

- **Vorbereitung**

To study in the U.S., one needs to get a J1 student visa. You need to pay for your visa and to get a visa you need to provide a bank balance of about 10.000 dollars or more. You need to pay a fee of 1200 dollars for health insurance in the U.S. They do not accept the health insurance you have in Germany. There was an introductory event in the university during the first couple of days before the lectures began on the 28th of August which was mandatory for all students to attend. There was an option to get tutoring if you wanted to. Other than that, all international students had a mentor from whom they get all the information about the university, and they are there to help you with anything since you are new in the University.

- **Unterkunft** I stayed in the student dorms, and it was pretty easy to find a room. Unless you own a car, I do not recommend living anywhere else because there is almost no public transportation. I was sharing a bathroom with another person but I had my room which costed me 600 dollars a month. Some of the rooms also have a living room where you share the bathroom and the living room with your flatmate. Those rooms cost 700 dollars. If you want to cook your food I do not recommend staying in the RLC student dorms as there was only one kitchen in the entire building. To cook your food you need to live in a shared apartment with multiple people as they are the only ones with a kitchen in the flat and are located in University Village.

- **Studium an der Gasthochschule**

Almost none of the courses had compulsory attendance but since we had to make presentations or group projects during the semester it was almost impossible not to attend. Even though attendance wasn't compulsory we got 10 points from attendance, which can be important for your final grade. I took Buyer Behavior, Human Resources Management, Information System Analysis, Management Information Systems, and Social Business Analytics. Some of these courses had prerequisites but I already fulfilled them at the Viadrina. In the worst case, you can e-mail the professor of the class and they might be okay with you attending their class. We usually had a midterm and a final exam. The weights of the exams were decided by the professors. There were also some classes with two midterm exams, or some professors just preferred giving weekly tests or assignments instead and graded those as your midterm. The support services for exchange students were just great. You could just go and ask them anything, you can also just call them or e-mail them.

- **Alltag und Freizeit**

It was almost impossible to go anywhere without a car in Laredo. You need to rent a car and have a driving license or have friends that have a car or can drive. Otherwise, you will be spending the entire time on the University campus. Unfortunately, TAMIU is in a very small city called Laredo which has almost nothing to offer. For the living expenses, you can easily get whatever you need at the beginning of your arrival for around 200 dollars (bedsheets, pillows, etc.). The university cafeteria closes at 8 pm during weekdays and at 7 pm during the weekends. So you usually need to buy snacks for yourself because there is nothing open on the university campus. Honestly speaking, although I paid for the cafeteria, I did not eat there much because I hated the food. It might differentiate for everyone. Every time I went to the supermarket, I had to pay around 200 dollars but that is because I bought a lot of things (like 5 plastic grocery bags). Assuming that you are going to travel as well, I would say 400-500 dollars a month is necessary for your living expenses. Other than that, the campus was pretty big and nice. There was a gym that was open 7 days a week and it had pretty much everything in it. There were even various free classes.

- **Fazit**

My worst experience during my abroad semester was that there was almost no public transportation and we either needed to call an Uber to go anywhere or ask a friend that has a car. That limited your freedom a lot and no matter how big the campus is you get bored after a month. First I was amazed by the campus and all it had to offer but I can say that I understood the importance of public transportation way more in Laredo. Other than that, I had a huge problem with the food, I wasn't used to any of those foods and I am not a fast food fan so it was pretty hard for me to find something that I liked. If you want to have a healthy meal, I would say it is pretty hard to do that. Also because my body wasn't used to that kind of food, it reacted to it and I got the ugliest skin ever. I used multiple face products but nothing helped. I never used foundation before I went to the States.

The best thing about it is that it is way easier than in Germany when it comes to classes so you have a lot of time for yourself. Even though the weekly assignments take some time they are easily doable. This is a personal experience but I also found the love of my life in Laredo which was very unexpected. Furthermore, the mix of

Land: U.S.A

Ausländische Universität: TAMIU

Vorlesungsbeginn und Prüfungsende im Ausland: 28/08/2023 bis 14/12/2023

Studiengang an der Viadrina: IBA [-] BA [] MA



EUROPA-UNIVERSITÄT
VIADRINA
FRANKFURT (ODER)



Mexican American culture was pretty nice and you could hear a lot of people speaking Spanish as well. Furthermore, even though your J1 Visa ends on the last exam date you can stay within the U.S. for one more month after the ending date of your visa. Since Laredo was very close to the Mexican border it was kind of hard to travel during the lecture period. That month after my visa ending date, I traveled quite a lot. I have been to a lot of cities that I haven't seen and made the best out of it. It was also a personal decision for me to travel after the lecture period as I wanted to score good grades.