

# Erfahrungsbericht

## Angaben zum Auslandsaufenthalt (Pflicht)

Gastland, -stadt, -universität: University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, United States	Zeitraum des Aufenthalts: 08.2016 – 07.2017
Aufenthaltsstyp (Studium, Praktikum, Forschung): PhD in Economics, Teaching/ Research assistant	Studienfächer: Economics

## Kontaktdaten (freiwillig)

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- Mein Erfahrungsbericht wird auf jeden Fall in der „Infothek“ im Referat Internationale Angelegenheiten zugänglich gemacht.
- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass der Bericht auch online gelesen werden kann: JA

### 1. Visum (erforderliche Unterlagen und deren Beschaffung, Dauer des Antragsverfahrens, Kosten etc.)

You need to go through the standard online application process for Graduate program of PhD in Economics of University of Notre Dame, with required documents including: motivation letter, two recommendation letters, Curriculum Vitae, TOEFL/IELTS and GRE grades. After being admitted and you accept the offer, you will be enrolled as an ordinary first year graduate student at University of Notre Dame.

You will receive the I-20 form by mail from its International Students Office to apply for the American F-1 visa. Total cost will be around \$260 for both the visa and SEVIS fee.

The duration from start (not including application for exchange study in LMU) to receiving your American F-1 visa will range from 1 to 3 months, approximately.

### 2. Anreise (Hinweise zu Reisemöglichkeiten usw.)

University of Notre Dame is in South Bend, Indiana in United States. There are three airports nearby. The O'Hare International Airport in Chicago is the largest and most convenient one. The other airport in Chicago is Midway Airport. There are direct shuttles from both airports to the campus and the tickets can be bought via the link on the university website for International students. The South Bend International Airport is the nearest airport but the costs of flying to this airport are usually very high. Taxis or Uber can take you from the airport to the campus.

The O'Hare International Airport is always the choice for international students.

### 3. Auslandskrankenversicherung

The annual insurance cost is around \$2200 but will be fully covered by the Graduate program of the University. And the campus is very friendly towards students with disability.

### 4. Unterkunft

University of Notre Dame offers on-campus accommodation for graduate students, which can be applied in April every year. The rent is about \$450 – \$630 per month. There are also many off-campus accommodation options. Information can be found on the university website.

### 5. Inhaltliche Beschreibung des Auslandsaufenthalts

Study:

Since you are enrolled as a first year graduate student, you are required to take the core courses for all the first-year. They are Microeconomics Theory I, Macroeconomics Theory I, and Econometrics I for the first semester and Microeconomics Theory II, Macroeconomics Theory II, and Econometrics II for the second semester. There are some overlappings with the materials from the compulsory courses in LMU. But new stuff can be expected for sure and I view it as a good chance to strengthen my comprehension in study. Other courses can be registered if you obtain the approval from the dean. You can search the department website for Economics to find what courses are provided. Workload is 8-10 hours every week on average for each course. There will be one or two midterms and a final for each course every semester.

**Work:**

The department of Economics at University of Notre Dame will grant every graduate student full tuition fee and also provide an annual stipend around \$2,1000. Thus we need to work as teaching/research assistant for the department. The first-year graduate students will work as teaching assistant for undergraduate courses. The work includes grading homework for professors and/or holding office hours, etc. The expected work time is usually 8-10 hours every week.

**Qualification exam:**

There will be an important qualification exam for graduate students after the first year's study. It is called the Comprehensive test at Notre Dame and usually it is held at the end of June every year. Only Micro and Macro will be covered. There will be three levels for the test result: PhD pass, MA pass and fail. You can get a Master of Arts certificate after one year's study at Notre Dame if you get either PhD pass or MA pass for your comprehensive test. If you get a PhD pass, you are eligible to continue the PhD program at Notre Dame.

**6. Freizeit**

University of Notre Dame is famous for its American football team. There is a very exciting game season every fall semester. Also, there are many baseball, soccer games, etc.

South Bend is not a very big city, but you can find good places to hang out with friends. If you or your friend has a car, it will be easier to explore many other interesting places around.

Also, travelling to Chicago will only take 2 hours by car. It is a good choice to spend your leisure time to explore this most famous and largest city in the mid area of the United States.

**7. Individuelle interkulturelle Erfahrungen**

I think I have a good intercultural experience at Notre Dame. When you first arrive, you will take orientation activities for a week. During this week, you will be introduced to many aspects of this university and intercultural involvement will be discussed.

Also, University of Notre Dame is a Catholic university. Even if you are not a Catholic or religious, people there are very caring to everyone and willing to listen and talk to you. And the department of Economics is very diversified. Your colleagues in the department, whom you will get in touch with mostly, are always there to help you. You will get used to the life there very soon.

**8. Persönliches Fazit**

I personally will recommend this exchange program, especially to those who are considering to pursue PhD study in the future. The good points of this program include: tuition-free for study, good stipend, good physical and research environment. It is a good choice to stay at University of Notre Dame if you want a PhD degree. The department is young but they aim to reach a higher rank (top25 in the US) in the near future. If you do not want to stay, an MA degree is a bonus of this program.