

# Erfahrungsbericht USA



My name is Louisa Oelschläger and I spent my third semester at the University of Wyoming where I studied social work. I chose to go to the USA because I had lived there as a child and wanted to see what life is like as a college student.



The University of Wyoming is situated in Laramie, a little town in the southeast of Wyoming, in the Midwest of the United States. If you first come to the little town you will feel like you are in a western movie and in

fact, you can go into several cowboy-bars and even dance square dance, if you wish to. If you don't like to listen to country music, you can also go to the Buckhorn (a dance bar with 2 small floors) or to the Mingles (more like a bar with pool-tables, a beer-pong table and different flippers). The only problem is you are only allowed to go into all these bars if you are over 21.



This is why I can recommend; go there if you are over 21! If you are under age and still want to go to the US,

you will have to make friends quickly and go to a house party. (Still, do not get caught drinking alcohol. You will get into serious trouble!) When it comes to shopping, Laramie has an outfitter for cowboys, where you can buy cowboy boots and hats. Grocery shopping is also possible, if you rent a bike in the beginning of the semester. (Outdoor Recreation Office) Wal-Mart and Safeway are about a mile away from the university in different directions. If you do not like riding the bike, the university has something like a taxi service (Saferide) every Thursday until Saturday from 7 pm until 10 pm that drives students to Wal-Mart and picks them up afterwards. After 10 pm, one can also call them to get picked up anywhere in Laramie to get a ride back to the University of Wyoming.



My preparations began about 3 months before my trip; however, if possible, try to begin earlier, as the American embassy takes their time to give out the J1-visas. Additionally, I would try to book a flight as soon as possible (do not book, if you know you will have difficulties concerning the visa) and check different websites for the cheapest flight. (Airline-direct.com; fluege.de; swodoo.de; expedia.de; skyscanner.net) When you decide to study in Wyoming, the best way to get to Laramie is: Fly to Denver International Airport (DEN) and then

take either the plane to Laramie with Great Lakes Aviation or take the well-working bus shuttle (Green Ride Colorado) directly from Denver Airport to the university.

Looking back, it was really important for me to have travel insurance, and as it turned out, it was my best invested money ever, as I had a sports accident and had to have a surgery worth about \$5000. Personally I chose the HanseMercur Versicherung, but there are also good insurances offered by ADAC etc.

And now to the important part: The university preparations. On the website of the University of Wyoming, one can find the course lists and all the course descriptions that will probably be offered in the following semester. You will need them to begin with your learning agreement



that needs to be signed by your dean in Germany. (The Credit Points you earn in the US are worth double in Germany. For example: You take a class worth 3 credits in Wyoming, you can count them as 6 in Nordhausen.)

Studying in the U.S. is different from studying in Germany. You will need to take about 4 courses (worth about 12-15 Credit Points) for the B.A. programs; this is important to maintain your J1-Visa status. The courses you will pick are more like seminars. In my courses the average class size was about 25 people in one class and we were able to take part in many discussions with our teacher.



The University of Wyoming has about 13,500 students and is the biggest university in the state of Wyoming. The university has about 190 areas of study in the colleges of Arts & Sciences, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Business, Education, Engineering & Applied Science, Health Sciences, Law and the School of Energy Resources.



When it comes to activities, the university has a big outdoor program for both summer and wintertime. You can go skiing, hiking, climbing, fishing, bouldering, camping and several other things one can do in the beautiful nature (Laramie lies at the edge of the Rockies). One has the opportunity to do sport every single day. The huge recreation center has several basketball courts, a huge fitness center, one can play squash, swim, run (inside and outside), and train to climb on a big climb wall or take part in one of the

courses (Yoga, Belly Dance etc.). The best thing: for students it is free to take part in most of the indoor recreations.

If you need help or have questions, Ruth Shepard or Manuela Hofer, who work at the International Office, are always happy to help you and answer any of your questions!

I lived in Hill Hall in one of the student dorms. There are five different student halls one can live in. For me it was important to have a single room and this is only possible in Crane or Hill Hall. The interior of the rooms is really simple with a bed, two closets and two desks with chairs. If you get the chance to live in Crane Hall, you also have a sink, a microwave and a fridge in your room (and even carpet). Be aware of the fact that you will need to take one of the meal-plans in the cafeteria of the university, if you live in the dorms. Another opportunity is to take an apartment. The problem is that you will need to be two people and the university-apartments are rare. You will need to sign in for them early.

As an advice in the end, you should be an open-minded person and the time in Laramie can turn out to be one of the best times in your life!

