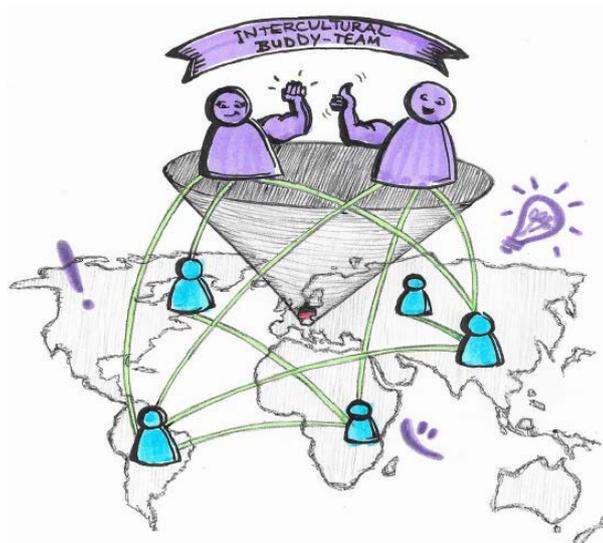


Student Buddy Program

What is a Student Buddy?

A Student Buddy is a German or an experienced international student in his/her second or an advanced semester of our university who voluntarily helps freshers settle down in Weingarten and organize their everyday life. The idea is to work as a **Buddy Team** – ideally one German and one international student forming a duo – who take care of a small group of 3-5 new students together.



In this way, the Buddies can help upon issues of the newcomers together easily and in many different aspects. On the one hand, they act as the first social contact to German culture, habits and language thanks to the German Buddy, and on the other hand, hold the experience of an international student who had to organize the start of his/her studies from abroad once before just as the newcomers do now.

Since there will be a personal contact right from the beginning before the new international students arrive, the Buddies will contribute considerably to ensuring a smooth beginning of their studies and thus enhances their satisfaction and success rate.

The Buddies are supporting on a **voluntary** basis, which means that they don't get credits nor are paid. What exactly the Buddies do together with their assigned students and how much time you spend together is up to him or her. There is no required number of hours or specific tasks to be done although it would be good for the companionship between the Buddies and the students to last at least for the first semester. And who knows, maybe you become good friends.

If I want to be part of an intercultural Buddy Team, what would my tasks be?

Buddies: Typical Tasks as a guidance	New students: Your Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Answer questions which the future students have concerning the preparation of their stay; ➤ If needed, provide support in finding accommodation; ➤ If required, organize the hand-over of keys for their accommodation; ➤ Help them find their way in the town (important public authorities, stores and shops, University institutions, public transportation etc.); ➤ Accompany latecomers to the Residents' Registration Office (<i>Einwohnermeldeamt</i>), the bank and the Foreigners Authority (<i>Ausländerbehörde</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Keep your Buddies updated about any organizational news or changes; ➤ Be responsive and communicative; ➤ Be tolerant as your Buddies most probably come from another cultural background and have other communication habits; ➤ Understand that they cannot reply promptly assist you all the time either. They are full-time students who are in classes, exam preparation and exams during the time you are preparing your arrival and stay. Most of them are working part-time, too; ➤ Keep in mind that the work Buddies do is completely voluntary.

<p>Buddies: Good-to-Have's (no Musts) – Recommended Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If possible, pick up the newcomers at the train station in Ravensburg and accompany them to the student dormitory; ➤ If needed, support with the installation of the internet, with the purchase of a SIM card etc.; ➤ Assist them in the organization of their everyday student life (registration for courses and exams, re-registration for the next semester etc.). 	<p>Please note that the Student Buddy Program is in addition to the Welcome and Orientation Program and to the offers of the International Office in general. For those who will miss the Welcome Week, your Buddies might help you with administrative tasks as well. The program is more on the informal side and aims at answering your questions regarding your daily life as a student here. For official paperwork and processes, you still refer to the university.</p>
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<p>Info for interested Buddies</p> <p>Can I be a Student Buddy myself? Yes, provided that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ next semester, you are enrolled at least in your second semester; ➤ you are able to communicate well in English; ➤ you are available in Weingarten before the beginning of the lecture period; ➤ you attend a Buddy briefing. <p>On the said meeting, we will provide all necessary information about the arrival process of the new students and get to know each other as a Buddy network. On that evening, we will also form the intercultural Buddy Teams that work together as a German-International Consulting Team for a small group of new students.</p>

How much time will I need to spend for the Buddy Program?

Your support will start as soon as the international students have accepted their place at university, i.e. in the end of June for winter semester and in mid-December for summer semester. During the phase before their arrival, the idea is to use a **Buddy WhatsApp Group** with your Buddy Partner and students together. However, as soon as the new students arrive in Weingarten, it would be helpful that one of you is available to pick them up and help them with words and deeds. This may be the case from the beginning of September for winter semester and the end of February/beginning of March for summer semester.

On the other hand, how intensely you look after the students depends on you. As a Buddy Team, you have the advantage of being more flexible in answering and you can share responsibilities. The need for support from the part of the students is usually quite high, especially during certain periods, so that you must be able to say "No" from time to time and set clear boundaries.

When and how do I sign up for the Buddy Program?

Registration for Buddies	Registration for Newcomers
<p>You will receive the link to the online application form from Frau Herrmann via e-mail in May and November respectively.</p> <p><u>Registration deadline:</u> June 1st for winter semester and December 1st for summer semester</p> <p>If you are already in contact with a newcomer and he/she agreed to have you as his/her Buddy, please indicate his/her name in the registration form.</p>	<p>You will receive the link to the online application form from Frau Herrmann via e-mail once you have accepted your offer to study at our university.</p> <p><u>Registration deadline:</u> June 15 for winter and December 15 for summer semester</p> <p>If you are already in contact with a student from our university and he/she agreed to take care of you, indicate his/her name in the registration form.</p>

How do I get in contact with my Student/Buddy?

After having registered and coming together as a Buddy Team, the team gets the newcomers assigned in a matching process. Students and Buddies then receive the contact details of each other via e-mail. The Buddies should contact the students via e-mail first or add their numbers directly to the WhatsApp-Group of their Team. Please answer without delay. If you don't hear from your Buddy or student within two weeks, inform Frau Herrmann.

Please note that it is also very important to inform the Buddy and Frau Herrmann as soon as you know that you are not taking the offer to study in Weingarten any longer or if you could not obtain visa. As there might not be enough Buddies for all new students, your Buddy can then be assigned to another student on the waiting list.

How will I benefit from my activity as a buddy?

use and improve your foreign language skills (in particular English)

get to know foreign cultures

learn to question your own point of view

become aware of the difficulties and challenges which both parties face when someone comes to a foreign country without being familiar with the culture and without speaking the language at first

be made fit for the challenges of an international environment in view of any upcoming stay abroad and your future professional work in multinational teams and structures

establish contacts all over the world

improve your chances of being selected when applying for a place at a university abroad, a scholarship or an award

receive an official certificate of participation which you can enclose with your applications

How do I prove my participation in the Buddy Program?

Fill in a report sheet together with the students you were in charge of. This sheet can be obtained from Frau Herrmann or you can download it from our website. Then it should be returned to Frau Herrmann. With the signatures of everybody involved, you will confirm the accuracy of the statements made. After that, the report sheet will be checked by us for plausibility. If your activities were in accordance with the Buddy Program, you will receive an official certificate of participation in the Buddy Program from the International Office.

Further questions?

Should you have any further questions concerning the Buddy Program, feel free to contact Frau Herrmann:

Room: P 001

Office hours: Mon, Wed and Thur 13:30 – 15:30

Phone: +49 751 501-9592

E-mail: ramona.herrmann@rwu.de

*Convinced? Then sign up. We are looking forward to welcoming you in the program!
Your International Office*