

## **Interims Report**

Partner University: Portland State University

Semester/s attended: Fall and winter term 2024/2025

Degree program in Freiburg: Pharmacy (Staatsexamen)

Classes taken during exchange: Public Health Education, Economics, Marine Biology, Biology

I am writing this interim report after the first of my two terms at Portland State University.

With this report I want to summarize my impressions about my time abroad.

Application:

As a Pharmacy student with the degree of Staatsexamen I applied for the Freiburg Global exchange Program mostly just for fun. You have to know that as a Staatsexamen student you can't transfer the credits from your classes to your actual studies. So I took classes which sounded interesting to me and added to my actual studies. Nevertheless, I had probably the best time of my life so far and I can recommend everyone to try to apply.

The application itself took a lot of time with all the essays, the letter of recommendation and the TOEFL test but after finishing the application it felt even more worth when I got accepted by the program.

I got a spot in the IE3 program which is an exchange program between Baden-Württemberg and Oregon. It is well organized and the responsible exchange coordinators have a lot of experience. First we have met all the exchange students from our program in Tübingen. It was a nice event in which we got a lot of information and we got to know the other exchange students. I can recommend everyone to attend this event.

When we arrived in Oregon in September, IE3 provided an extra road trip in Oregon during the first week. The trip was called ExploreOregon and it was a lot of fun. We saw many cool places. I can recommend everyone to attend this trip too. You'll meet all the exchange students from Tübingen again.

Besides the first weeks were probably the most exciting ones. I have met a lot of people and everything was new which made it very exciting. It is nice that you already know a couple of Germans from the beginning but it is easy to get to know other people. PSU is

providing a lot of activities for exchange students where you meet students from all over the world. Especially in the first week I have met friends from South Korea and Japan with who I am still hanging out until today.

Besides I can recommend joining the sport clubs. PSU is providing several sport clubs which offer practice sessions as well as competitions for free. I have joined the Tennis club, Sailing club and the climbing club which were all fun and a good way to get to know more people.

Besides I could enroll in all the classes that I wanted to take. As I already mentioned I couldn't transfer their credits to my actual Pharmacy studies but the classes that I was taking were definitely helpful as an addition to my Pharmacy studies. For example, I was taking a class in Public Health Education which was dealing with topics like stress management which would normally not really be taught in my Pharmacy studies. In addition, I want to mention that it is easy to keep up with the difficulty level of the classes. I think that studies in Germany are a bit more difficult than in the US.

As a housing option PSU is providing options to live on campus in a dorm. It was a shock for me when I saw the prices because the cheapest option is costing about 650\$ per month and you are sharing one room with a roommate. Nevertheless, as an exchange student you can get a room quickly and the dorms are clean.

I like about the Portland State University that it is located in walkable distance to the downtown in Portland. If you don't want to hang out on campus you can easily get some food at one of the food carts or grab a coffee in one of the cafes. But I have to say that the city of Portland can be sketchy sometimes. You have to watch out to stay away from the homeless people which can be aggressive and unpredictable. When I meet with friends we therefore mostly stayed on campus.

Another positive point about Portland is its location. Oregon is beautiful and trips to the coast or to the cascades are stunning. Besides you are fast in Washington and Seattle or in the North of California.

All in all I really enjoy my time here and I can recommend everyone to try to get a spot at the Freiburg global exchange program.