unibn-vpn.uni-bonn.de` if you want to access the intranet from home or `https://unibn-wlan.uni-bonn.de` if you want to use it for WLAN access.

CS-VPN: The institute of computer science uses the open source system OpenVPN. To access the institute's intranet via OpenVPN, you require a profile, or certificate, which can be requested and downloaded via the b-it / IoCS User Management Interface. To authenticate, you will need to use your CS username and password. The GSG website offers step-by-step instructions for different OS here: `https://gsg.informatik.uni-bonn.de/doku.php?id=de:vpn`

SSH Tunnel

When you don't need a full VPN, but only want to access a few intranet services real quick, you might find SSH (Secure Shell) useful. SSH is a usually text-based tool with which you can execute command line expressions on an external server instead of your own computer.

For that, you will need your CS account and the name of the server: `login.informatik.uni-bonn.de` (Alias: `login.cs.uni-bonn.de` und `zeus.informatik.uni-bonn.de`, all redirect to the same server)

SSH for Linux & MacOS Many UNIX based distributions have an SSH client preinstalled. If not, it can be easily added via the package manager.

Now, you can use the command line argument `ssh [username]@[server]` to establish a connection. Type the name of your CS account as `[username]` and one of the adresses mentioned above as `[server]`. Following that, you will be asked for your password.

To establish a so called tunnel with ssh and access intranet sites via your browser, you have to execute the command `ssh -D8888 [server]`, then continue with step *Browser Settings* below.

SSH for Windows Windows 10 often has a SSH client preinstalled (in that case use the instructions for Linux and MacOS above). If it isn't or you are using a different version of Windows, you can use the open source tools PuTTY, which can be downloaded here: `https://www.chiark.greenend.org.uk/~sgtatham/putty/latest.html` In PuTTY, enter one of the adresses mentioned above as *Host Name*. When asked for a username or password, use those of your CS account.

To establish a so called tunnel with ssh and access intranet sites via your browser, you have to:

1. Open PuTTY
2. Again, use one of the adresses mentioned above as *Host Name*
3. Navigate to *Connection* → *SSH* → *Tunnels* via the menu on the left
4. Pick the option *Dynamic* put 8888 in the field *Source Port*
5. Click *Add*
6. Click *Open*

Browser Settings This step is the same for command line and PuTTY. After establishing a tunnel, open the settings of your browser and search for *Proxy* (the exact names of settings may vary depending on your browser). There you have to switch *Manual proxy configuration*, set it to *SOCKS Host* with version *SOCKS v5* and enter `localhost:8888` (If your browser has two fields for that, enter only `8888` into the one that says *Port* and only `localhost` into the other).

Computer pools

The institute for computer science has a bunch of CIP-Pools. Accessible for students are two Windows pools and two Linux pools in the basement of the computer science building (see map, page 29). To log in to the computers there, use your CS account.

To enter the CIP-Pools you will need a code to type in at the door.

The pools also offer a scanner and printer. Per month, you get 50 pages of print credit added to your balance. If you don't use them all they stack for the next month, up to a maximum of 300 pages. As an alternative you can get a prepaid printer card for the HRZ and libraries.

Besides the pools at the computer science building, the HRZ at Wegelerstraße 6 and the libraries offer some public computer workstations as well, you can log into those using your Uni-ID.

Inform #0

Free Microsoft-Software

With your Uni-ID you also gain access to the license program Azure Dev Tools for Teaching. Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint are not included, but you can get e.g. Windows 10 or Visual Studio through this. It is acessible at `https://aka.ms/devtoolsforteaching`.

Books and journals online

The Institute has a subscription for the IEEE Copmuter Society Digital Library and ACM Digital Library, that can be retrieved online. This can be useful when you are required to read academic articles for seminars.

On top of that, the ULB library has a couple more subscriptions from the computer science field. Those are often also available in digital form.

Please note that the access is IP secured and you have to either be on campus or use a VPN (see previous page).

Weblinks `https://www.fachschaft.info/en/links`

- `https://ecampus.uni-bonn.de`
- `https://tvs.cs.uni-bonn.de`
- `https://mail.uni-bonn.de`
- `https://www.hrz.uni-bonn.de/en`
- `https://www.informatik.uni-bonn.de/en/institute/library`

Useful Tools

IDE There are a lot different IDEs and opinions on IDEs. There is no real right or wrong here and the choice highly depends on the programming language and project at hand. Nonetheless, here are a few recommendations:
For Java you might choose the Community Edition of *IntelliJ IDEA* (`www.jetbrains.com/idea/`) by JetBrains (which is also OpenSource).
If you are searching for a more lightweight solution or don't work with Java, you should take a look at *Visual Studio Code* (`code.visualstudio.com/`) or the variant without Telemetry, *VsCodium* (`github.com/VSCodium/vscodium`). This editor offers a large library of extensions, which can be added as required and in this way provides support for almost every programming language.
For the aspiring Linux admin though, *vim* (`www.vim.org/`) or *emacs* (`www.gnu.org/software/emacs/`) should also be known terminal editors.
LaTeX is a well known typesetting engine, an alternative to Microsoft Word or LibreOffice Writer. LaTeX is especially popular for writing academic documents, as it is very versatile and provides a good formula editing system. Most students will encounter it sooner or later, so it might be worthwhile checking it out. By the way: This magazine was also made using LaTeX.
GNU/Linux is used a lot at university, so it's good for Windows users to familiarize themselves with the system. A good start is the distribution Ubuntu, which is especially suitable for beginners. This is also the one used in the Linux pools. Those who don't want to just give up on Windows can set up a Virtual Machine instead, e.g. with *Virtual Box* (`www.virtualbox.org/`).

BASIS – Planer for your studies

BASIS (`https://www.basis.uni-bonn.de`) is a website that is important for all students. It does not only include the course overview, but is also used to apply for exams and view the results. Let's take a closer look at it! To sign into BASIS, use your Uni-ID. Page 14 shows you where to find and how to activate it.

The institute has provided a short guide on how to register for the exams. You can find it under `https://www.informatik.uni-bonn.de/en/for-students/registering-exams-in-basis`.

Overview of functions

After signing in, you will be taken to "My Functions". Most of them are self-explanatory. Nonetheless, here is a quick explanation:

General Administration Here you can change your contact information. The changes will be reported to the registrars office and all future study reports and papers will be sent to this adress. You can also view your done and due payments to the university via this tab.

Administration of study Through this you can download study reports and also access your payment overview (links to the same page as above).

Schedules A link to your schedule that is automatically generated from the courses you preselect.

My Curricula Timetable A schedule that shows all courses that are available to you in the current semester.

Registration/Unregistration of Lectures Here you can apply for courses where the number of participants is limited. At computer science we have a different system for this, so you will probably not need it.

My Lectures An overview of your courses.

My Lectures (PDF) Generates a pdf file with the courses you took so far. Many computer science lectures do not use this system though.

Apply for exams Later in the semester you will be able to apply for exams through this panel. The exact date for application varies from semester to semester and can be found at `https://www.informatik.uni-bonn.de/en/for-students`. You can also step down from the exam here.

Info on Exams (internships) A list of all exams you signed up for, as well as the status of your application. You should check this after registering for your exams to see if everything worked, and also at the end of the lecture period to make sure you were admitted to all of your exams. If something seems off to you, talk to your lecturer or the examination office.

Transcript of Records After the exams you will find your score with all exam attempts and their results here. In addition to that, you can view your credit points and grade average. If needed you can export these into a pdf file.

How to build your own schedule

To get information concerning courses available for the next semester, go to the term picker in the top right of BASIS. Choose the upcoming semester, then go to the Course Overview → All Lectures and navigate to your respective program (Informatik, Life Science Informatics und Media Informatics → Life Science Informatics OR Master Computer Science (→ [your track])). There you will find a list with all available modules for that semester.

BASIS has a built-in tool to create your schedule, but it does not work very well, so we usually advise to use pen and paper or spreadsheets instead.

Questions regarding BASIS

If you have questions regarding BASIS, you can of course always ask us. In many cases, we will however refer you to the technical contact for BASIS at pos@informatik.uni-bonn.de, so you can also contact them directly. Do not use the contact form within BASIS!

eduroam

eduroam

(Education Roaming) was originially a European, now world-wide initiative. Eduroam gives staff and students of participating universities and organisations internet access via WLAN at all of these facilities, using their personal username and password or a personal X.509-user-certificate from a valid PKI.

Where can I use it?

You can connect to the eduroam WLAN access points at all participating facilities. Those usually have the network name (ESSID) "eduroam" or contain that word and a specification, like “eduroam-cs“ at the CS building or “eduroam-stw” for those hosted by the student administration.

How does it work?

Refer to the screenshot on the right, to see the how the settings for your eduroam connection should look. Replace the field ”identity“ with your own “Uni-ID@uni-bonn.de”. The password (if prompted) is the same as for your Uni-ID.

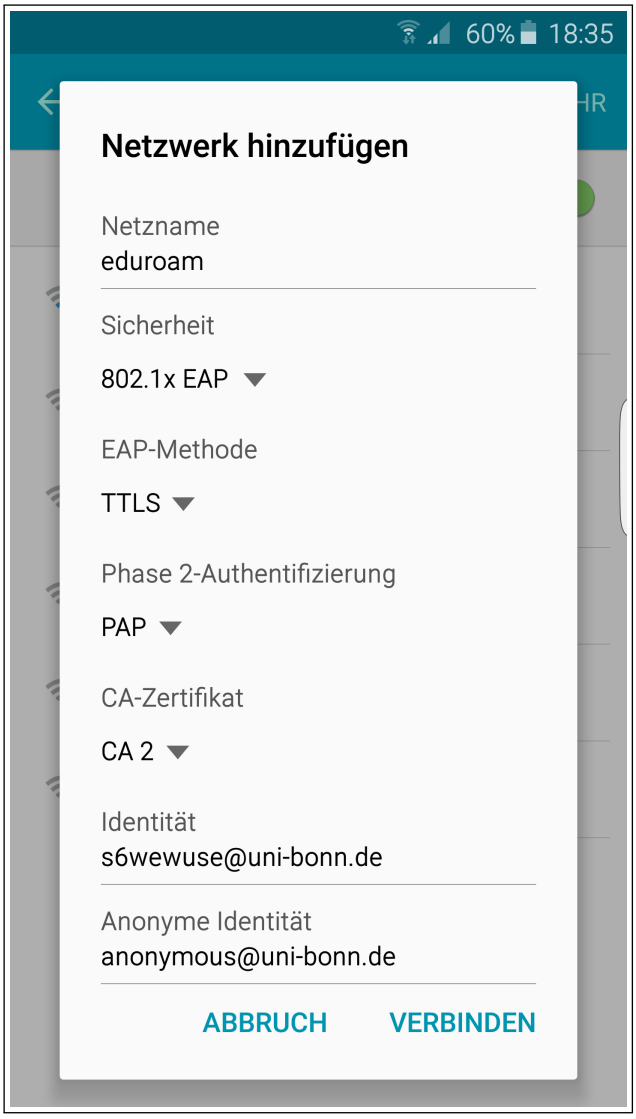
The certificate named “CA 2” as seen in the screenshot is officially called “T-TeleSec GlobalRoot Class 2” and is preinstalled on a lot of Linux-based distributions. If you don’t have the certificate, you can download it here: `https://www.pki.dfn.de/wurzelzertifikate/globalroot2/`

For some systems, the manual setup can be substituted by the eduroam Configuration Assistant Tool (CAT) available here: `https://cat.eduroam.org/`

What if it doesn’t work?

In case that you are having trouble setting up your eduroam access, you can find more detailed instructions and useful tips on the HRZ website: `https://www.hrz.uni-bonn.de/en/services/internet-and-network-access/instructions`

Please also note that the setup varies between desktop and mobile, as well as between different operating systems.



sciebo - the campus cloud

University Cloud Storage

Sciebo (from SCIEnce and BOx) is a non-commercial cloud storage service (similar to Dropbox or Google Drive) for research, studying and teaching. It is operated by universities and receives funds from the NRW government, with an operators guarantee that there is no commercial interests. With locations in NRW exclusively, sciebo is subject to the strict German directives on data protection and data security.

Every student and staff member of the participating universities receives 30 GB storage space. You can share your data with other sciebo users or via a link with external people.

Create a sciebo account

To create a sciebo account, go to `sciebo.de` and register by picking "Universität Bonn" as your organisation and registering with your uni mail adress (s6xyabcd@uni-bonn.de) and a password of your choice. The password can (and should) differ from the one for your Uni-ID.

The account has to be renewed every year, you will receive an e-mail asking you to confirm you still study at Uni Bonn.

Using sciebo

There are multiple ways to use sciebo:

Webinterface The easiest way to use sciebo is via your browser. Sciebo offers a web interface, which you can find at `uni-bonn.sciebo.de`. Just log in with the account you just created.

sciebo via a client For many operating systems you can download a sciebo client. Because sciebo is based on ownCloud, all ownCloud clients will work for sciebo as well and might offer more features than sciebo clients. In addition to that, sciebo can be embedded as a network drive via WebDAV.

Sharing files or folders with others

If you are using sciebo in a browser you can go to fileview and click on the symbol <. There's two options: Either you share the file with a specific Uni-ID (the other must have a sciebo account) or via a link. In that case the other does not need a sciebo account, everyone with the link will be able to access the file(s). Don't worry though, you can put a password and/or expiry date on the link.

Editing documents in browser

When using sciebo in browser you can edit documents, presentations or spreadsheets from Microsoft Office or Libre Office directly in browser. In theory you can also work simultaneously with other users in this way, but this is more a "nice to have" than a core feature of sciebo and the features for this are rather minimalistic. The linkbox on this page contains a link to a more detailed tutorial from sciebo, that sums up the features of the webeditor and explains more about simultaneous editing. For projects where you need to work in real-time with you fellow students on a file we recommend using products specialized for that instead, the sciebo editor is just not technically mature enough yet.

Weblinks `https://www.fachschaft.info/en/links`

- `https://sciebo.de/en/`
- `https://www.sciebo.de/en/help/`
- `https://www.sciebo.de/en/manual/editor_en.html`
- `https://uni-bonn.sciebo.de/`

Student Transit Ticket

Your student ID card is also a transit ticket for the VRS area as well as all of NRW. Your ticket is much cheaper than if you would buy one by yourself, due to all students receiving one. It still makes up most of your social dues. Even if you do not intend to use it, you have to pay for it, but in case you have trouble paying for it or due to special circumstances, you may be eligible for a refund.

What can I do with it?

In general, you can use all trains, trams, subways and busses in NRW. Exempt are long-distance trains of the categories ICE (InterCityExpress), IC (InterCity), EC (EuroCity), FLX (FlixTrain) or Thalys, for example. You also may not use the first class, not even by paying an additional fee.

If you want to get to or from the airport Cologne Bonn Airport (CGN), you can take the lightrail, but this is not the fastest way. You can also take the SB60 (Schnellbus, express bus), but this costs an additional fee of 3.40 €.

Inside the VRS area, which is depicted on top, but only there and not in the whole of NRW, you have additional benefits. Every weekday between 19:00 and 03:00 (7 p.m. and 3 a.m.) as well as during the weekend and public holidays, you can take

- one additional grownup,
- up to three kids between 6 and 14 years and
- one bicycle, if there is enough space.

Kids below the age of six always can be brought free of charge.

How far can I go?

The VRS area with the additional benefits covers Cologne, Bonn, Leverkusen as well as the administrative districts Euskirchen, Rhein-Erft-Kreis, Rheinisch-Bergischer Kreis, Oberbergischer Kreis as well as the Rhein-Sieg-Kreis. A small area within Rhineland-Palatinate also lies within the VRS area.

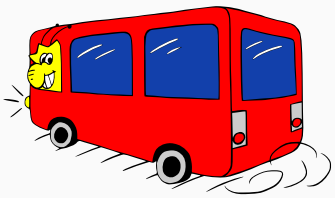
Without the additional benefits, you can use your ticket within all of Northrhine-Westphalia, as well as a few additional lines that go over the borders to Lower Saxony, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate.

What is the mobility guarantee ("Mobilitätsgarantie")?

In public transit in NRW you have the mobility guarantee. This means that, if you are at your starting station and over the course of 20 minutes starting at the planned departure time nothing can get you to your planned destination (the next hop, so only direct connections count), you can either get the costs of a taxi or of a long-distance train refunded. You have to pay in advance and can then hand in an application for the refund within two weeks. The applications must contain a receipt, so keep that in mind. Additional information as well as the forms are available here (in German): `https://www.mobil.nrw/service/mobigarantie.html`.

Riding Busses as Computer Scientist 101

Most of your lectures and exercises will take place on the Campus Poppelsdorf.
At the station "Kaufmannstr.", lines 604 to 607 stop, at the station "Am Botanischen Garten" lines 601, 602 and 603 stop. All seven lines are main lines that run every 20 minutes. Into the city, they all go via the central station (Bonn Hauptbahnhof/Bonn Hbf); out of the city, they split up.
At the station "Nußallee" you can take line 631, that also stops at both other stations. This (like all bus lines in Bonn that start with 63) is a tangential line that does not stop at the central station. It only runs every half hour and is a bit unreliable due to its length, but it connects the Campus Poppelsdorf with the Campus Endenich.
After 00:00 (12 a.m.), night busses run every hour; the N2 at the station "Kaufmannstr" and N5 at "Am Botanischen Garten".



Notes Your ticket is only valid with a **valid photo ID card** (your passport also works). If you do not carry your ID or passport, you essentially have no ticket. Especially Deutsche Bahn usually asks for identification.
You may not laminate your ticket because this invalidates the hologram of the NRW ticket. The AStA stores however sell plastic covers to keep your ticket alive over the course of the semester.
If you lose your ticket, you can ask the student office (Studierendensekretariat) to give you a another one.

View of the campus. Copyright: Volker Lannert / Uni Bonn

Weblinks

- `https://www.asta-bonn.de/Services#Semester_Ticket`
- `http://www.studenten-nrw-ticket.de/nrw.html`

Administration

First Steps

Before you start poking around in desperation and panic trying to get useful information, take a look at the AStA website. There you have the possibility to get a lot of interesting information.

If you have any questions, you can contact the AStA via e-mail or social media. As soon as the current situation allows it personal consultations will also be possible again. On the homepage of the AStA, there is also a lot of useful information, such as the AStA-BAföG brochure, a scholarship guide, and, if you are financially strapped, short loans.

BAföG

All those who think that they might be entitled to educational support under the Federal Training Assistance Act, or BAföG for short, should in any case submit an application to the BAföG office as soon as possible. BAföG is a financial support from the state for students, of which, however, half must be paid back after the completion of studies. If you come from the EU or from Norway, Iceland, Switzerland or Liechtenstein, you can always apply for BAföG. If you come from another country, there are very special regulations regarding BAföG entitlement, so it is best to ask the Studierendenwerk directly! If you are not sure, you should simply ask and possibly apply on suspicion, better to be safe than to miss out. If you are entitled to BAföG, you should receive money starting from the month of application. At least in theory, because it usually takes time to process an application. But then you will get your money retroactively in any case.

So: Submit an informal application or Form 1 of the application forms in time, and the application will already be considered to have been submitted. The forms are available at the AStA, as well as at the BAföG office and an informal application could look like the following example: "I hereby submit an application for educational funding as of dd.mm.yy. I will submit the required documents within the next two months. I was born on ... I have been studying since/as of ... at the University of Bonn in the Department of Informatics. Please send me the required documents immediately." It's that simple.

Payments are usually made at the end of each month for the next. The amount you receive is 50 percent an interest-free loan, the other half you get as a grant. The maximum duration of the grant is based on the standard period of study, although there are exceptions to this rule. These can include, for example, study visits abroad or committee activities such as student council work. The continuation of payments after the fourth semester is linked to performance records and other requirements. It is therefore worthwhile to find out in good time.

For further questions, you can contact the BAföG office or the BAföG advice service of the AStA. There is also a BAföG calculator on the internet, which you can use to calculate how much you will receive.

If you receive BAföG, you can also relieve yourself financially by applying for exemption from broadcasting fees.

Scholarships

If you demonstrate above-average performance, you can apply for a scholarship. A scholarship means financial and idealistic support as well as being part of a network.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research promotes 13 scholarships for the gifted. Each scholarship is different: different backgrounds (political, religious, independent), different goals, different requirements. But they all offer the same thing: As a scholarship holder, you receive a monthly tuition allowance of 300 euros, and, if you are eligible for BAföG, the BAföG rate on top of that. In addition, there is a wide range of seminars, events and other activities on various topics, which are definitely worthwhile and, if you were to pay for them yourself, would cost a lot of money.

To get a scholarship, you have to apply and participate in a selection meeting. Here you score points mainly with your achievements, but also with voluntary and political commitment. And if you think: "Oh, so much effort, I won't get it anyway," try it anyway, it's worth it.

Registration in Bonn

As soon as you have found a room, a visit to one of the citizens' registration offices is mandatory. You should have registered or re-registered there no later than two weeks after moving in. Here you also have to decide whether you want to register your main residence or secondary residence in Bonn. In most cases, the place of study is considered the main residence by the Residents' Registration Office, since students usually spend more time there than, for example, with their parents (if they live in Germany). However, if your main resi-

dence is not too far away from Bonn and you state that you spend the weekends and semester breaks there, you should not have any problems with the registration of Bonn as a secondary residence. But beware: In Bonn there is now a tax on secondary residences. You should find out about the costs in advance.

Residence Permit

If you are not from the EU, you must apply for a residence permit after your arrival in Germany. This should be done as soon as possible, but in any case within the period of validity of your visa, so that you do not run the risk of suddenly being in Germany illegally. You can apply for a residence permit at the foreigners' office in the city where you live. At many foreigners' offices it is necessary to book an appointment online. Due to the pandemic the application for a residence permit in Bonn can currently be made by e-mail. After the application has been processed, you will then be sent an appointment for the signature. Attention: It is possible that an "interpreter" has to be brought along for the personal appointment. If you do not speak German, you could take a German-speaking fellow student with you, for example.

Welcome gifts

If you don't care where you are registered, you will be rewarded by the city if you choose Bonn as your main residence - e.g., with a book of vouchers for the theater, the museum and a visit to the swimming pool. In addition, there is the possibility for students who are financed by BAföG to apply for the so-called Bonn identity card. This also offers some benefits. Applications can be made at the Social Welfare Office in Beuel, in the old Duisdorf Town Hall and in the Godesberg Town Hall. For some students, however, registering their primary residence in Bonn can lead to the loss of a child allowance for their parents, which in turn depends on their income. So it is best to ask around before you make a final decision. By the way, when registering your residence, you can specify that your data may not be passed on to political parties (for example, if you do not want to receive mail from a party you do not like).

Health Insurance

To study in Germany, you must have health insurance. Be careful with your health insurance, in Germany there are public and private health insurance companies. Examples of public health insurance companies are AOK, BARMER, DAK, HEK, KKH and IKK, but there are many more. Membership can often be applied for online. If you come from the EU, you can get an EHIC - European Health Insurance Card from your health insurance company in your home country, with which you can register with a German health insurance company, which will then provide an insurance certificate for the university. Make sure that your health insurance covers all treatment costs in Germany; a health insurance with a limitation of the treatment costs or the obligation to pay benefits will not be recognized in Germany. There are also "contracts" with the following countries regarding the recognition of the home country health insurance: currently Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Tunisia and Turkey. If you come from a country with which there is no social security agreement, you must be insured with a German health insurance company. With all the different regulations, it is normal that you might be a bit confused now, don't worry about it and just ask your insurance company in case of doubt!

Language Courses

The Language Center of the University offers language courses in German for foreign students. Registration is done online. If you want to get a spot in a language course, you have to be quick: Especially the spots in beginners' courses are usually booked up very quickly.

Let's go!

Also, if you want to or have to work while studying, you should find out about things like social security obligations or the maximum income limit for continuing to receive child benefits (see AStA's social info). So good luck in the jungle of regulations, and don't panic - there are a lot of people and places that will be happy to help you.

Weblinks https://www.fachschaft.info/en/links

- https://www.asta-bonn.de/AStA
- https://www.studierendenwerk-bonn.de/en/financing/
- https://www.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/german?set_language=en

Accomodation in Bonn

For most, the word room search will sound daunting at first, but - don't panic, there are plenty of ways to find a cozy and affordable room.

You want to live in a dorm room?

On the one hand, you can apply for a place in one of the currently 31 dormitories of the Studierendenwerk. It is best to collect information about the respective dormitories, because the apartments (ahem, rooms) and their facilities differ greatly: For example, there are rooms with their own "kitchen" and "bathroom" (these are the apartments) or those in which you have to share one with other students. The location is also important. Tannenbusch or Bad Godesberg are not recommended for everyone, as those parts of Bonn have a reputation to be "rougher" neighbourhoods.

Meanwhile, all dormitories in Bonn are directly connected to the university network via fiber optic leased line and thus also to the Internet. However, in order to use the WLAN in the dormitories, you will need your own router. Information about the individual dormitories as well as the application forms can be found on the homepage of the Studierendenwerk.

After your application, you will hopefully soon receive an offer of an apartment. If not, it may be worthwhile to check with the student union, as the lease might have gone missing. This has all happened before. While your request is being processed, you will receive an email every month asking you to confirm that you are still looking for a place in the dormitory. If you do not do this, your request will not be considered further.

Offers from the city, university and AStA

"Zimmer frei?!" is a joint campaign by the AStA, the universities, the city of Bonn, the Rhein-Sieg district and a number of of partner institutions to draw attention to the problematic housing situation of students. On the Internet portal `www.zimmerfrei-bonn.de`, students and housing providers are brought together. Here you can find private housing offers and information on finding housing in Bonn.

A short-term accommodation option for those looking for housing is offered by the "Sofa frei?!" project of the AStA. Here you can stay with other students for a few days, according to the principle of couchsurfing, while you are looking for your own apartment, or offer a place to sleep to people who are looking for an apartment. Offers can be posted and accessed at `www.sofafrei-bonn.de`.

Further offers can be found in the university handbook of the AStA.

The free housing market

Experience shows that the situation on the housing market becomes much more difficult shortly before the start of the semester. Therefore, you should start looking for an apartment as early as possible. If you pay the rent a month earlier, it's peanuts compared to what you might pay for a more expensive room rented late. When the start of lectures is approaching, it can also be worthwhile to take a small or expensive room first, before you have to sleep under a bridge. Usually you should find a suitable opportunity (or buy a warmer sleeping bag) by Christmas at the latest.

For those who want to try their luck on the free housing market, here are some more places to go: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the Annonce, the General-Anzeiger, the Bonner Anzeigenblatt (Wednesdays and Saturdays), WG-Gesucht,

the Schnüss with WG offers and of course the countless notice boards in the refectories, cafeterias, institutes and in the "blaue Grotte" in the main building. eBay Kleinanzeigen also has a section for rental requests and offers. The Studierendenwerk also offers a free room service. Either you call them (see address section) or you browse through their folders for suitable rooms or apartments. Foreign students who will probably be studying in Germany for a longer period of time are best advised to contact the International Office.

Weblinks `https://www.fachschaft.info/en/links`

- `https://www.wg-gesucht.de/en/`
- `https://www.studierendenwerk-bonn.de/en/accommodation/`
- `https://housinganywhere.com/?utm_source=StudentenWG`

Zimmer oder Sofa frei?

zimmerfrei-bonn.de "'Zimmer frei?!"' is a joint campaign of the ASten, the universities, the Federal City of Bonn, the Rhein-Sieg-Kreis and a number of partner institutions, which are jointly committed to the creation of student housing.
Here you may find housing offers that are not yet available on the relevant portals. The offers can be filtered by apartment/shared apartment/short-term housing, price and size.

Foto: Barbara Frommann

sofafrei-bonn.de With the Sofafrei platform, the AStA wants to offer a temporary solution from which you can look for your own home. For this purpose, people who are already studying in Bonn provide you with a sofa, a place for your air mattress or a guest room for one night or several nights, so that you have a point to get started. This way you may get to know other students before you start your studies.

inner courtyard at the Institute of Computer Science
Copyright: Volker Lannert / Uni Bonn

Dictionary

Your course is held in English, and usually all offices can communicate in English as well. Still, you will encounter information that is only available in German, whether that may be due to someone forgetting to translate it, not having the knowledge or ressources to do that or because they might not even think about it. Therefore, it still might be useful to know a little bit of German.

Language Courses

The university offers a few language courses for international students, but they are, like all language courses, much sought after. If you are able to get into one of these courses, you will be able to get the A1 certificate for German by completing the course and the exam at the end. The admission time for these courses however usually is well before the beginning of the semester, therefore you can not enrol in your first semester.

If you cannot get into one of these courses, the university also has a partnership with Rosetta Stone. You can get free access to this language learning platform by registering with your university email using the steps explained here: `https://hbza0-c1.sprachen-online.eu/form`

Ä, Ö, Ü and ß

You probably have noticed one of the four letters above. The first three are called umlauts (from German Umlaut), the last is called “Eszett (SZ)“ or “scharfes S”. If you do not have these on your keyboard, you can transcribe them, using the following rules:

Ä ↔Ae
ä ↔ae
Ö ↔Oe
ö ↔oe
Ü ↔Ue
ü ↔ue
ß ↔ss

This may lead to ambiguities (especially around ß and ss), but usually it is clear from the context. There also exists a capital ß, though it is only used for completely capitalised text as the ß never starts a word.

Small dictionary of university words

If you ever have trouble understanding something, you can ask us. To get you started, however, we thought it might be helpful to know a few words that you will encounter during your time at the university. The university also has its own glossary, available here: `https://www.uni-bonn.de/the-university/glossar/english-german-glossary`.

Dictionary

AStA Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss (general student’s committee) 5.

BASIS Bonner aktuelles Studieninformationssystem, the course catalog and student management system of the University of Bonn 17.

CIP-Pool Computer Pools 14.

computer science Informatik.

course catalog Vorlesungsverzeichnis 17.

credit point Leistungspunkt 9.

doctor's note Attest (für Prüfungsunfähigkeit) 9.

ECTS European Credit Transfer System 7, 9 13.

examination office Prüfungsamt 9.

FSR Fachschaftsrat (student coucil) 5.

FSV Fachschaftsvertretung (student assocation representatives) 5.

GSG Gemeinsame Systemgruppe (shared system group), the technical administration of the institute of computer science 14.

HRZ Hochschulrechenzentrum (university computing centre), the technical administration of the university 14.

improvement exam Verbesserungsversuch 9.

lecturer Dozent (male), Dozentin (female), Dozenten/Dozierende (pl. all).

library Bibliothek.

MNL Abteilungsbibliothek für Medizin, Naturwissenschaften und Landbau der Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn (department library for medicine, science and agriculture of the university and state library Bonn), the department of the library that is on Campus Poppelsdorf and holds most of the books for computer science.

NRW Nordrhein-Westfalen (Northrhine-Westphalia), the state the university is inside. Germany is split into 16 states which have some autonomy, NRW is the largest by population.

post-exam review Klausureinsicht 9.

registrars office Studierendensekretariat.

SP Studierendenparlament (student parliament) 5.

student body Fachschaft 5.

ULB Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn (university and state library Bonn), the main library of the university.

VRS Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Sieg (transit network Rhine-Sieg), the local transit authority around Bonn 20.

WG Wohngemeinschaft (flat share) 24.

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We need your help! If you find errors or missing information, or if you have any suggestions on how to improve this magazine, we would be very happy if you wrote us an email to inform@fachschaft.info.

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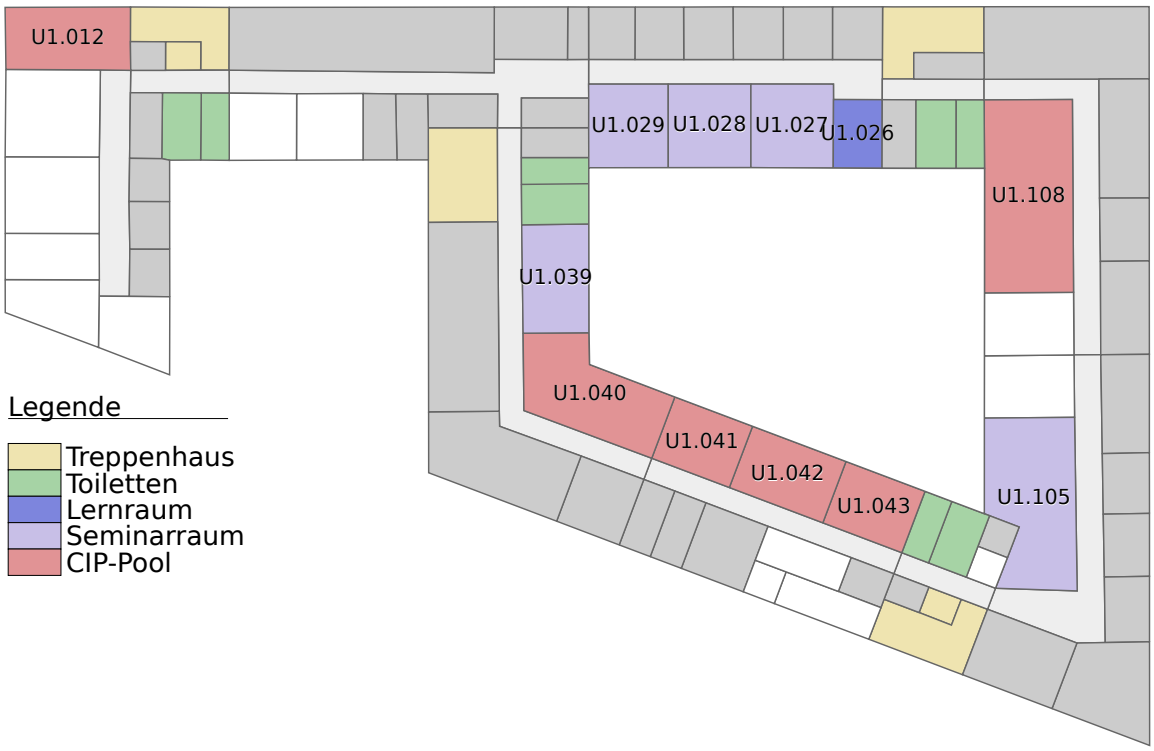

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