



Austrian-American Educational Commission

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A HANDBOOK

For U.S. English Language
Teaching Assistants
in Austria
2010-2011

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with advice and information, which you may need before leaving the United States, while preparing for your arrival in Austria, and during your stay in Austria.

The material is general in nature. It is illustrative and by no means comprehensive. Some opinions contained in this document may seem colored by personal experiences of former teaching assistants from whose reports we draw. No two experiences as an English Language Assistant are alike, and you should bear that in mind when reading this handbook.

The midyear survey reports and final reports you complete during the year will offer a good opportunity for constructive comments on the materials provided and experience as an English Language Assistant. These reports will be used to periodically update the information included in this handbook.

If the booklet proves to be helpful in preparing you for your year in Austria, it will have served its purpose.

Please bring it with you to Austria and refer to it as needed throughout your stay.

Security Issues

The U.S. Government publishes official travel directives and advisories for U.S. citizens abroad, accessible on the Department of State website at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. For relevant news releases and statements with a more "local" or Austrian focus, the U.S. Embassy website in Austria has good resources: <http://www.usembassy.at/en/index.html>.

The Austrian-American Educational Commission is in regular touch with the U.S. Embassy in Vienna and informs grantees on an equally regular basis, if there are any warnings, alerts, or specific issues of concern. Please note, however, that the Commission has no further sources of information on security issues outside of the official sources listed above.

Registering with the U.S. Consulate in Vienna

U.S. citizens staying longer than three months in Austria are not required, but are encouraged to register with the U.S. Consulate in Austria. The address is: Gartenbaupromenade 2 (in the Marriott Hotel) 1010 Vienna. The telephone number is: (01) 313 39. It is advisable to keep the U.S. Consulate informed of your arrival, address and departure. The relevant form can be completed online at the U.S. Embassy's website: <http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/cons/ibrs.htm>

Those who register with the Embassy will also receive relevant email updates regarding security concerns and events of interest throughout their stay.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1963, 2,805 U.S. college and university graduates have served as English foreign language teaching assistants in Austria under the auspices of a program that the Austrian-American-Educational Commission (Fulbright Commission) has managed for the Austrian Ministry of Education. Although the majority of U.S. teaching assistants are not officially Fulbright grantees, the Commission's management of this program falls under the Fulbright Program's mandate to "promote further mutual understanding between the peoples of Austria and the United States through educational and cultural contacts." Article 2 (10) of the bilateral agreement that established the Commission in 1963 also listed such activities as part of the Commission's mandate: "[to] administer or assist in administering or otherwise facilitate educational and cultural programs and activities that further the purposes of the present Agreement but are not financed by funds made available under this Agreement . . ."

The U.S. teaching assistantship program started small – initially with six positions – and has expanded throughout recent years. Approximately 140 U.S. teaching assistants will be placed in Austrian secondary schools in all nine Austrian federal provinces (*Bundesländer*) and in communities large and small during the 2009/2010 academic year. They will work at some 200 schools with 1,600 different classes and have contact with an estimated 40,000 students between the ages of 10 and 18.

The mutually beneficial nature of this program is obvious. It contributes substantially to the quality of foreign language instruction in Austria, for teachers and students alike. It is also a fine opportunity for U.S. teaching assistants, who not only serve as linguistic and cultural ambassadors in the Austrian classroom but also, upon returning to the U.S., are truly assets for and advocates of Austria. Given the nature of their work and the number of people they have contact with in an educational setting, U.S. teaching assistants make a considerable contribution to the promotion of mutual understanding.

Working in a foreign institution is just as challenging as living in a foreign culture. The purpose of this [Teaching Assistant Handbook for Americans in Austria](#) is to provide incoming teaching assistants with background information on the Austrian school system, the obligations of teaching assistants, pragmatic tips, and resources for instruction. It is based on surveys completed by former U.S. teaching assistants in Austria. The bulk of the text was drafted by Ms. Joan Riegert, who taught English for two years in Austria as a U.S. teaching assistant as well as German in the White Bear Lake School system (in a suburb of St. Paul, Minnesota). Major revisions and editions were made in 2010 by Mr. John Andy Brunner-Brown, who taught German at California State University Long Beach before teaching English for one year as a U.S. teaching assistant. The Fulbright Commission staff edit, revise and update the [Handbook](#) on an annual basis.

2. GETTING STARTED

2.1 Check Lists

Proper planning will greatly improve your transition to your position as a teaching assistant. Generally this list follows a chronological order.

Before Departure

- Housing is of great importance: please arrange housing before departure. With university students returning to the big cities in September, finding housing gets increasingly difficult the longer you wait.

- Start saving money now! First paycheck is in mid-November. Don't forget about domestic financial obligations (Student Loans, etc)
- Contact your school(s) in a brief email to let them know a little bit about you.
- Apply for your Residency Permit
- Packing (Winter clothing, medical documents, etc)
- Photocopy important documents

After Arrival

- Housing: if you have not arranged housing before arriving, please plan on arriving early: searching for housing once teaching begins can be very difficult.
- Keep up-to-date with program information through Was Ist Los? This bimonthly newsletter will be able to answer almost all your questions during the year
- Register at the *Meldeamt*
- Pick up Residency Permit
- Open a bank account
- First day of work
- Save money with Commuter Tickets and a *Vorteilskarte*

Before May 2011

- Taxes, both U.S. and Austrian taxes; information in Was Ist Los?
- Give your landlord proper notice that you are leaving
- De-register at the *Medleamt*
- Let the ÖBB that you are leaving to de-register your *Vorteilskarte*

2.2 Important Dates

In order to plan ahead for the upcoming year, here are some important dates to keep in mind:

September 27 – October 1, Orientation
 October 4, First day of work
 mid-November, First payday
 May 31, Last day of Contract

Austrian Holidays and School Breaks

Austrian Holidays	2010	2011
New Year's Day	January 1	January 1
Epiphany	January 6	January 6
Easter Monday	April 5	April 25
May Day/Labor Day	May 1	May 1
Ascension Thursday	May 13	June 2
Pentecost Monday (Whit Monday)	May 24	June 13
Corpus Christi	June 3	June 23
Assumption Day	August 15	August 15
National Holiday	October 26	October 26
All Saint's Day	November 1	November 1
Immaculate Conception of Mary	December 8	December 8
Christmas	December 25	December 25
St. Stephen's Day	December 26	December 26

School Breaks	2010/2011
Christmas Break (<i>Weihnachtsferien</i>)	December 24, 2010 through January 6, 2011
Semester Break (<i>Semesterferien</i>)*	
Niederösterreich, Wien	February 7 through February 12, 2011
Burgenland, Kärnten, Salzburg, Tirol, Vorarlberg	February 14 through February 19, 2011
Oberösterreich, Steiermark	February 21 through February 26, 2011
Easter Break (<i>Osterferien</i>)	April 16 through April 26, 2011
Pentecost (<i>Pfingstferien</i>)	June 11 through June 14, 2011
Summer Break (<i>Sommerferien</i>):	
Burgenland, Niederösterreich, Wien	July 2 through September 3, 2011
Kärnten, Oberösterreich, Salzburg, Steiermark, Tirol, Vorarlberg	July 9 through September 10, 2011

* Schools with a focus on tourism may have a different schedule of school breaks.

Each school also has several vacation days (*schulautonome freie Tage*) to use at its discretion. Be sure to confirm the dates of school breaks with each school that you have been assigned to, as school calendars can vary from school-to-school.

2.3 Initial Expenses

Please keep in mind that the first month of the program will require higher expenses than the rest of the year. Before the first payday in November, TAs will likely pay for their trip to Austria, two months rent and a housing security deposit.

2.4 Financial Obligations at Home

Look into the status of your **student loans**. The teaching assistantship is not a graduate fellowship or scholarship, and you will not be considered a "full-time student" during this time. It is, however, a legitimate full-time educational pursuit (analogous to student teaching in the U.S.), and program participants have successfully deferred loan payments in the past. In some cases, it suffices to provide the lending organizations with a copy of the letter of appointment you initially received in April outlining the dates and the nature of your teaching assistantship. Once you have arrived in Austria, the Commission Secretariat also can issue a confirmation that you are participating in the program as a teaching assistant, which should suffice for the purpose of loan deferrals.

2.5 Medical Matters

If you have a previous history of medical problems or are on a regular regime of medication, you should definitely bring background information, prescriptions, or copies of relevant **medical records** with you.

2.6 Austrian residency permit application

The application for a residency permit needs to be submitted to an Austrian consulate 3 months before starting the assistantship in Austria. For more on this procedure, please reference the detailed information you received in May 2010.

2.7 Photocopies for Safety

For safety, **photocopy** important documents and materials, such as your passport, plane tickets, driver's license, birth certificate, etc, and keep the copies in a separate place for reference in case originals are lost. Copy Austrian IDs once they are received.

2.8 Driving

If you plan to drive a car in Europe, according to the ÖAMTC, a foreign drivers license is valid for 6 months in Austria if the driver is a resident of Austria and over 18 years old, AND if the license is written in German or accompanied by an international license (available through AAA) or a translation (which the ÖAMTC provides for €13,81 with your *Meldezettel*).

Within 6 months, foreigners from outside the European Economic Area who are residents of Austria would need to have their license re-issued for Austria at any drivers licensing authority in order to drive. There are numerous documents required for this, as well as a fee; please inform yourself about the requirements if you are interested.

You are advised to consult with the local motor vehicle licensing authorities before driving and encouraged to investigate insurance issues in particular.

Local Austrian automobile clubs could also advise you on legal and insurance issues (www.oeamtc.at/ and www.arboe.at/)

2.9 Attire and Packing

Do not take too much with you: you may add to your wardrobe while in Austria; shipping can be expensive and Airlines usually have luggage restrictions. Be sure to also bring materials for teaching (more information in section 7.3)

- Consider bringing hassle-free, wash and wear clothes.
- Semi-casual is the appropriate dress for teachers (dress shirts, blouses, khaki pants, nice jeans, skirts, and sweaters).
- The weather in Austria can vary greatly within a day, but is generally very cold in winter with rain and snow yet warm and pleasant in summer. Layering is a key element to comfort, with a variety of light and thick sweaters and jackets. Warm winter clothing, rain gear and good footwear will dramatically improve comfort and enjoyment of Austria.
- You may also walk more than in the U.S., but bring comfortable dress shoes for daily wear.
- Indoors, the Austrian standard of comfortable temperature may be somewhat below that of the American; slippers and warm lounge clothing are recommended.
- Over the counter medications that you know and trust are good to have on hand, such as ibuprofen and anti-histamines.
- Many past TAs have taken advantage of the opportunity for athletic pursuits in Austria. Consider packing for both winter and summer sports; sports apparel and equipment can seem expensive compared to American standards.
- Shopping in Europe is, generally, more expensive than shopping in the USA.

Previous TAs suggest bringing the following items: reference books and dictionaries; favorite toiletries, specific medicine for your annual cold, vitamins, contact lens supplies; if you are a cook: an American cookbook, perhaps some of your favorite spices or flavorings, some of your other favorite kitchen gadgets, measuring cups and spoons.

Most European countries use 220 volts/50 cycles AC, which most AC adapters can handle, yet the plugs are different. Almost all AC-adapters on power cords list their power constraints, which should range from 100 to 250 volts and 50 to 60 cycles AC; this is compatible for both systems. Plug adapters are easy to find, but consider buying power converters for power cords that do not have adapters on them.

2.10 Housing Information

Teaching assistants are responsible for arranging their own housing.

N.B. It is recommended that you do NOT use Craigslist.

NOTE: TAs are advised to either plan in advance or arrive early to arrange housing. The closer you get to the beginning of the academic year in Austria (October 1), the tighter the market for student housing gets in university cities.

Past TAs have lived in dormitory rooms, single apartments or apartments shared with other students, and rooms rented in a private home, each with positive and negative aspects in terms of cost, privacy, comfort, and opportunities for German language use. For example, renting a room in a private home usually imposes certain restrictions on privacy and the use of kitchen and bathroom facilities. However, it may also offer you more opportunities to use the German language and experience Austrian culture. Teaching assistants frequently have preferred to rent small apartments, to share an apartment with one or more subtenants, or to live in a dormitory. The latter does not put many rules and regulations on its occupants and is the most inexpensive type of accommodation. However, dorm rooms must be booked in advance and frequently entail contracts that cannot be terminated on short notice.

Rent in Austria generally ranges between 200 and 400 Euros, depending on the size and type of housing, the size of the city and the location within the city. Many Austrian residential buildings are old - over 50% of the buildings in Vienna were built before World War I - and have been adapted to meet modern standards, but are generally built with smaller bedrooms and living spaces than American apartments. Austrians might consider an apartment sufficient or even spacious that may be small by American standards.

Keep in mind:

- Avoid engaging a realtor or other agents: **fees** will amount to up to 3 months' rent.
- Dishwashers are not nearly as common as in the U.S., and refrigerators are small with correspondingly small freezing compartments.
- Do not expect a microwave.
- Some apartments may be furnished with a washing machine for clothing, but a dryer is rare. Laundromats and dry cleaning are expensive by American standards.
- Heating and utilities are checked and then averaged over every quarter. Whether they are included in rent will depend on your rental agreement.
- You will be accountable for any damages. If something is damaged or out of order when you move in, inform your landlord immediately so that there are no misunderstandings when you leave.
- Utilities are paid quarterly; monthly payments are based on the previous quarter.
- When shopping for furniture and household supplies, there are other options than Ikea, such as Mömax, and many supermarkets carry cookware.

Most TAs sign contractual rental agreements. A watertight contract written by a lawyer and/or notary may prevent unpleasant surprises but will involve additional expenses.

NOTE: You will be required to submit written documentation that you have secured housing in order to have your residency permit processed in some provinces.

The relationship between you and your landlord will be a matter of mutual trust. However, it is best to be as specific and as clear as possible about expectations and obligations. When moving in, make it clear you will give notice at least one month before

moving out (*Kündigungsfrist*); most contracts require at least 3 months notice. Try to keep the period of notice (*Kündigungsfrist*) down to one month as set by law in the absence of a special agreement and do not sign a contract that may force you to remain in an apartment for a specific length of time. Most landlords ask for two or three months' rent as a deposit (*Kaution*) in addition to the rent for the first month. The deposit will be refunded in full if it is not needed for damages or unexpected utility charges.

2.11 Resources for Finding Housing

TAs should consider all resources for arranging housing; some resources may be more appropriate for urban areas, whereas others may be more appropriate for rural areas.

Smaller communities

Contact with your school for direct assistance or for the contact information of former teaching assistants who may be able to advise you on housing options near your school. Some of the contact teachers are able to suggest or help arrange housing for TAs. Generally speaking, teaching assistants assigned to smaller communities find housing more easily because the host schools are familiar with the teaching assistant's needs and the (usually limited) opportunities. Teaching assistants at schools in urban centers should not expect their schools to be so forthcoming in identifying housing opportunities.

Larger communities

Austrian National Union of Students (*Österreichische Hochschülerschaft*, ÖH) has chapters at each of Austria's 18 universities, which are situated in seven cities: Vienna, Graz, Leoben, Linz, Klagenfurt, Salzburg, and Innsbruck. The ÖH branches maintain online "brokerages" (*Börsen*) for student housing. These websites have interactive search engines that allow you to specify the type, size, cost, and location of the housing you are seeking:

<http://wohnen.career.at/>

ÖH University of Graz

<http://campusboard.at/>

ÖH University of Innsbruck

<http://www.oehweb.at/index.php?id=36>

http://boersen.oeh.cc/view_wb.php

ÖH University of Klagenfurt

<http://www.oeh-klagenfurt.at/>

ÖH University of Linz

<http://www.oeh.uni-linz.ac.at/boerse>

ÖH University of Leoben

<http://www.unileoben.ac.at/>

ÖH University of Salzburg

<http://www.oeh-salzburg.at>

ÖH University of Vienna, ÖH WU Vienna <http://wohnen.career.at/>

ÖH branch offices also have **Social Service Offices** (*Sozialreferate*) that may be of assistance in finding housing; locations listed on <http://www.oeh.ac.at/> and on the websites of Austrian universities. (For links to Austrian university websites, please see the Austrian Fulbright Commission website: <http://www.fulbright.at/>).

In Austria you can also browse housing opportunities that are posted on bulletin boards at the respective offices of the Austrian National Union of Students.

Austrian Exchange Service - Housing Office: (*Österreichischer Austauschdienst WohnraumverwaltungsGmbH*) The Austrian Exchange Service is a non-governmental organization that manages a series of scholarship and exchange programs for the Republic of Austria. The *ÖAD-WohnraumverwaltungsGmbH* is a private organization responsible for administering student housing in dormitories and apartments of various sizes. ÖAD housing is situated in the seven Austrian university cities mentioned above. See the ÖAD website: <http://www.housing.oead.ac.at/>

For details contact: ÖAD-WohnraumverwaltungsGmbH, Alserstraße 4/1/1/3, A 1090 Vienna, Tel.: (+431) - 4277 / 28152; Fax: (+431) - 4277 / 28150; e-mail: housing@oead.ac.at. ÖAD offices can provide you with information on what options they have and will reserve housing for you if you are willing to make a (non-refundable) reservation deposit.

Newspapers: The Fulbright Commission website (<http://www.fulbright.at>) has links to newspapers that can provide you with an overview of the housing market (*Immobilien*) throughout Austria.

Other Online Resources:

<http://www.immobazar.at/> (Database with search; mostly for eastern Austria)
<http://derstandard.at/anzeiger> (On-line version of a large Austrian newspaper)
<http://www.easywg.de>
<http://www.jobwohnen.at>
<http://www.sws.or.at>
<http://www.wohnet.at/wohnungen-in-wien.htm> (for Vienna)

Please see Appendix 12.7 for housing advertisement terminology.

2.12 Mandatory Orientation Program

The Austrian Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture organizes orientation sessions for incoming teaching assistants in conjunction with the respective provincial Boards of Education (*Landesschulräte*) from the provinces in which assistants will be teaching. The orientations provide important information on the Austrian educational system, duties as a teaching assistant, and also offer an opportunity to meet fellow teaching assistants.

These mandatory orientation sessions – one for TAs in eastern Austria (Vienna, Lower Austria, Burgenland and Styria) and the other for TAs in western Austria (Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia, Upper Austria) – run from **Monday, September 27 (late afternoon) through Friday, October 1, 2010**. Participants are expected to pay a fee of € 70 (in cash) on-site to help defray the costs of the seminar, which includes room and full board. After the conclusion of the seminar, you are expected to report for work at your contact school (*Stammschule*) on **Monday, October 4**.

Please make arrangements to arrive at your seminar venue by 5 pm at the latest. Should you for some reason not be able to attend or arrive late, notify the Fulbright Commission in advance.

What to pack for the seminar:

- Towels, toiletries
- Warm clothes (it can be cool in October, especially in Saalbach)
- (for Saalbach only) hiking shoes and *Hauschuhe* (slippers), which are customary in this kind of venue; shoes are not allowed inside the house

Seminar Venues

The seminar for teaching assistants assigned to schools in Wien, Niederösterreich, Steiermark and Burgenland will be held at:

Schloss St. Martin

Kehlbergstraße 35, 8054 Graz (Steiermark)

At your arrival in Graz, please go directly to
Exerzitienhaus der Barmherzigen Schwestern
Mariengasse 6a, 8020 Graz

This is only a short walk from the train station.

The seminar for teaching assistants assigned to schools in Kärnten, Salzburg, Tirol, Oberösterreich, and Vorarlberg will be held at:

Bundesschullandheim Saalbach
5754 Hinterglemm 38 (Province of Salzburg)

Internet: <http://www.bslh-saalbach.at> Email: info@bslh-saalbach.at

Take a train from the Salzburg central train station to Zell am See. Directly outside the train station you can catch the 680 bus to Hinterglemm.

3. ONCE YOU ARRIVE

3.1 First Priorities

- Secure your housing arrangements
- Within three business days of your arrival: register with the local *Meldeamt* (registration office)
- Pick up your residency permit
- As soon as possible: open a bank account
- The Monday after the orientation: report for work at your *Stammschule* to begin your work (*Dienstantritt*) and get your job contract (*Dienstzettel*)

3.2 Commission's Newsletter Was ist los?

The Fulbright Commission issues a newsletter four times during the year to provide valuable administrative information and to help maintain contact with the Teaching Assistants in Austria. Was ist los? will inform you of administrative announcements and report on matters of general interest as well as publish occasional articles on Austrian customs or on your experience. Your contributions are welcome and appreciated.

3.3 Registration with the local Austrian authorities: *Meldezettel*

Please note: Registering with the Austrian authorities and securing your residency permit follow two separate procedures!

Within three business days of entering Austria, you (and your dependants) are **required to register** with the appropriate authorities. The *Meldezettel* is an important document for identification purposes. Furthermore, you are **required to deregister** with the authorities at the end of your stay in Austria.

In Vienna: register with the *Magistratisches Bezirksamt*; consult <http://www.wien.gv.at/verwaltung/meldeservice/stellen.html> for addresses and office hours.

Elsewhere in Austria: register with the local *Magistrat* or *Gemeindeamt*. Consult <http://www.help.gv.at/behoerdenadressen/suche-flow> to identify the appropriate office in your area with the *Behördenadresse-Abfrage*: choose *Gemeindeamt/Magistrat* for *Behördentyp* and type in your *Postleitzahl* (zip code).

You will need:

- A completed *Meldezettel* registration form with the landlord's signature
- A *Meldezettel* is in your packet, available at the registration office and online: <http://www.help.gv.at/documents/meldez.pdf>
<http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/documents/meldez.pdf>
- Passport, supporting documents if applicable (e.g. marriage license for spouses).

The authorities will record your personal data, passport number, and current and permanent addresses, and they will assign you a twelve digit "central registration number" (*Zentrale Melderegister-Zahl* or ZMR-Zahl), which you use in any further official business to identify yourself. They also record the expiration date of your residency permit to track the length of your legal residency in Austria. Therefore, it is imperative to deregister before leaving Austria, three days before or after moving out.

Please keep the Fulbright Commission informed of your contact information. As soon as you get settled, please inform the Fulbright Secretariat of your address, telephone number and current e-mail account. Also notify the Fulbright Secretariat should you move throughout the course of the year.

3.4 Residency Permit: *Aufenthaltstitel*

Once you arrive in Austria, you should be able to pick up your residency permit at your province's *Bezirkshauptmannschaft* or *Magistrat* (contact to be found at http://www.help.gv.at/linkaufloesung/applikation-flow;jsessionid=873646A08C57C8504234A38C521EE1CA.tomcat_ghp_appl1?quelle=HELP&label=Fremdenpolizei&flow=LO&leistung=LA-HP-RL-Fremdenpolizei). Having applied 3 months in advance, you will only need to pay any remaining dues, which should be no more than €100.

3.5 First day at work (October 4, 2010): *Dienstantrittsmeldung*

The Monday after the orientation program, you are expected to report for work at your main school (*Stammschule*). You may want to arrange a meeting time with your contact teacher prior to your arrival, as he/she may or may not have a scheduled lesson at the time you arrive. On the first day, you should complete paperwork with the *Direktion* to inform the appropriate authorities that you have reported to fill the position to which you have been assigned (*Dienstantrittsmeldung*) which, among other things, is a prerequisite for your being paid. Your school should provide you with a "job description" (*Bestellung*). A sample for this document is on page 39 of the German *Fremdsprachen AssistentInnen Austausch Leitfaden für AssistentInnen 2010/2011* from the Ministry of Education. You should provide your name, birthday and address for the personnel in the *Direktion* and make sure that they register you (and your dependents) for your health and accident insurance (*Kranken- und Unfallversicherung*). If you already have your bank details, you should give them to the personnel in the *Direktion*. You may be asked to provide a written confirmation (*Bestätigung*) from the bank, verifying your account information.

Be sure to provide:

- date of birth
- address
- bank account information including the routing code (BLZ)
- copy of your residency permit ID card **OR**
- copy of confirmation that you have handed in an application for a residency permit

Once you are registered, the authorities will issue a *Sozialversicherungsnummer* (insurance number) and corresponding green E-Card, which should arrive within a month. This number is used to identify you for all physicians and health delivery systems.

3.6 Teaching Schedule

You should be introduced to your *BetreuungslehrerIn*, the teacher responsible for supervising you, and run through the details of your class schedule at this time. Sometimes, teaching assistants are asked to work with the supervising teacher to

organize their timetables. You may be allowed to make small requests regarding your schedule for a day off or time to sit-in on another class in school. However, keep in mind that your primary role in Austria is to serve your school as a teaching assistant.

Teaching assistant work schedules vary from school to school, based upon the needs, schedules, and preferences of the teachers, but generally follow these formats:

1. **Sign-up list:** Teachers sign-up on a schedule posted in the *Konferenzzimmer* for the TA, according to their teaching needs and schedule. This means that the TA will likely have a different schedule each week and work with classes on a less regular basis.
2. **Set Schedule:** TAs and the teachers agree upon regular classes to teach in, providing a constant and known schedule.
3. **Fixed odd/even weeks (*ungerade/gerade*):** The contact teacher assigned a fixed timetable in which the teaching assistant has two class schedules, one for odd and one for even weeks. TAs may also have a fixed one-, three-, or four-week plan depending on the number of classes he/she will work with.

Coordinating schedules between two assigned schools will largely depend upon the location of the schools and class schedules, but schedules will probably follow these formats:

1. **Odd/even weeks:** 13 hours in one school each odd week and then works 13 hours in the second school each even week.
2. **Alternating days:** 6 hours in one school on two days of the week and for seven hours in the other school on two days of the week.
3. **Same-day switch:** If the schools are within close proximity of each other, it is possible to work in both schools within the same day, perhaps even in consecutive lessons.
4. **Semester / Semester:** The TA works at one school for one semester, and the second school for the second semester.

Keep in mind that teachers may choose to deploy you in a variety of ways. You may be asked to teach lessons to whole classes (note that you are not supposed to teach entirely on your own), to half of the class (while the teacher works with the other half), or to small groups. Your role may include cultural, conversational, or topical lessons. You may also be asked to teach directly from the book or using materials, which you have prepared. Maintaining flexibility is of utmost importance.

3.7 Opening a Bank Account: *Gehaltskonto*

Teaching assistants are salaried employees of the school board of the province in which they teach. Salaries are paid through direct deposit around the 15th of the month; including account information on your school's *Dienstantrittsmeldung* in the first week ensures a timely **payment in November**.

You should provide your *Stammschule* with the following information

- your account number
- the routing code of the bank (*Bankleitzahl* - BLZ)
- the name of the bank
- the address of the bank

At a local bank, open a *Gehaltskonto* (salary account, sometimes called Girokonto) with your passport and a few euros for deposit; some banks will require your *Meldezettel*. **Do not open a *Konto*** (account) or *Sparkonto* (savings account) or a U.S. dollar account at an Austrian bank; they will be of no use to you and are very expensive.

You will be paying the bank for their services on a quarterly basis, automatically deducted from your account at the end of each quarter (approx. €10-20 per quarter), and you will most likely not earn interest on your account. Students of an Austrian university will be able to open a student's account that costs less. Inquire about this possibility at your local bank.

Teaching assistants receive their salaries around the 15th of the month. **October's salary will most probably arrive in November**; it takes time for your information to get into the system. Please make sure to bring sufficient funds to cover your expenses in the first 6 to 8 weeks of your employment. Delays in opening an account or providing your *Stammschule* with your bank information may delay your first payment.

If inordinate delays arise in connection with the payment of your salary, inform the *Direktion* of your *Stammschule*.

Banking vocabulary

<i>Bankomat</i>	ATM; cash dispenser
<i>Bankomatkarte</i>	ATM/Debit card for national and international withdrawals
BLZ = <i>Bankleitzahl</i>	Routing number; a 5 digit numerical code for individual banks
<i>Dauerauftrag</i>	Customer order form for regular (recurring) payments (e.g. rent)
<i>Einziehungsauftrag</i>	Customer order form to regularly pay incoming bills from specific companies (e.g. phone, utilities, etc.)
<i>Erlagschein</i>	An invoice used to make payment via bank-to-bank transfer
<i>Gehalts/Girokonto</i>	Salary account, private checking account
IBAN	International Bank Account Number
<i>Konto</i>	Account
<i>Kontoauszug</i>	Account statement (printed from a machine in the bank foyer)
PIN	Personal Identification Number to access your ATM card
SWIFT or BIC	Bank Identification Code
<i>Sparbuch</i>	Savings account
<i>Spesen</i>	Bank charges
<i>Überziehungsrahmen</i>	Overdraft limit. Note: High interest is charged.
<i>Überweisung</i>	Bank-to-bank transfer

3.8 Austrian Insurance: BVA

During the period of their assignments in Austria, teaching assistants are covered as "employees" by the health and accident insurance program of the BVA – *Versicherungsanstalt öffentlich Bediensteter*. About one month after you have started working, you should receive an insurance card (E-Card, *Sozialversicherungskarte* containing all relevant data) with your insurance number (*Sozialversicherungsnummer*) from your insuring agency. Bring your E-Card to all treatments. After your teaching assistantship (i.e. after May 31st), you still have limited coverage during a grace-period of six weeks.

For detailed information on the conditions and extent of coverage, teaching assistants should consult the BVA website at <http://www.bva.at> or call the BVA Hotline at 05 04 05.

Coverage includes treatment for illness and injuries, eye examinations, basic dental care, pregnancy, medication, therapeutic and laboratory services (if prescribed by a physician), medical supplies, hospitalization, etc. Many Austrian physicians or hospitals have contracts with the BVA. Make sure that the health care provider you consult has a BVA contract before going in for treatment. Health care providers bill the BVA directly for the costs of treatment, and the BVA bills you for 20% of the total. This insurance has a 20% deductible (*Selbstbehalt*) for outpatient treatment; in-patient treatment (hospitalization) is covered in full.

Austrian medical insurance also covers medication. A prescription fee (*Rezeptgebühr*) of € 5 is collected for each medication prescribed. The physician responsible for prescribing the medication must be consulted if additional medication is needed, and he/she will issue another prescription.

Traveling within the EU, you may request an *Urlaubskrankenschein* (also called *Auslandsbetreuungsschein*) in the event that you become ill while away from your place of residence. Austrian health and accident insurance is valid in EU countries as well as in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Iceland. You need to check that your E-Card has "*Europäische Krankenversicherungskarte*" written on the backside (above the signature) and take your card with you while traveling.

NOTE: The insurance coverage for U.S. teaching assistants does not apply to the United States. Contacting Austrian insurance companies can provide you with moderately priced travel insurance (*Reiseversicherung*). Before traveling outside of the European Union (e.g. in Eastern Europe), you should inquire if there are insurance reciprocity agreements between Austria and the countries you will be visiting. The BVA currently has bilateral agreements with Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey.

3.8.1. Health insurance for accompanying dependents:

Accompanying children can be insured free of charge under the auspices of parental insurance, as long as they are under 18 and still in school. Accompanying spouses may be insured free of charge if they are exclusively engaged in child-care. Otherwise, additional insurance premiums have to be paid to insure accompanying spouses. The rate of premium is 3.4% of the gross salary of the primary insurance carrier.

It is important that USTAs provide relevant documentation (birth certificate, *Meldezettel*) to the BVA if they want their dependents to be covered from their assignment.

3.8.2. If you fall ill

If you are ill, unable to work, it is important to call in sick at your school or schools immediately on the first day to let them know that you will not be coming to work. You are required to get a note from your doctor (*Krankenstandsmeldung*) that you are ill, which has to be forwarded to the BVA. Please inquire at your school whether you are required to bring a confirmation from a physician.

3.9 Your Salary and Taxes

The Provincial Board of Education (*Landesschulrat*) or the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture are responsible for disbursing your salary to you on a monthly basis. It takes a certain amount of time for the authorities to get your information into the system; October's salary is usually distributed a month late in November. **It is important for you to bring enough personal funds to cover the**

costs of your first 6-8 weeks. In the first month your expenses will be a bit higher to cover costs associated with setting up your household, travel expenses, residency permits, deposits, etc.

You will receive a monthly salary slip (*Gehaltszettel*) from your *Stammschule* that records your gross income of approximately € 1,300, deductions for health insurance and income tax resulting in a net income of about € 1000. You can print a *Kontoauszug*, an account statement documenting your monthly net pay, at a machine in your bank foyer. In early March and in early June, you should receive an official *Lohnzettel* stating your gross and net earnings. Your colleagues or the secretary at your schools will be able to give you detailed information on your typical monthly deductions.

Although bilateral agreements exempt TAs from certain European countries from Austrian income tax, this exemption does not exist for U.S. citizens and therefore income tax will be deducted from your salary. It is important for you to draw this to the attention of the *Direktion* at your school and confirm that *Lohnsteuer* is listed on your pay sheet.

Income tax in Austria is progressive and calculated upon the basis of an extrapolated annual income. In light of the fact that TAs work only three months in one year (October-December) and five months in another (January-May), the income tax deducted is too high. Therefore, TAs may apply for tax refund at the beginning of calendar year.

This entails getting forms from a local tax office (*Finanzamt*) and submitting a formal request called an *Erklärung zur Durchführung der Arbeitnehmerveranlagung*. To find the *Finanzamt* responsible for your *Arbeitnehmerveranlagung*: http://dienststellen.bmf.gv.at/ListDst_Auswahl.asp. Consult pages 16-17 of the [Leitfaden für AssistentInnen](#) for details or ask the staff at your school for advice. More information will be mailed out about both the Austrian and U.S. taxes during the year.

Information on U.S. taxes and downloadable IRS forms for filing taxes are available online at: <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/>

Note: Teaching assistants are responsible for all taxes and tax declarations in Austria **and** the United States. The Fulbright Commission secretariat does not advise students on U.S. or Austrian taxes.

4. LIFE AS A TEACHING ASSISTANT

4.1 Duties

It is important for you to recognize that you will be expected to conduct yourself as an employee of your assigned schools, and you will be treated as such.

The status of foreign language teaching assistants has been carefully circumscribed by law in Austria (*Erläss*, from the Ministry of Education), which outlines what you may and may not do. The details about your legal rights, duties and responsibilities, as well as your salary, are integrated in the *Lehrbeauftragtenengesetz* (teacher's employment law).

You will receive the official guidelines for your position as a TA – [Fremdsprachen AssistentInnen Austausch: Leitfaden für Assistent/innen 2010/11](#) – along with this Handbook. It addresses many of the issues raised in this handbook in a more detailed manner. Most importantly, the [Leitfaden](#) is an official document from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. **Read the guidelines carefully and bring them with you.** Individual teachers with whom you will work may not be aware of your obligations or limitations, and you may want to show them the guidelines so that they are informed.

The guidelines are clear in theory, but practical application may sometimes be more difficult. This is certainly not an excuse to be uncooperative. Some teaching assistants in the past have also "violated" the guidelines because they wanted to assume more responsibility in the classroom than they were supposed to. It is important to use common sense and discretion in interpreting and following the guidelines.

Remember that you are an employee subject to the directives of your superiors: you are required to comply with requests made by your superiors within the framework of your employment as a teaching assistant.

4.2 You are expected to:

- Carry out your teaching duties with the utmost dedication, prepare your lessons and incorporate the advice given to you by your supervisory teachers.
- Teach 13 hours per week.
- Familiarize yourself with the rules and customs of your school. (Ask your contact teacher to introduce you to the peculiarities of your school's "institutional culture.")
- **Communicate and cooperate** with your teachers in all matters ranging from the preparation of lessons (e.g. with regard to what your teachers expect from you) to the solution to problems that might arise.
- Discuss any problems that arise with your contact teacher (first) and/or principal.
- Try to create real-life situations when repeating materials that have been previously covered by teachers. (Younger students might also enjoy playing games.) Do not hesitate to enrich lessons by including your personal experiences.

Teaching assistants are not formally licensed to teach in Austria.

4.3 Therefore, you MAY NOT:

- Teach on your own without supervision.
- Grade or correct work. If you are interested in doing so, ask the teachers if you can assist them. However, the teacher always has the final decisions and responsibility.
- Provide corridor supervision (*Gangaufsicht*) on a regular basis.
- Perform administrative tasks.
- Teach new chapters of grammar.
- Go into the lesson unprepared.
- Be used for substitute teaching.

Only in exceptional cases may you be asked to substitute for another teacher, with the principal bearing full responsibility. Make sure you know exactly what is expected of you in the lesson. You have full right to respectfully decline; you have no obligation to teach alone or substitute.

It is important for all teaching assistants to recognize that they have a contractual relationship with the school authorities. If teaching assistants are negligent in the execution of their duties, their contracts may be terminated by the school authorities.

4.4 Compliance and confidentiality

You also are required to be discreet. Any matters addressed in staff meetings or parent-teacher meetings are not to be discussed outside of school.

4.5 Have fun! Make the most of your time at school!

- Join in on lessons in other subjects - it is always rewarding to watch your classes interact with other teachers.
- Join teachers during office hours; attend PTA meetings and similar events.
- Try attending the final oral exams (Matura), an excellent opportunity to witness the results of your efforts.
- Join your class on day trips and remember that school tours or parties are an excellent opportunity to get to know teachers and pupils in a relaxed atmosphere.

5. EXPECTATIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS

This teaching position in Austria could be an experience of a lifetime. This opportunity is really what you make of it. The cliché is true: you will get out of it what you put into it.

5.1 Accents and colloquialisms

It is important for you to recognize that British English – in terms of pronunciation as well as spelling – is the generally recognized model in Europe. Therefore, some teachers may feel that you (as an American) do not pronounce English “correctly” or that you use some grammar improperly;; they were trained to use a different (“correct”) model. You may be confronted with this pro-British (or anti-American) bias. There is nothing you can do about it, so don’t worry about it.

5.2 Adjusting

Most teaching assistants previously have lived and/or studied abroad, yet it is important to recognize that there are a number of differences “the second time around.” You will not be a student in a program with other students; instead, you will have to fend for yourself while working in a different cultural and institutional environment, where the way things work may not clear in the beginning. Being a teaching assistant demands a considerable amount of flexibility and capacity to solve problems.

You may be placed in a very small town or in a large city; **allow yourself that time to adjust to your new settings.** In the words of one teaching assistant, "Don't despair if you don't get assigned to where you wanted to go. It may take a while to get used to your surroundings (i.e. NYC to Wieselburg), but you may like it. It's a great experience."

Another teaching assistant who had a hard time adjusting said, "I found that it was tougher for me to be stared at by the townspeople than to be overlooked by my colleagues. Until [December] most people didn't reply to my greetings, but all of the sudden it's like they all agreed to embrace me with open arms! Just don't get discouraged with the small town mentality. You'll find your own way soon enough."

Some TAs have found that it takes Austrians a bit to warm up to new people. Living and working in Austria is likely a great endeavor, one that could prove to be a life-changing experience. However, in some schools (particularly urban schools), you may be just one of many language assistants that the school has had over the past few decades.

5.3 The Workplace

Not only will you be learning how to adjust to a new living situation, you will also be adjusting to new working conditions. It may be difficult at first to learn how to work with many different teachers, who each have a different teaching style and different expectations of you and of their students. You will also be working with different ages of

students with varied skill levels. As one assistant said, "Each teacher has a different 'style' and you need to adapt to each one's needs. After a few months, it is easy to understand what they expect from you. But again, this takes time." Another assistant observed: "The tasks became clear only after I understood the expectations that each teacher has in class."

As you will likely be working with many different teachers and classes throughout the year; a system to organize your weekly schedule and responsibilities will be very useful. It will most likely be your responsibility to speak with teachers regarding the lesson plans. Try to do so at least a day in advance, so that you have ample time to gather materials and prepare the lesson. You may also wish to request the contact information for your teachers and provide them with yours in the event that a class is cancelled or you fall ill.

Most problems teaching assistants have had in the past have been based on an insufficient understanding of the way things work or a lack of communication (or both). If you do not understand something or are unhappy about something, you have to communicate in order to address these problems. Your *BetreuungslehrerIn* or another teacher can help in times of need or complication. The official route for lodging a formal complaint, the *Dienstweg*, may often not be the best way to solve problems.

Establish a good rapport with fellow teachers from the start of your assignment. Many times you will be better off if you can find a teacher with whom you can connect and communicate openly about any problems that arise. A teaching assistant told us, "I receive support from many teachers, regardless of the subject they teach. I have gone to a few teachers with some personal issues and they have helped me."

Another resource you have is other teaching assistants. Sharing difficulties and achievements with your colleagues can give you new perspectives on your work as a language assistant, as well as strategies to address potential problems. Fellow TAs can also provide you with information about events and travel in Austria. As one TA said, "Get to know other assistants in other areas. I have friends in Linz, Salzburg and Tirol I have visited."

Teaching assistants maintain an **intermediate position** between teachers and students, a representative of an educational institution yet often just a few years older than the students. You should try to maintain a healthy, balanced relationship with both teachers and students, and it is important that one group does not feel like you are taking the other's side. As one teaching assistant observed: "We assistants are definitely in the middle: we aren't teachers or students. I say, take advantage of the situation and use it to everyone's benefit." Avoid situations where you publicly disagree with your teachers, thus creating a situation where they (or you) may lose face. If a teacher corrects you in the classroom situation, deal with the correction graciously and with humor.

Although you are "not a teacher and not a student," it is important for you to establish a certain amount of authority. Teaching assistants who are too chummy with students ultimately have great problems (not only with the students, but also with the teachers) because they are not taken seriously. It is important also for you to dress appropriately when you are in the classroom ("faculty dress codes" may vary widely from school to school). Generally, semi-casual is the appropriate dress for teachers (dress shirts, blouses, khaki pants, nice jeans, skirts, and sweaters).

5.4 Workplace Relationships

It is a great idea to socialize with both students and teachers outside of the school and to participate in extra-curricular activities, like school excursions or ski trips. However, it is equally important to remember to establish and maintain **personal and professional**

boundaries. Amorous or sexual relations with teachers usually create problems (regardless of the "consenting adults" argument). **Amorous or sexual relations with students are an abuse of position and incompatible with the responsibilities TAs have in virtue of their positions.** Furthermore, gender specific roles and expectations in Europe are different than they are in the United States. The definition of sexual harassment and general awareness thereof is different as is the type of institutional recourse one has to address it.

5.5 Classroom Discipline

Classroom discipline is an issue which teaching assistants frequently find difficult because they have observed that – by American standards – there is less discipline in the classroom in general and fewer school-wide disciplinary policies and systems at the teacher's disposal (detention, demerits, etc.) It is therefore necessary when you start teaching to establish authority in the classroom. Be friendly but clear about what behavior you will and will not accept. Do not be afraid to ask your teachers for help with discipline if you need it. Here is some advice from past assistants: "Students are excited to have someone new, but it's important to show that you can really teach something. If they see that you are nervous, they will heckle you." "Don't put up with unruly pupils. They learn fast who is in control and it is hard to regain control once you lose it."

Remember, respect is not something that a classroom of teenagers is going to give you automatically. You have to expect it and to command it. Furthermore, if you structure the material you wish to present, you are structuring the classroom environment as well. If you come poorly prepared or unprepared and students recognize this immediately, you will create a disciplinary problem because you do not know how to keep students' attention or structure their time and expectations.

5.6 Tips from former Teaching Assistants

It is important to recognize the individual nature of the teaching assistant experience. No two teaching assistants will be in the same situation. Teaching assistants assigned to the same school have different experiences from one year to the next. A tremendous amount of your success depends upon your flexibility and attitude, as well as your general approach to interaction with students and teachers.

We asked former teaching assistants what general advice they would give incoming assistants in order to help them have a successful and effective year. Here's what they reported:

General advice:

- "Ask a lot of questions at the beginning." (Pädag. Hochschule, Steiermark)
- "Above all, make a conscious effort not to spend too much time with other Americans, as this is a convenient trap at the beginning that severely limits the potential of your experience abroad." (HAK, Vienna)
- "This is a year for growing and experimenting. Throw yourself into every activity 100%, and the rewards will astound you. If you mess up, laugh it off; the teachers know that everything is new for you, and they love a good laugh, too!! That having been said, you can try out things you never would have back home, with nothing to lose. Opportunities like this don't come around very often, so grab it while you can. You'll be glad you did." (HAK, Upper Austria)
- "Keep talking to people, eventually it will be more than '*Grüß Gott*' so hang in there! Don't be afraid to say you don't understand something and ask for help when you need it. Always be prepared and be flexible." (BORG, Upper Austria)
- "Dive in! Become involved in different groups or organizations, take classes at a local university or VHS (*Volkshochschule*), and really explore your community. You feel so

much more at home and successful when you actually exert yourself to fit in and experience new things." (HTL, Tirol)

- "Explore! Don't ask why a particular part of the culture is how it is and think our American way is better. I found if I accept the culture I am living in, I am much happier for it. I have so much fun when I actually take part in the traditions and don't just watch. See with an unbiased eye and you get to learn so many cool parts of Austrian culture!" (BHAK, Vienna)
- "Join a *Verein* or something fun to meet people, especially if you are in a small town." (BG, Graz)
- "German! Brush up your German, especially if you are placed in a small town!" (BORG, Styria)

Materials, lesson plans, and other school issues:

- "Establish clear guidelines with your teachers from the start. Make absolutely sure that it is known what is expected of you, and also what you expect from them. You will be working very closely, but one of the hardest parts of my job was coordinating lessons." (HIB, Liebenau)
- "I have a folder of last minute lessons and games, which has been very helpful." (BORG, Vorarlberg)
- "Be very flexible! Some days things won't go like you planned. Don't gossip - leave that to the teachers. And just relax." (HLTW, Vienna)
- "Be open to change and be ready to think on your feet. Whenever you plan a lesson, have a back-up plan and a back-up, back-up plan." (HGBL, Vienna)
- "Always remember to talk slower and more clearly than you normally would." (HTL, Vienna)
- "Things you might bring: If you are an AAA member, go get their free guidebooks and maps for big U.S. cities like New York, San Francisco, etc. NY and SF are units in the textbooks, and you can give out the guidebooks as 'authentic materials' to groups of students and have them plan a few days in their particular city. Bring along a few pictures, brochures and newspapers from home, maybe including some job classifieds. Also, everyone wanted me to talk about the American school system. So if you have a yearbook, or can bring along a copy of your class schedule from middle/high school, or some pictures of Homecoming, etc. that is helpful." (Gymnasium, Vienna)
- "The more assertive I was about taking communication into my own hands, the better my experience got. The more the assistant shows that he or she is independent and willing to take on (limited) responsibility, the better the interactive experience becomes."
- "Don't listen to comparisons from/to previous TAs. Each teacher has his/her own story. Just do your job as best you can, and enjoy the unique position you're in." (Gymnasium, Tirol)
- "Do not prepare lectures. Prepare interactive worksheets where students can have small tasks to complete toward understanding a topic. With this worksheet as a tool in hand, they are able to form and express their opinions for a discussion 100 % more easily. I did this form for topics of restaurants to violence to teen interests." (HBLA, Lower Austria)
- "It has taken a little time to adjust to all the different teachers/teaching styles. I've learned you simply have to be flexible and let the teachers decide how to use you." (Gymnasium, Upper Austria)

- "Don't be afraid to present interesting and unusual topics, and maintain healthy lines of communication with your teachers." (Gymnasium, Lower Austria)
- "My advice would be to have fun, don't be so serious all the time. Their school lives are stressful and although you should teach them and actually work, use the time to be a treat for them ... This is an amazing experience, use it!" (HAK, Tirol)
- "Don't be shy! If you need something or don't understand something, ASK! Ask your teachers what their expectations are. Establish a system for feedback. Speak slowly and clearly. Jump right in and have fun!!" (BHAS, Lower Austria)
- "My advice is to make your experience the way you want it to be and not to rely on your school to know what you want. If the teachers don't approach you at least a day in advance, then approach them! Smile and be friendly to all if they don't initiate it. People are friendly and nice, but just have a different manner in which they express themselves. In class you are on stage, performing, don't let them know you're nervous and try to make them laugh at least once in every class! Be prepared – they will respect you for this!" (Gymnasium, Tirol)
- "Be open, honest and persistent. If you have a problem, or don't understand something, ask until you do. If you don't speak up right away, it will be much harder to change something later, and you don't want to be roped into doing something, which makes you uncomfortable just because you didn't speak up. Austrians are used to people who say their opinions clearly, and will expect you to do so." (HAK, Styria)
- "Be flexible. Many times lessons you've prepared might not even be used or class may be canceled. Not everything goes as planned, but it's all part of the challenge of working as a TA." (HLW, Vienna)
- "Be yourself – make jokes and talk about things you think are funny. A sense of humor in a second language is a little different, so laugh at your own jokes and the class will eventually "learn" how to laugh." (BRG, Steiermark)
- "Be a part of school events, trips, etc. You get to know teachers and students much better and it helps you with your work." (BHAK, Lower Austria)

6. IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT AUSTRIA

The Austrian Federal Chancellery and Federal Press Service have an informational website in English: <http://www.austria.gv.at/site/3327/Default.aspx>

6.1 Language

The importance of knowing German for the success of your stay in Austria cannot be sufficiently stressed. A person's enjoyment and profit from his/her year in this country are almost proportional to the degree to which he/she knows the language. If you become dependent upon English-speaking Austrians and the American colony in Austria, much of the benefit of your stay abroad will be lost. Many TAs who have extensive experience in Germany have trouble with language in Austria: keep in mind that Austrian German not only includes many regional accents, but also dialects with vocabulary different than High German.

It is strongly recommended that you use the time before arrival to brush up on verbal communication. Try to work at the language lab at your school, enlarge your vocabulary, sign up for a conversation course, or attend activities of the German Club if there is one in your vicinity and practice your German there.

Dependents accompanying you should also make every effort to get a start in German before their arrival, such as learning the names of foods and the system of weights and measures. Children attending Austrian schools will receive instruction exclusively in

German; yet bi-lingual schools are being established in larger urban centers. Try to speak German with them before departure - even a little acquaintance with the language will make it easier for them.

There are a number of German language learning possibilities in Austria throughout the whole year, including Berlitz, inlingua, and International House. Courses are also available at a *Volkshochschule* (www.vhs.at) a *Berufsförderungsinstitut* (<http://www.bfi.at>), Delphin Sprachservice (<http://www.dolphin.at>) and at the universities. You can start your search at Campus Austria: <http://www.campus-austria.at/campus/frontend.php>.

6.2 Austrian-American Personal Relationships

Personal relationships with Austrians are not only vital to your personal enjoyment of your year here, but are also **essential to the basic aims** of the Teaching Assistantship program. Making friends is usually not difficult; you will have plenty of opportunities if you eat a snack or drink coffee in the teacher's lounge, eat at the school buffets, or participate in the activities of student and bi-national organizations as well as the programs offered by your school or local sports clubs. Austrians, however, may seem more reserved, maintaining fewer but closer friendships compared to Americans.

Social patterns are more formal in Austria; shaking hands all around, greeting colleagues and friends in the hallway or entering and exiting the *Konferenzzimmer*, greeting employees when entering or leaving an office or shop, using appropriate titles, etc. While students now use the *du* form among themselves, the older generation continues to address colleagues with *Kollege* or *Kollegin*. *Fräulein* is never used with titles and never alone, except for waitresses, sales girls, etc. A woman past her twenties is addressed as *Frau* whether she is married or not. It is customary to take along flowers, a bottle of wine, or a small gift when invited to private homes.

6.3 Currency and Financial Matters

The Austrian monetary unit is the euro (€, E or EUR), with fluctuations in value in recent years between 1.20 and 1.55 dollars to the euro. Please check current exchange rates. Euros are issued in:

Coins	.01	.02	.05	.10	.20	.50	1.00	2.00
Notes	5	10	20	50	100	500		

All teaching assistants are presumed to have sufficient financial resources to meet their annual income tax and other financial obligations in the U.S. while abroad. It is advisable to keep some funds in an American bank or with a friend for the payment of such obligations. Transferring money between countries is possible but can be logistically difficult and include extra expenses, particularly through wire-transfer.

Check with your American banks and credit card companies if they charge for usage within Europe.

Many ATMs in Austria accept U.S. ATM cards (Maestro, Cirrus) and make the transactions directly from your account (at the exchange rate of the day of the transaction). However, beware of withdrawal fees charged by both the Austrian bank and your U.S. bank.

Normal banking hours in Austria are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. and 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. (Thursdays until 5:30 p.m.). This may vary considerably; check the opening hours of your local bank.

Traveler's cheques are a safe and convenient way to carry your money (1-2 % fee). Your bank or American Express office will advise you on how to buy and cash them. You can usually exchange dollars at the airport or main railroad station in Vienna upon arrival.

Personal checks from American accounts will be accepted by Austrian banks, but allow about four weeks waiting time for the checks to clear, unless you hold an account with the respective Austrian bank. American Express International has a check cashing service for those holding American Express credit cards. The usual form of payment in Austria is with cash or a cash card, or by payment order with an *Erlagschein / Zahlschein*.

There is no counterpart to the "personal check" in Austria; the *Bankomatkarte* functions as a debit card. Therefore, you do not have to worry about opening a checking account.

Credit cards have become increasingly popular in Austria, and major credit cards are accepted in most places, but not necessarily in restaurants and small stores. If you have the PIN code for your credit card, you may withdraw cash at specially designated "international" ATMs in Austria, but you should look into the charges your credit card carrier makes before using this as a method of drawing funds.

6.4 Living Standard and Costs

For general information on life in Austria and relevant links, please consult the Commission's website: http://www.fulbright.at/us_citizens/general_living.php

All teaching assistants should expect to spend a significant amount of money before the first paycheck in the middle of November to pay for travel expenses, rent (October AND November) and a deposit.

The differences between Austrian and American traditions, habits, income structures, and expectations make it difficult to compare the standards and costs of living. While some things (particularly services rendered and goods) cost more, other things cost less.

When budgeting and planning your stay in Austria, please remember running costs in the U.S. (house, car payments, etc.), and that the TA salary is designed for one person.

Your teaching assistant salary should cover necessary day-to-day expenses for one person in Austria. TAs with dependents must have sufficient extra funds and should not expect to finance their family's stay on one teaching assistant salary. Housing is a major expenditure for all teaching assistants, and clothing can be expensive by American standards. TAs with babies or growing children are advised to purchase items for them in advance in the U.S., which they can grow into. However, there are discount markets and chain stores in all major Austrian cities. Groceries cost roughly the same.

There are also a number of trade-offs. For example, public transportation is cheap in all major cities and tickets to many cultural events have discounted opportunities (standing room at the Vienna State Opera and the State Symphony for €3-5!).

Depending on your situation, teaching assistants typically spend the following percentage of their salary for the items listed below:

Housing	25 - 50 %
Utilities, heat	5 - 8 %
Food	30 - 40 %
Laundry, dry cleaning	3 - 4 %
Daily transportation	3 - 5 %
Local travel	6 - 8 %
Entertainment	3 - 5 %

Cultural events	3 - 5 %
Other (medical, clothing)	5 - 10 %

To help with budgeting, here are some sample costs (in euros) in Austria:

Monthly U-Bahn pass in Vienna	49.50
Single fare for city public transportation	1.80
2nd Class train ticket between Vienna and Salzburg with a <i>Vorteilskarte</i>	23.80
Cell phone call	0.05 - 0.15
Cell phone text message	0.02 - 0.05
Movie ticket	5 - 10
Coffee at a café	2.50 - 4
Night in a hostel	15 - 25
Day ski pass	20 - 40
Dinner at a restaurant	8 - 20

The following sales taxes (*Mehrwertsteuer*) are used in Austria. Unlike in the U.S., price tags show prices including taxes.

For food, medicine, rent	10 %
For gas, electricity, clothing and most other products	20 %

In Austria you are required by law to register and purchase a license for all broadcasting reception equipment (TV and/or radio). More information can be found online at: <http://www.orf-gis.at/>.

6.5 Medical Coverage

In case of a serious emergency, call an ambulance (Rettung, 144).

Medical care in Austria is on par with the standards in highly developed, industrialized country. Most medications are available; however, many require a doctor's prescription. For example, you cannot get over-the-counter anti-histamines in Austria. Medications are only sold at pharmacies (*Apotheke*) where some medications for less serious illnesses such as the common cold can be prescribed on-site. **If you need a specific medicine, bring it in sufficient quantity for the beginning of your stay and bring your doctor's prescription along with you.** Sending (even over-the-counter) medications through the mail can lead to problems with Austrian or U.S. customs.

Some TAs recommend immunization against the flu and the common cold. Wood ticks in Austria carry a serious viral infection similar to Lyme disease (which can result in meningitis in some cases), and tick immunization is strongly recommended.

Physicians are listed in the telephone directory under *Ärzte*. If you are in need of a doctor ask your landlord, colleagues or main office at school for the name of their family doctor, or pick out one in your vicinity from the telephone directory.

Large hospitals operate emergency rooms for accidents (*Unfallstationen*) on a 24-hour basis. Outpatient clinics (*Ambulanzen*) are open in the mornings on weekdays for the general public where medical care and advice can be obtained for minimal fees or under Austrian insurance coverage. The telephone directory lists hospitals under *Krankenhäuser*. For thorough examinations, a consultation at a doctor's office (*Ordination*) is suggested.

A great tool for finding a physician is offered by the *Österreichische Ärztekammer* online. Some of the local *Ärztckammern* even let you limit your search to physicians who can speak English. Be sure to pick BVA when selecting your *Krankenkasse*.

Burgenland: <http://www.aekbgld.at/service/aerztesuche.aspx>
Kärnten: <http://www.aekkttn.at/servlets/aekkttn/patienten/arztanfrage/ArztAnfrage.po>
Niederösterreich: <http://cms.arztnoe.at/cms/ziel/100969/DE/>
Oberösterreich: <http://nextdoor.wigeogis.com/kunden/akoo/start.asp>
Salzburg: <http://www.aeksbzg.at/nav.jsp?id=15>
Steiermark: <http://www.aekstmk.or.at/cms/cms.php?pageName=46>
Tirol: <http://www.aektirol.at/fas.htm>
Vorarlberg: <http://www.aekvbg.or.at/aek/dyn/distributor?page=extfueall>
Wien: <http://www.aekwien.or.at/997.py>

6.6 Tipping

Tip modestly compared to American standards: tips to waiters, taxi drivers, porters, hairdressers, etc., are usually 5-10 %. Instead leaving the tip on the table, it is customary to round off the bill. Thus, if the bill were €12.50, you would say, "*Bitte auf 13 Euro.*" Some Austrians may also leave a few coins on the table for the waiter who served them, if the money was collected by another waiter - *Ober (Zahlkellner)*.

Musicians (e.g. at *Heurigen*) expect tips, too. They usually set up a plate or basket in a strategic place near the door into which you can drop money on your way out. It is usually hard to miss.

6.7 Telephone

There are a number of recommended alternatives to signing a contract for landline phones, including cell phones, Skype, Gmail Chat, calling cards (rates increase if either party is using a cell phone), and particularly good deals for international calls on certain prepaid cell phones. Contrary to the U.S., in Austria, local calls can be quite expensive for landlines. For a comprehensive listing of providers and respective rates: <http://www.infospot.at/>

Former TAs recommend buying an Austrian prepaid SIM card because contracts typically require a 2-year commitment. Generally, an SMS can cost less than 5¢ and a phone-call can cost less than 10¢ per minute. Austrian cell phone providers: A1, Drei, Telering, T-Mobile, Orange, Bob and Yes.

Important numbers such as **fire brigade (122)**, **police (133)**, **ambulance (144)**, long-distance codes, and various service numbers are listed on the cover or on the first pages of the telephone directory.

Instructions in telephone booths are also given in English. In most booths the coin will be returned if you do not get a connection. Several calls can be made within the time limit. Some phones only take pre-paid phone cards, which can be purchased at any post office.

6.8 Public Transportation

Austria's modern public transportation systems will provide for easy travel within local areas and around Austria. While tickets are reasonably priced, there are heavy fines for riding without a ticket (*Schwarzfahren*) on public transportation.

For any sort of commute it is highly recommended to ask transportation services about weekly and monthly tickets, which will provide significant savings. Weekly tickets are particularly valuable when holidays reduce the number of working weeks within a month.

The discount train card (*Vorteilskarte*), issued by the Austrian Railway Company (ÖBB), is valid for one year and reduces the costs of train rides up to 50%. If you are under 26, the card will cost you € 19.90; otherwise, it will cost € 99.90. There is also the possibility

of getting a 25 % reduction for traveling to neighboring countries with your *Vorteilskarte*. Please remember to take an ID and a passport photo with you when applying for the card. There are also number of discount fares offered by the ÖBB to neighboring EU countries (sometimes as low as 29 Euros for a seat on a night train). More information on the *Vorteilskarte* and the ÖBB can be found online at: <http://www.oebb.at>

Also look into bus travel, which can often be cheaper than a train.

6.9 Store Hours

Business opening hours in Austria are shorter than in the U.S., often closing at or before 7pm. Shops and restaurants are often closed on Sundays and national holidays. In smaller towns and villages, shops close at noon on Saturdays.

6.10 Books and Information on Austria

The more you know before arrival, the more rewarding the experience will be. To maximize your experience, try learning about the country where you will spend a full year, either through a guide book, such as Grieben's, Fodor's, Baedeker's or Michelin (emphasizing art) or by reading the histories of Austria and Vienna. At the same time, be prepared to have to answer questions about your own country and review your own cultural history.

Recommended literature:

- Dr. Lonnie Johnson's Introducing Austria: A Short History (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 1987) provides a short survey of Austrian history.
- American Ways, edited by Gary Althen, et.al. (Intercultural Press: 2nd edition, 2002) is helpful for preparing to teach and live in Europe. This paperback, with 22 chapters, attempts to introduce people coming to the United States to the peculiarities of the "American way of life," receiving accolades for its insight and criticism for reproducing stereotypes.
- In a more scholarly and historical vein, Richard Pells wrote an interesting and multi-faceted book on European-American perceptions and transatlantic relations: Not Like Us: How Europeans have loved, hated, and transformed American Culture since World War II (Basic Books: 1997). This book is a treasure chest of information that reaches from the historical analysis of the concept of "Americanization" or the impact of the Marshall Plan to reasons for the popularity of U.S. sitcoms in Europe.
- A good start for a general introduction to Austrian customs and etiquette: Culture Shock! Austria by Susan Roraff and Julie Krejci (London: Kuperard, 2001).
- The American Women's Association in Austria publishes Living in Vienna: A Practical Information Guide for the English-speaking Community. Although some of the information is "Vienna-centric," much of it pertains to Austria as a whole. Information on ordering a copy is available the AWA websites: <http://www.awavienna.com/>.
- Gordon Brook-Sheperd has written a tremendous amount about Austria in The Austrians: A Thousand Year Odyssey (paperback: HarperCollins, 1996) provides a good general introduction to Austrian history, characterized by a very sympathetic treatment of the Habsburgs.
- Anton Pelinka, a professor of political science from the University of Innsbruck and former member of the Austrian Fulbright Commission's board, provides a superb overview and analysis of contemporary Austria in Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).
- Rolf Steininger, Günther Bischof and Michael Gehler's book Austria in the Twentieth Century has interesting articles on Austrian history and politics, especially about the

interwar years and the time after the end of World War II up to the year 2000 (New Brunswick: Transaction Pub, 2002).

- TAs living in Vienna may wish to consult Vienna – The Past in the Present: A Historical Survey by Inge Lehne and Lonnie Johnson (Riverside: Aridane Press, 1995, 2nd ed.). The Viennese born US author Frederic Morton has written two exceptionally readable books (available in paperback): A Nervous Splendor: Vienna, 1888-89, which is built around the suicide of Crown Prince Rudolf, and Thunder at Twilight: Vienna 1913-14, a portrait of cultural life in Vienna on the verge of World War I.
- Claudio Magris' book Danube is a good introduction to the history of the Danube basin.

The following Internet websites (and their link pages) may also be helpful in obtaining information about Austria:

http://www.bmeia.gv.at	Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs
http://www.wien.gv.at	City of Vienna
http://www.austria.gv.at	Austrian Federal Press Service: Federal Chancellery
http://www.austria.org	Austrian Press and Information Service
http://www.austria.info.at	Austrian National Tourist Office
http://www.apa.co.at	Austria Press Agency
http://www.acfny.org	Austrian Cultural Forum, New York
http://www.cas.umn.edu	Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota
http://www.virtualvienna.net	Online community of English speakers in Austria
http://www.tiscover.at	Tourist Information

General information on Austria as well as maps and brochures may be obtained from the Austrian Cultural Institute in New York, the Austrian Consulates and the Austrian National Tourist Office in the U.S. (for addresses see Appendices 12.5 and 12.6). Furthermore, many Austrian cities and towns have websites, which can be found through an Internet search.

In addition to your specific reference books and dictionaries you may wish to acquire the Duden paperback Wie sagt man in Österreich? A small Webster's English language dictionary and a German language dictionary might come in handy.

7. AMERICAN GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR

7.1 International Role

The teaching assistant program provides more than a native speaker in the classrooms by providing **cultural exchanges in both directions**: TAs are representatives of America. This is an important aspect of the program, because the American perspective of the United States is different than the European perspective. Trans-Atlantic relations and cross-cultural perceptions are topics that will repeatedly come up. In many ways, including geographically, politically, socially, the United States is very large and very complex. It is impossible to know everything, and occasionally teachers and students may expect you to know more about the U.S. than you actually do.

You also will inevitably be asked about current affairs. In recent years, topics of great interest have included how the Electoral College functions, President Obama, 9/11, gun control, popular culture, the death penalty, and the economic crisis. Direct questions are not always meant to be confrontational, or a judgment on your character.

On occasion, however, you may be confronted with a certain amount of anti-Americanism. It is important for you to recognize that you are not personally responsible for American foreign policy since World War I, Hiroshima, the Vietnam War, or poverty, crime, drugs, and racism in the United States. Your job is not to defend the United

States, but to try and explain it to your students. This is not always an easy job, but keeping this difference in mind always helps.

As former teaching assistants have observed:

- "Most of my students' knowledge of America comes directly from television."
- "The questions that the students have are usually based on what they've seen on TV."
- "I have been able to dispel certain myths about the U.S. just by talking to the students and answering their questions. My being there has given them a better understanding of America and the American way of life."
- "I've made a difference by providing students with a real example."

These comments reflect the acquired knowledge of Austrians about America from American movies, TV shows and the Media, such as: *Wag the Dog*, Michael Moore's documentary works; *OC California*, *Sex and the City*, *Desperate Housewives*, *The Simpsons*; CNN and MTV. These represent America equally poorly as the few stereotypes of Austria penetrate the American collective knowledge: Austria offers more than just Lederhosen, Arnold Schwarzenegger, *The Sound of Music* and skiing.

Therefore it is important to have an opportunity like this, as one assistant said, "to open up the minds of students to things they never knew about the U.S. by telling them how it really is at home." You will be able to do this by covering certain topics, which are of interest to the students.

Most of your teaching time will be spent generating discussions, answering questions about America, and presenting material. **Your job is to engage the students**, to lower their apprehension about using a foreign language and to get them to talk.

There are some very useful Internet resources that deal with the culture shock many people experience when studying or living in another country:

<http://www3.uop.edu/sis/culture/index.htm>

<http://www.studentsabroad.com/>

<http://www.uwec.edu/counsel/pubs/shock.htm>

7.2 Frequently Used Topics

AIDS	Genetic engineering
Child abuse	Jobs - job applications - résumés
Death penalty	Native Americans
Drugs – alcohol abuse	Religions
Feminism	Pollution - environment
Food	Racism - prejudice
Current events in the U.S. & U.S. foreign policy	Regionalism - life in different parts of the U.S. - geography
Grammar - differences between American English and British English	U.S. history - melting pot – civil rights - immigrants– foreign policy
Holidays - traditions	School system - school life
Political system - government – elections - voting	Teen issues - smoking, driving, lifestyle, fashion, teenage pregnancy
Literature	Tourism

Media - television - advertising
Music

Terrorism
Violence - crime - gangs - gun control

How in-depth you get with these topics of course depends on which levels you are teaching. If you spend time with the *Unterstufe* (ages 10-14), you might discuss a few of these topics at a very basic level of English, whereas *Oberstufe* students (ages 14-18) will be able to understand and discuss these topics at a fairly high level.

To form some ideas of what you might teach, you may wish to consult this website where past teaching assistants have shared lesson plan ideas: <http://content.tibs.at/fla/>.

In the appendix of this handbook, you will find a list of on-line resources related to the aforementioned topics and the tables of contents from the textbooks used at the different kinds of schools. Keep in mind, however, that not every *Gymnasium* or every HTL uses the same textbook. Use the list as a guide and ask your school to provide you with copies of the textbooks, if they expect you to use them on a regular basis.

Although teaching grammar is something you should not do on a regular or extensive basis (according to the guidelines), you may also be asked to help explain certain grammar points or help with grammatical exercises. This may be a challenge if you have never had to do this before, because there is a difference between speaking intuitively and having to explain the prescriptive rules. Having some kind of a grammar book with you as a reference will help. Do not hesitate to ask your teacher to make sure you understand English grammar before you are expected to teach it. Although you are not expected to know everything about the English language, do your best to be prepared for those situations where an explanation is needed.

7.3 Bring Authentic Materials

Authentic materials provide a more genuine use of the language and more motivation for students to learn the language. While bringing these may be difficult, shipping them from the US can be costly. The Internet provides a great alternative; a list of Internet resources is included in the appendix. Here are suggestions for effective materials. Keep in mind that many schools also have subscriptions to English-language publications.

Consider asking your school for advice about which materials you should bring, but some general ideas are:

Films, videos of talk shows, news clips, baseball game, commercials, etc. (Note: European videos don't operate on the NTSC, but the PAL format. Due to different regional encoding, you may also encounter problems with American DVDs.)

Pictures or slides of home and town/city	Newspaper articles from home
Tourist brochures/pamphlets	Short stories
U.S. history book	Advertisements - housing, jobs
Grammar book	Restaurant menus
Any "reference" CD-ROMs you may have	Music
Teen magazines	Maps or atlas of the U.S.
Comic books	TV guides

A "bag of tricks" - spur of the moment lessons and games

Magazines: Newsweek, Economist, Time, Rolling Stone, Spotlight, World and Press

8. THE AUSTRIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

8.1 Introduction

The Austrian system is based on federal legislation that both provides for a general institutional framework as well as centrally regulates a number of detailed issues on a national level, such as school types and curricula. The Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK: <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/>) oversees primary and secondary schools, administered by boards of education (*Landesschulräte*) in the nine Austrian federal provinces.

The most striking difference between the school systems between Austria and the United States is the two-track system that prepares students for different educational and professional careers (including vocational training). After children complete four years of primary education (*Volksschule*) at the age of ten, their parents make far-reaching decisions about their children's future by choosing one of two educational tracks.

Age Entering	U.S. Grade	Austrian <i>Schulstufe</i> or <i>Klasse</i>	Primary and Secondary Educational Paths in Austria			
6	1	1	General Primary Education (Volksschule)			
7	2	2				
8	3	3				
9	4	4				
10	5	1	"Higher" Secondary Schools (Höhere Schulen) Lower-Secondary Level: (<i>Unterstufe</i>) AHS	Polytechnikum		
11	6	2		General Secondary Schools (Hauptschule)		
12	7	3				
13	8	4				
14	9	5	Upper-Secondary Level (<i>Oberstufe</i>) AHS (general academic)	Upper-Secondary Level (<i>Oberstufe</i>) BHS (vocational / technical)	Trade schools (2-3 year programs)	Vocational / technical training and apprenticeship
15	10	6				
16	11	7				
17	12	8				
18		9*			"Blue collar" labor market, such as sales clerk, hairdresser, plumber, electrician.	
19			University studies, <i>Fachhochschulen</i> , "colleges" (<i>Akademien</i>) for teachers, social workers, health professions, etc., "white collar" labor market			

*Note: Many higher secondary vocational-technical schools (BHS) have 5 years in the upper level.

8.2 General Secondary Schools Track

The *Hauptschule* educational track provides four years of mandatory general education, usually followed by a 1-year *Polytechnikum* (vocational trade school) or transfer to a "higher school" with good grades.

8.3 "Higher" Secondary Schools Track

The other educational track is an eight-year, "higher school" track designed to prepare students for a university education or further academic or professional training, either on a general track (*allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen*, AHS) or at schools that provide

advanced vocational training (*berufsbildende höhere Schulen, BHS*). In order to enroll in an Austrian university, students must complete one of these “higher schools.”

Education at a higher secondary academic school lasts for an overall period of eight years, split into a lower-secondary level (*Unterstufe*) of general education (ages 10-14) and an upper-secondary level (*Oberstufe*) of specialization (ages 15-18). *Oberstufe* offers a variety of different four-year upper-secondary level programs with varying fields of generalization or specialization. Therefore, the second most important educational decision in a student’s academic life in Austria is made at the age of fourteen.

8.4 Higher Secondary Academic Schools (AHS)

The purpose of lower- and upper-secondary academic schools (*allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen, AHS*) is to give students a broad and extended general education and to provide them with the skills and knowledge necessary for a university education or for more specialized education or training at post-secondary technical and vocational colleges called *Fachhochschulen* or *Akademien*.

The upper-secondary academic school (*Oberstufenrealgymnasium*) comprises of the 5. *Klasse* – 8. *Klasse* (U.S. grades 9 to 12) and may be attended after successful completion of the fourth year of a lower-secondary school. Students conclude upper-secondary academic schools with comprehensive oral and written exams (*Reifeprüfung*) in three to four subjects (e.g. German, Mathematics, and a foreign language) and are awarded a graduating certificate (*Matura*), entitling them to enroll in an Austrian university.

Core curriculum is taught in all school types up to the *Reifeprüfung*. In addition to compulsory subjects, individual school types provide for further specialization in certain subject areas depending on their special focus. Compulsory subjects are: German, foreign languages, history and social studies, geography and economics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and ecology, psychology and philosophy, musical education, art classes, handicrafts (at the lower-secondary level), and computer science.

There are several different types of AHS schools, which have some autonomy in placing their educational emphases. However, it is common for these “different schools” to be structured as curriculum track options within one school administrative structure and building.

The AHS “school types” are:

- *Gymnasium* is the “classic” lower- and upper-secondary academic school. English is studied from the 1. *Klasse* (U.S. grade 5) onwards. Usually, Latin is studied from the 3. *Klasse* (U.S. grade 7) onwards, and a third foreign language is studied from the 5. *Klasse* (U.S. grade 9) onwards. Many schools, however, opt for different options.
- *Realgymnasium* is a lower- and upper- secondary academic school beginning at the 3. *Klasse* (U.S. grade 7). It offers either Latin or a second foreign language, emphasizes mathematics and science with descriptive geometry (at the upper-secondary level), geometrical drawing (an elective at the lower-secondary level), and projects emphasize practice-oriented education (labs, computer science).
- *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium* is a secondary academic school emphasizing economics.
- *Naturwissenschaftliches Oberstufenrealgymnasium* is an upper-secondary academic school for natural sciences.
- *Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit Instrumentalunterricht* is an upper-secondary academic school specializing in instrumental music.

- *Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit bildnerischem Schwerpunkt* is an upper-secondary academic school emphasizing art and handicraft classes.

8.5 Higher Secondary Vocational-Technical Schools (BHS)

After completing the *Unterstufe* (1. Klasse to 4. Klasse, U.S. grades 5 to 8), students may choose to move into a variety of different upper-secondary schools that provide specific vocational and technical training with an additional 5 years of education. The core curricula of these different school types reflect their respective fields of specialization.

Students also conclude these higher secondary vocational schools with comprehensive written and oral exams (*Reifeprüfung*) and are awarded a *Matura*, entitling them enrollment at an Austrian university. In addition to the *Matura*, they also receive technical-vocational education diplomas that certify their skills and entitle them to work in certain professions.

The BHS "school types" are:

- *Höhere technische Lehranstalten* (HTL): intensive five-year upper-secondary level programs for engineering (39 hours per week) with various fields of specialization in engineering. During the first two years, the emphasis is on general education. After the second year, students may further specialize in their respective fields.
- *Handelsakademien* (HAK): five-year upper-secondary level programs in business administration, providing students an integrated business (commercial) education, which qualifies them for white-collar jobs in commercial and administrative branches.
- *Höhere Lehranstalten für wirtschaftliche Berufe* (HLWB): upper secondary programs designed to prepare students for occupations in the service industries. They offer classes in a third foreign language, business, ecology, nutrition and business management, business organization and industrial management, human ecology, social administration, social services and health care and cultural tourism.
- *Höhere Lehranstalten für Tourismus* (HLT): specialized in tourism and offer additional choices in the following areas: foreign languages and business, hotel management, tourism management and cultural entertainment.
- *Bildungsanstalten für Kindergartenpädagogik und Sozialpädagogik* (BAKIP): train nursery school teachers and non-teaching supervisory staff.
- *Höhere land- und forstwirtschaftliche Schulen*: designed to provide students with the technical and managerial know-how for the fields of agriculture, forestry and related sectors.

Lists of Austrian schools, most of which have their own websites, can be found on the information server of the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture:
<http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/schulen/index.xml>

8.6 Post-Secondary Schools

There are several post-secondary schools available in Austria, including universities (*Universitäten*), universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*), academies (*Akademien*), and teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*), open to all students who have a *Matura*. With the exception of arts and music universities and university degree programs in medicine, there are no entrance exams at Austrian universities. The university academic calendar has two semesters: a winter semester (October – February) and a summer semester (March – June). The tuition fees of Austrian universities are inexpensive compared to American universities: no tuition for EU citizens; approximately 380€ per semester in tuition for non-EU citizens.

For non-EU citizens, application to an Austrian university has to be completed at least one month before the semester starts. Applicants must submit an official transcript, application form, and additional documents outlined in the application materials. Please consult the university websites for more detailed application and course information, as well as appropriate deadlines and fees.

Additional information regarding study at the University of Vienna can be found at:

<http://www.univie.ac.at/studentpoint>

<http://studieren.univie.ac.at/index.php?id=364> English Version

9. AUSTRIAN SCHOOL LIFE

9.1 Who's Who?

The gender-neutral or gender-specific use of terms (i.e. chairperson instead of chairman) is more frequent in English than in German, where there is a grammatical gender (*der, die, das*) that also has to be taken into account. Most positions and titles can be "feminized" by adding the suffix "in" to the singular form: e.g. *Direktor, Direktorin*. An upper case "I" is often used in the plural to indicate male and female members of a group. Technically, *Studenten* refers to male university students, *Studentinnen* to female university students, and *StudentInnen* (note the upper-case I) to male and female university students. Over the past years, however, the gender-neutral term *Studierende* has been introduced and is now employed in most cases. You may also hear the following titles: *Schüler, Schülerin, and SchülerInnen* for the pupils at your schools; Professor or the slightly more formal *Herr/Frau Professor* used by the pupils to address their teachers; *Herr Kollege/Frau Kollegin* used by teachers to address colleagues who they do not have close personal relationships with; and *Herr/Frau Direktor*.

This is a short list of positions to help you get oriented at your school:

- DirektorIn:* The principal of the school is responsible for management and budget issues and public relations.
- Direktion:* The main administrative office at the school.
- AdministratorIn:* This person is usually in charge of scheduling classes and teachers and arranging substitute teachers/lessons.
- SekretärIn:* This person takes care of all of the school's paperwork (your file included), calls and mail. It is a good idea to get along with this person. He/she knows how to get things done if you have questions. He/she is responsible, for example, for handling matters related to health insurance and salary payment.
- Hauswart / Schulwart / Portier:* The building custodian is also an important person to get along with if you have any needs or requests (keys, supplies, etc.).
- Klassenvorstand:* Similar to a homeroom teacher in the U.S., this teacher takes care of the administrative paperwork (attendance, report cards, and mailings) for his/her class (e.g. the "5A"). Often, the *Klassenvorstand* follows the same class from the first year until the class finishes its school career.
- Konferenzzimmer:* Usually a large "faculty room" where teachers have their desks and mailboxes, as well as spend time between classes or during free periods in their schedule. You might want to ask your *KontaktlehrerIn* if there is a spot or desk for you to work and/or leave materials, as well as a mailbox (*Postfach*) for correspondence with teachers.

KontaktlehrerIn / BetreuungslehrerIn: The "contact" or supervisory teacher who will plan your schedule and will show you around school. If you have any problems or questions, go to this person first.

KlassensprecherIn: The student elected to represent his/her class (e.g. the "5B").

Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss (SGA): A committee made up of teachers, parents, students, and the principal. They discuss issues regarding school policies.

Elternverein: PTA, which tries to keep open lines of communication between teachers and parents. They also raise money for special school projects or special requests.

9.2 School structure

A typical school day starts at about 7:45-8:15 a.m. and has six 50-minute morning periods (*Stunden*) that last until about 1:30-2:00 p.m.; times differ from school to school. Most students will go home after the morning periods, but one or two days a week they might have afternoon classes, which are usually physical education, or electives and small group classes. This may vary however depending on the students' grade level. Schools may have a small lunchroom (*Buffet*), but lunch is not a part of the student's schedule. Some schools also have classes on Saturdays; however, each year, an increasing number of schools are opting for a five-day school week. Austrian schools basically run on a five-day week and ten-month school year.

Teachers switch classrooms, not the students. Students generally have all their classes with the same group of people and in the same classroom. Each grade level is divided into various sub-classes (e.g., the 5th class into 5A, 5B, 5C, etc.), and these sub-classes spend the majority of the school day and their school careers together. This can have an impact on the student behavior, class dynamics, and your instruction style.

Each class consistently meets on a weekly schedule, but not on a daily or block schedule. That is, Austrian students do not have the same subjects at the same time every day, but rather their subjects are arranged into a weekly plan: three hours of English, four hours of math, etc., at various times throughout the week. The core subjects (*Hauptfächer*) are math, German, English and a second foreign language (French, Italian, Spanish, Latin). Some of the other subjects (*Nebenfächer*) are history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, philosophy, psychology, music, art, and PE.

Grading in Austria is based on a one to five scale:

- 1 *Sehr gut*
- 2 *Gut*
- 3 *Befriedigend*
- 4 *Genügend*
- 5 *Nicht genügend*

This scale does not translate directly into the American A to F scale insofar as a "4" is considered not only a passing but also an acceptable grade. Students' academic grades are based to a great extent on major written examinations (*Schularbeiten*), two or three of which are given in the course of the semester. Many students consequently tend to "learn for the test."

A full-time teacher teaches about 20 periods a week and is usually licensed to teach two subjects, in which he/she has completed academic studies. Teachers will often be gone from school when not teaching or performing other duties, such as hall supervision during breaks (*Gangaufsicht*), office hours for parents (*Sprechstunden*), and substitute periods (*Supplierstunden*). Usually there is a master teacher schedule posted in the *Konferenzzimmer*, in case you need to see when a specific teacher should be at school.

9.3 Classroom Environment

In the classroom students use tables, not individual desks. Since the classroom "belongs" to the class and each teacher comes in for his/her lesson, the students in each class usually decide how they want to arrange the tables and how to decorate their classroom; ideas and plans have to be approved by their homeroom teacher (*Klassenvorstand*).

Many TAs find that the school rules and discipline system are less strict and straightforward than those found in American schools. Austrian teachers often rely on their own strategies for creating and maintaining class discipline, as there are often no school-wide detention or demerit systems in place. Some differences in rules observed by former TAs include: the lack of dress code (though students must wear slippers or *Hausschuhe*), the presence of a smoking-area on the school grounds, and the lack of standard disciplinary punishments for disruptive students during or between classes. It is important to realize that, as a TA, you will be largely responsible for establishing a productive classroom environment.

Classroom instruction is more traditional in nature than in the U.S., with the majority of teachers using a frontal instruction approach. Many TAs have observed the differences between Austrian and American educational philosophies and how they manifest themselves in the group dynamics of the classroom. For second language acquisition, European schools often emphasize a teacher led classroom and lack a focus on student-to-student communicative learning.

The facilities you will be working in will probably be well kept up, even if the buildings themselves are old. American schools can be recognized by their spacious "campus" settings: playgrounds, sports fields, tennis courts and big parking lots. Austrian schools are less conspicuous. Usually, sports facilities in Austrian schools are much smaller than their American equivalents; if students play sports, they will usually play on a club or team not affiliated with the school. A big parking lot is not necessary because many teachers and students walk, bike or take public transportation to school; Austrians cannot get driver's licenses before they are 17.

Austrian schools have a break at Christmas (generally from December 24 to January 6), a semester break (a week in February), and an Easter break (the week before Easter), as well as a summer vacation (two months). Roman Catholic Church holidays (e.g., Assumption, Pentecost) are also observed by the state as public holidays in Austria.

10. SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

10.1 General Format

Many TAs have no teaching experience or training. A general lesson plan might follow:

- Warm-Up: primary goal is to announce that class has begun and to get student attention.
- Set the stage: establish the topic.
- Providing input: present new materials.
- Guided participation / controlled practice: students engage in a variety of specific learning activities for specific skills in narrow contexts.
- Extension: students apply and perform lesson goals.
- Closure / Wind-down: let the students know the lesson is coming to an end.

Keep in mind when creating a lesson plan, it is important to have a warm-up and an introduction, and to engage the students in the lesson. Below are suggestions for integrating the topics with the materials mentioned in the previous sections. Below you will find a list of sample lesson plans and "fillers" you can use and adapt for your students/classes. The following sample lesson plans are just that - samples. You can adjust and adapt them to your needs (time schedule, age level, level of English proficiency, etc). They are meant to help guide you and give you ideas.

10.2 Peer Resources

Teachers, the student textbooks, and fellow language assistants will be great resources as you plan your lessons in the upcoming year. Resources are available from previous TAs: <http://content.tibs.at/fla/>, a Google Group, "English Teaching Assistants in Austria" <http://groups.google.com/group/TAaustria>, and a Facebook Group, "Lesson Plan Exchange Austria" <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=273257079186>.

10.3 Suggestions for Topics

Media

1. Introduction: what are the different forms of media
2. Compare/contrast: list most common newspapers and magazines from each country
3. Compare/contrast: radio and television, print and electronic or "new media"

Materials: magazines, newspapers, advertisements, TV guides, video clips

Racism

1. Klasse Introduction: Tell a story of how you or someone you know experienced an act of racism; ask students for a story (may be personal) about an act of racism; relate the topic of racism to a song or elicit song titles from students; write the word "racism" on the board and ask students to brainstorm and define the term (either in groups or as a large group)
2. Klasse Ask them to tell you about the situation in Austria. Are there incidents of racism? Which groups are affected? Ask them what their first reaction is when they hear a person speaking a foreign language. Which languages do they hear?
3. Klasse Music: Play a song and use as a fill-the-gaps exercise. For this topic, Peter Gabriel's "Biko" is suitable (deals with Apartheid in South Africa), or use any other song dealing with the issue of racism. You can also try <http://www.songtext.net/> web site to search for appropriate songs.
4. Klasse Role play - come up with a situation: Put the students in groups and give each group member a specific opinion or role to play. The specific roles should create some kind of controversy/conflict/discussion. Students need to come up with arguments for their opinion and discuss in their small group.

U.S. School System

1. Klasse Introduction: Compare the Austrian school system with the U.S. system
2. Klasse On an overhead transparency/handout/on the board: Outline the structure of the U.S. school system, including a chart of which ages are in which grades, kinds of schools, daily life, school day, schedule, classes, lockers, textbooks, rules, school bus, after school activities, homework, grading system and report cards, extracurricular activities, graduation, prom, dances, etc.
3. Klasse Students outline the Austrian system: compare / contrast the systems
4. Klasse Handout with questions: discuss positives and negatives in each system

Materials: yearbook, report card, student handbook, pictures of graduation, school (or university) newspaper

Fillers

Fillers are used to fill in those last few minutes of class when you have covered all the material for that lesson, but you still have some class time left. It is helpful to have a "bag of tricks" that you can pull out at any time. Use your own discretion as to which fillers are appropriate for your students and how long each filler should last.

- **Hangman:** Use words from the day or from the current topic in class. Choose the words or ask for suggestions (have them write them out to avoid spelling mistakes).
- **Twenty questions:** Have the names of well-known people (singers, actors, authors, athletes, etc) written out on cards. One volunteer will pick a card and the class will ask yes or no questions, for example, "Is it a woman?" or "Is this person still alive?" Whoever guesses the name of the person gets to pick the next card. You can limit the questions to twenty, thus the name of the game.
- **Bingo:** Have a five by five grid ready (photocopied for each student) or ask students to quickly draw this out. This is their Bingo card. You can ask them to label the top of each column with current topics, for example: the first column is names of animals, the second column is colors, the third column is articles of clothing, the fourth column is rooms in a house and the fifth column is furniture. Each student should fill in their own card according to the topics. When they finish, you can then call out, "Colors - blue" or "Rooms - dining room". They should mark their cards by putting a star in the right top corner of the square. When someone has "Bingo", you can start a new game and have them mark their cards by putting an X in the bottom left corner of the square. Reuse the cards as long as they use a different marking system each time.
- **Telephone:** Think of a sentence (somewhat challenging for the age group), and whisper it to the first student. The sentence is whispered around the room from student to student. When it reaches the last student, ask them to tell the class what the sentence is. Tell them the original sentence and see how close they were.
- **Charades / Pictionary:** Have cards prepared with current vocabulary or split the class into two teams and each team can come up with vocabulary for the opposite team. Each team takes turns acting out or drawing for their team to guess. Give points for each correct guess. You may want to set time limits for guessing.
- **Find someone who...** Prepare a grid sheet with specific tasks in each box, for example: can play an instrument, can speak a language other than German, has been to England, etc. Label the top of the grid "Find someone who...". Students walk around the classroom to find a student who answers yes to the task. That student then writes their name in that box. Students try to fill all their boxes with different names of students from their class.
- **Grammar or vocabulary tasks:** who can name all the months of the year in English, can name five animals, can count to 100 by 5's, etc.

11. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP EXTENSIONS FOR A SECOND YEAR

Some teaching assistants wish to continue their stay in Austria. Provided that their performance merits an extension for a second year, TAs may apply to have their teaching assistantships extended for a second year, either at their current locations or at another location in Austria. Applicants for extensions are required to pay a processing fee of €50 to the Fulbright Commission at the time of the application to help defray administrative costs. Status of applications is usually sent out at the beginning of April.

Under no circumstances are teaching assistants entitled to an extension of their assignments. The number of extensions granted is contingent upon the number of applications for extension, their relative quality and merits, the size of the "first time" applicant pool, and the number of teaching assistant positions available for the following school year.

Deadline

The deadline for the Ministry of Education and the Commission to receive extension applications is February 1, 2011. Applying for an extension involves the completion of:

- An *Antrag auf Verlängerung* (found on page 37 in the Leitfaden)
- A written recommendation from your school(s).
- Write a statement answering the question: "Why do you want to stay a second year?" (Attach extra pages as necessary.)

At the beginning of January 2010 the *Direktion* of your *Stammschule* must forward two copies of the *Antrag auf Verlängerung*:

- one copy via the *Dienstweg* to the Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture.
- a second copy to the Fulbright Commission.

Note: Applicants are responsible to ensure that the school officials forward these materials. All of the above-mentioned conditions and deadlines must be met or your request will not be reviewed. It is particularly important for your application to be submitted via the *Dienstweg* to the Ministry of Education. Sending in your application via the *Dienstweg* means that your school will forward your application through the city or provincial school board and it is then sent on to the Ministry of Education. Late applications will not be considered.

12.APPENDIX

12.1 Internet Resources

The following list of on-line resources includes several general information and lesson plan websites, as well as links to articles related to topics which past teaching assistants have been asked to address in class.

There is also a teaching assistant website where past teaching assistants have uploaded and shared lesson plan ideas: <http://content.tibs.at/fla/>

English Teaching Assistants in Austria <http://groups.google.com/group/TAaustria>

Lesson Plan Exchange Austria <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=273257079186>

12.1.1. General Information and Lesson Plan Websites:

Encyclopedia	Microsoft Encarta	http://encarta.msn.com
Language Resource	Dictionary	http://dictionary.reference.com
	Thesaurus	http://thesaurus.reference.com
Lesson Plans	Teaching International English from current Reuters News Stories	http://www.english-to-go.com/
	PBS	http://www.pbs.org/teachers/
	CNN San Francisco Bureau Learning Resources	http://literacynet.org/cnnsf/
	News	http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/
TESL	Dave's ESL Cafe	http://www.eslcafe.com/
	English Language Program Division of USIA	http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/E-USIA/education/engteaching/default.html
	P I Z Z A Z ! People Interested in Zippy and Zany Zcribbling	http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~leslieob/pizzaz.html (includes a bag of tricks)
	Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab	http://www.esl-lab.com/index.htm
	Tongue Twisters	http://towerofenglish.com/

12.1.2 Topic-Specific Websites

AIDS	It's Up to Us	http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/homepages/lesnick/aids/page03.htm
American Studies	USIA Study of the United States	http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/E-USIA/education/amstudy/default.html
Death Penalty	Angel on Death Row: the real case of "Dead Man Walking"	http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/angel/
	Death Penalty Information Center	http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/
	PBS Frontline Report "The Execution"	http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/execution/
Drugs	Mark's Realm - Drug Abuse Resistance Education	http://www.edrugrehab.com/
	The Drug Reform Coordination Network	http://stopthedrugwar.org/home
Environment	EPA	Kids Page: http://www.epa.gov/kids/ Students: http://www.epa.gov/students/ Teacher: http://www.epa.gov/teachers/
Feminism	Virginia Tech Feminist Theory	http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/enin.html
	Gifts of Speech. Women's Speeches Around the World	http://gos.sbc.edu/
Film / Movies	International Movie Database	http://www.imdb.com
Holidays	The Holiday Zone: Activities for English Language Learners	http://www.theholidayzone.com/
Int'l Relations	H-Net discussion group	http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/
Native Americans	Bureau of Indian Affairs	http://www.doi.gov/bia/
	Native American Internet Resources	http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/
	NativeWeb	http://www.nativeweb.org/
Racism	Speakout	http://speakout.com/activism/race/
	Race and Racism and the Law	http://academic.udayton.edu/race/index.htm
Religion	American Religious Experience	http://are.as.wvu.edu/
U.S. Education	U.S. Network for Education Information	http://www.ed.gov/about/contacts/gen/ot_hersites/index.html
U.S. Foreign Policy	The State Department	http://www.state.gov/
U.S. Gov't	Gov't Info. Exchange	http://www.info.gov/
	Government Info. Exchange for Kids	http://www.kids.gov/
	White House for Kids	http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/
	FBI for Kids	http://www.fbi.gov/kids/6th12th/6th12th.htm
	CIA for Kids	https://www.cia.gov/kids-page/index.html
U.S. History	Naturalization Test	http://www.uscis.gov/newtest

12.2 Frequently used textbooks

The following representative selection of the tables of contents from frequently used textbooks will begin to acquaint you with the material students cover at specific age levels as well as the learning sequence in terms of vocabulary and conceptualization. Different schools choose different textbooks contingent upon teacher preferences and their respective branches of specialization in the higher grades.

The New You And Me

Used by: BG, BRG

Grades 1-4 (ages 10-14)

1. Klasse Colors, sweets and snacks, classroom objects, clothes (money), circus animals, body, time, hobbies, food, collections, rooms in a house, family and friends, TV, magic, short stories, holidays (vacation), Christmas, Easter
2. Klasse Holidays (vacation), giving directions, friends, festivals (Halloween), mascots (good luck charms), money, feelings, ghosts, science fiction, sports, magic, school subjects, buildings, pets and animals, lost and found, dreams, Christmas
3. Klasse Adventures, rules (chores/household jobs), mystery story, London, vampires, teen problems, King Arthur, San Francisco, real life dramas, famous writers, natural disasters, cheating in school
4. Klasse Australia, sports, Native Americans, food, save the earth, environmental issues, big cities, New York, book (bookworms), growing up, Ireland, dilemmas, jobs, poetry

Meanings Into Words

Used by: BG, BRG, BORG, HBLA, HLW

Grades 5-8 (ages 14-18)

5. Klasse Housing, holiday Britain, daily routine, schools, rules, jobs, family relations, youth organizations, sports, health (food, calories, activity)
6. Klasse TV (viewing habits, soaps), Canada, city life and country life, endangered earth, inventions and discovery, arts, violence, charities, shopping, advertising
7. Klasse Culture vulture (art, cinema, poems), drugs, racism, politics, books and reading, growing up, travel and tourism, disasters (Titanic, Lindberg flight), environment, media
8. Klasse Family issues (gender roles, single parents, divorce, adoption), attitudes towards work and leisure, industrial change, developing country issues, literature, human rights

Make Your Way With English

Used by: BG, BRG, BORG, BAKIP

Grades 5-8 (ages 14-18)

5. Klasse Pop music, school system, Victorian times, unsolved mysteries, India, environment, poetry, cartoons and jokes, train/railway system, computers, housing, shopping, food, friends-family-fifteen, youth hostels
6. Klasse Fashion, books and reading, violence, relationships, cars and transportation, drugs, Texas, dictionaries, horror films and stories, smoking, tourism in Austria, Amnesty International, dangers of sunbathing
7. Klasse Generations, TV, Canada, art, death and dying, dreams, short stories, senior high school, coping with stress, politics in the U.K., beauty, science and technology, careers
8. Klasse Novels, racial problems in the U.S.A., leisure time, Northern Ireland, language (British and American English, who speaks what, men and women, feminism), newspapers, The American Dream, school and education

Make Your Way In Business

Used by: BHAK, HBLA

Ages 14-19

1. Klasse Family, school, hobbies, pen pals, agony columns, shopping, diary, home - what does that mean, free time, sports, American football, bungee jumping, bodybuilding, extreme sports, health and sickness, food, restaurants, menus, invitations, preparation, games and tricks, school, post office, jobs, working situation, traffic signs, reading instructions on equipment, hotels, banks, holidays (vacation)
2. Klasse Being a teenager, clothing and fashion, school life, goals, music and books, TV habits, video games, alcohol and smoking, school or work, tourist industry, flying, going by train, holidays (vacation), Australia, New Zealand
3. Klasse Peers and parents, youth exchanges, American and British English, politics, elections, human rights and discrimination, Earth Day, eating habits, coping with stress, drugs, tourism, tourist brochures, food and restaurants, shopping, banking, history of money, business industry, working in industry, products
4. Klasse Driving, renting a car, stereotypes, European Union, stock market, newspapers, tabloids, death, AIDS, violence, civil war and famine, United Nations, Internet and computers, art, jobs for males and females, business ethics, travel industry, management styles, advertisements
5. Klasse Economic aspects, organizing an event, hurricanes, energy conservation, tourist industry problems, standards of living, child labor in the Third World, fashion, jobs, job applications

Work It Out In English

Used by: HTL, die Graphische

Ages 14-19

- Book 1. Getting to know one another, sports, shopping, adventures, families, young people abroad, free time, post office, computers, reading instructions, a dream job, gender issues, advertisements, hotels, environment, at the bank, working with tools, working with numbers, working with shapes, safety
- Book 2. Schools, food, fashion, travel by train, houses, youth hostels, cars and transportation, dictionaries, smoking, Amnesty International (torture), dangers of sunbathing

12.3 Meldezettel

<http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/documents/meldez.pdf>

<http://www.help.gv.at/documents/meldez.pdf>

12.4 U.S. Citizen Registration with U.S. Consular Section

<http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/cons/ibrs.htm>

12.5 Addresses In the United States of America

Austrian Consular Offices and the Austrian Embassy in Washington, D.C: (Consult <http://www.austria.org/> for details)

<p>Embassy of Austria Ambassador Dr. Christian PROSL (http://www.austria.org) 3524 International Court, NW Washington, D.C. 20008-3027 Consular District: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, US-Virgin-Islands, Commonwealth of the Bahamas Tel: (202) 895-6700 Fax: (202) 895-6750 E-mail: washington-ob@bmeia.gv.at</p>	<p>Consular Section Tel: (202) 895-6711, 895-6743 Fax: (202) 895-6773 E-mail: consularsection@austria.org</p>
<p>Austrian Press and Information Service 3524 International Court, NW Washington, D.C. 20008-3027 Tel: (202) 895-6775 Fax: (202) 895-6772 E-mail: austroinfo@austria.org</p>	<p>Office of Science & Technology at the Embassy of Austria 3524 International Court, NW Washington, DC 20008-3027 Tel: (202) 895-6754 Fax: (202) 895-6750 E-mail: office@ostina.org Website: http://www.ostina.org/</p>
<p>Austrian Cultural Forums <u>NEW YORK</u> 11 East 52nd Street New York, NY 10022 Tel: (212) 319-5300 Fax: (212) 644-8660 E-mail: desk@acfny.org Website: http://www.acfny.org</p>	<p>Austrian Cultural Forums <u>WASHINGTON</u> 3524 International Court, NW Washington, D.C. 20008-3027 Tel: (202) 895-6700 Fax: (202) 895-6750 E-mail: culture@austria.org</p>
<p>Austrian Consulates General</p>	
<p><u>CHICAGO</u> Consul General Dr. Robert Zischg Wrigley Building, Suite 707 400 N. Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60611 Consular District: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin Tel: (312) 222-1515 Fax: (312) 222-4113 E-mail: chicago-gk@bmeia.gv.at</p>	<p><u>LOS ANGELES</u> Consul General Mag. Martin Weiss 11859 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 501 Los Angeles, CA 90025 Consular District: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Pacific Islands (under US. Administration) Tel: (310) 444-9310 Fax: (310) 477-9897 E-mail: los-angeles-gk@bmeia.gv.at</p>
<p><u>NEW YORK</u> Consul General Dr. Brigitta Blaha 31 East 69th Street New York, NY 10021 Consular District: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; Bermudas Tel: (212) 737-6400 Fax: (212) 772-585-1992 E-mail: info@austria-ny.org Website: http://www.austria-ny.org</p>	

12.6 Addresses In Austria

<p>Fulbright Commission (Austrian-American Educational Commission) quartier 21/MQ, Museumsplatz 1, A-1070 Wien, Tel: (01) 236 7878-0, international access code plus country code 43 and city code 1 (Europe/Austria/Vienna) Website: www.fulbright.at</p>	<p>American Embassy Boltzmanngasse 16, A-1091 Wien, Tel. (01) 313 39 Website: http://www.usembassy.at/</p> <p>American Consulate Gartenbaupromenade 2 A-1010 Wien, (Hotel Marriott) Tel: (01) 313 39 – 0</p>
<p>Austrian Student Union (Österreichische Hochschülerschaft) Taubstummengasse 7-9, A-1040 Wien, 4. Stock Tel.: (01) 310 88 80 - 0 Fax: (01) 310 88 80 - 36 E-Mail: oe@oe.ac.at Website: www.oe.ac.at Branch offices in all university cities and at institutions of higher education</p>	<p>Branch office University of Vienna Uni Campus Spitalgasse 2, Hof 1 1090 Vienna (Universitätsvertretung) Tel. (01) 277 / 19553 Website: http://www.oeh.univie.ac.at/ E-Mail: sozialreferat@oeh.univie.ac.at (social issues, jobs, housing) E-Mail: kultur@oeh.univie.ac.at Tel.: (01) 40103-2630 (cultural affairs)</p>
<p>Austro-American Institute of Education (Amerika-Institut) Operngasse 4 A-1010 Wien Tel: (01) 512 7720</p>	<p>Austrian Exchange Service Website: http://www.oead.ac.at/ with information on all branch offices</p>

12.7 Sample Housing Ad Terminology

1/2/3 Zi. Whg/ 1/2/3 Zimmer Wohnung	1/2/3 room apartment	Maklerfrei	not brokered by realtor
2er/3er etc. WG/ Wohngemeinschaft	2/ 3 etc. people sharing an apartment and rent	Mitbenutzung	facilities to be shared with others
2./3. Liftstock	3/ 4. floor with elevator	möb./ möbliert	furnished
AB/ Altbau	old; usually built before 1945; high ceilings	nach Vereinbarung	to be agreed upon
Ablöse	non refundable deposit	Nachmieter gesucht	party being sought to take over lease
Ausst./ Ausstattung	interior, furnishings	NK/ Nebenkosten	utility costs (does not include heating and electricity!)
Betriebskosten	utility costs	NB/ Neubau	relatively new building (built after 1945)
Durchgangszimmer	Walk-through room / connecting room	OG/ Mezzanin	2 nd floor
Duschgelegenheit	shower facility	von privat/ privat zu vermieten	rented through owner
EG/ Erdgeschoß	ground floor	Provision	commission
Garconniere	studio apartment with shower and cooking facility	Provisionsfrei	no commission
Gepflegt/ gepflegt.	well-kept	teilmöbliert	partially furnished
getrennt begehbar	rooms are separated	Untermiete	sublease
großzügig	here: spacious	Warm/ Warmmiete	rent includes heating
inkl. Heizung	rent includes heating costs	WaMa/ Waschmaschine	washing machine
Kalt/Kaltmiete	rent does not include heating	ZH/ Zentralheizung	central heating
Kaution	deposit	Zzgl./ zuzüglich Heizung u. Nebenkosten	plus heating and utilities

12.8 Conversion Tables

When using Austrian recipes, it would be wisest to invest in some measuring scale to handle liters and grams. However, if you do not have access to a scale, here are conversions to metric units that you will need:

Dry Volume Conversions			
1/2 cup	0.136 liters	50 milliliters	3 Tbsp.
1 cup	0.272 liters	100 milliliters	6 Tbsp.
1 pint	0.551 liters	125 milliliters	1/2 cup less 2 tsp.
		200 milliliters	2/3 cup plus 1 Tbsp.
1 quart	1.101 liters	1 liter	1 quart less 6 Tbsp.

Most dry goods are measured by weight rather than volume (a handy cup—MESSBECHER — on the market gives markings for various weights of different dry goods). Here is a chart for three commonly used ingredients.

	Shortening	Sifted Flour	Sugar
1 tablespoon	14 grams	8 grams	12 grams
1/4 cup	56 grams	30 grams	50 grams
1/3 cup	75 grams	40 grams	67 grams
1/2 cup	113 grams	60 grams	100 grams
1 cup (16 T.)	225 grams	120 grams	200 grams

Weight Equivalents		Liquid Volume Conversions	
1 ounce	28.35 grams	1 teaspoon	4.9 ml.
1 pound	453.60 grams	1 tablespoon	14.8 ml.
1 gram	0.035 ounces	1 cup	0.236 liters (1/4 liter minus 2
tbls.)			
5 grams	0.18 ounces	20 grams	0.7 ounces
30 grams	1.04 ounces	1 quart	0.9463 liters (1L minus 1/4 cup)
50 grams	1.75 ounces		
100 grams	3.5 ounces		
125 grams	4.4 ounces		
150 grams	5.3 ounces		
250 grams	8.8 ounces	1/4 liter	1 cup plus 1 T
400 grams	14.0 ounces		
500 grams	1.2 pounds	1/2 liter	2 cups plus 2 T
1 kilo	2.2 pounds	1 liter	1.06 quart
(4.25C)			

Metric Conversion Factors (Approximates)

To covert to metric:

To convert from metric

When you Know	Multiply by	To find	When you Know	Multiply By	To Find
Length					
Inches	2.5	centimeters	millimeters	0.04	inches
Feet	30.0	centimeters	centimeters	0.4	inches
Yards	0.9	meters	meters	1.1	yards
Miles	1.6	kilometers	kilometers	0.6	miles
Area					
sq. inches	6.5	sq. cm.	sq. cm.	0.16	sq. inches
sq. feet	0.0929	sq. meters	sq. meters	10.8	sq. feet
sq. miles	2.6	sq. km.	sq. km.	0.4	sq. miles
acres	0.4	hectares	hectares	2.5	acres
Weight					
Ounces	28	grams	grams	0.035	ounces
Pounds	0.45	kilograms	kilograms	2.2	pounds
short tons (2000 lbs.)	0.9	tons	tons (1000 kgs)	1.1	short tons
Volume					
teaspoons	5	milliliters	milliliters	0.2	teaspoons
Tablespoons	15	milliliters	milliliters	0.6	Tablespoons
fluid ounces	30	milliliters	milliliters	0.03	fl. ounces
cups	0.24	liters	liters	4.2	cups
quarts	0.95	liters	liters	1.06	quarts
gallons	3.8	liters	liters	0.26	gallons

Temperature Conversions

Air		Body		Oven	
C°	F°	C°	F°	C°	F°
-20	4	36.5	97.7	121	250
-15	5	37	98.6	149	300
-10	14	37.5	99.5	163	325
-5	23	38	100.4	177	350
0	32	38.5	101.3	191	375
5	41	39	102.2	204	400
10	50	39.5	103.1	218	425
15	59	40	104.0	232	450
20	68			260	500
25	77			288	550
30	86				
35	95				

**To get F°, multiply C° by nine, divide by 5, and add 32.
To get C°, subtract 32 from F, multiply by 5 and divide by 9.**