

# CogSys Manual

Student Council Cognitive Systems

[cogsys-fsr@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:cogsys-fsr@uni-potsdam.de)

<https://www.uni-potsdam.de/cogsys-fsr/>

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## Introduction

Hello! If you are reading this, chances are you have just begun (or will soon begin) your studies in Cognitive Systems at the University of Potsdam. Great choice! This document is intended to collect important information related to the program in one place. *Note that it has been compiled by students and as such cannot serve as an official, binding source of information.* If you find any mistakes or problems like dead links, feel like something is missing, or have other suggestions for improvement, feel free to contact the FSR and we'll get right to it. What's an FSR? Read on to find out!

## 1 General Information

### 1.1 What is FSR?

FSR stands for 'Fachschaftsrat', which is a long German word meaning 'student council'. The CogSys Student Council is the voice of students studying in the program. The Student Council was formed on the 14th of July 2017 and it consists of up to 13 members elected by the students. Apart from representing students' interests in the councils (e.g. the VeFa and the StuKo) of the University of Potsdam, the Student Council also organizes parties and events that contribute to the spirit of the program.

The FSR office is located at *Campus Golm, House 14, Room K-0.38/0.39*. It's in the basement of the linguistics building (the one on campus Golm that looks like a barcode). Office hours by appointments only.

Alongside the committee work, we want to help you wherever we can, e.g. by supporting your project or by giving you advice in study affairs. You are also warmly welcome to the almost-weekly Stammtisch (regulars' table) which takes place in either Potsdam or Berlin. Most of the spontaneous events like this are announced via Slack, so make sure to get an invitation to our workspace (see Section 3 of this document).

Among other responsibilities, FSR tasks are:

- Representing concerns and interests of students in the Master's program "Cognitive Systems: Language, Learning and Reasoning"
- Course guidance and advice from students to students
- Organizing events (freshmen introduction, Christmas party, kayak tour, barbecues etc)
- Representation of the CogSys student association in committees, e.g. study commission (Studienkommission = StuKo), Gathering of Student Councils (Versammlung der Fachschaften = VeFa), General Student Committee of the University (Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss = AStA), Student Parliament (Studierendenparlament = StuPa)
- Offering support, e.g. by giving tutorials and workshops
- Being the voice of students
- Providing a place to relax and meet your fellow students (CogSys FSR office)

### 1.2 Mailing lists

Apart from Slack, the FSR and especially the professors use mailing lists to communicate with all students and lecturers, so please make sure you subscribe to these lists:

- [cogsys-all-list@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:cogsys-all-list@uni-potsdam.de): a list of students *and* professors, you can subscribe [here](#).
- [cogsys-students-list@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:cogsys-students-list@uni-potsdam.de): a list containing exclusively students, much like Slack, but theoretically, professors have access too. You can subscribe [here](#).
- There is a general university mailing list. General information about the university are posted here: [uni-list@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:uni-list@uni-potsdam.de). You can subscribe [here](#).
- There is also a university-wide student list: [student-list@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:student-list@uni-potsdam.de). You can subscribe [here](#).

### 1.3 Program Structure & Suggested Studying Plans

- Foundation module (FM) = Catch-up module (required depending on your background). 6 ECTS per module
- Basic module (BM) = Mandatory "core" module. 9 ECTS per module
- Advanced module (AM) = Elective module. 6 ECTS per module
- Project Module (PM) = Project module (normally work in small groups). 12 ECTS per module
- Individual Module (IM) = Independent research module (work alone). 15 ECTS

3 * BM	27 ECTS
4 * (AM + FM)	24 ECTS
2 * PM	24 ECTS
1 * IM	15 ECTS
Master's Thesis	30 ECTS
Total	120 ECTS

#### What should I take in the first semester?

You probably will have to take at least one FM (assigned by the program coordinator) and two out of three BMs. Don't be confused if BMs have titles starting with *advanced*. These are still basic modules which everyone needs to take. *Advanced Natural Language Processing* (BM1) and *Advanced Problem Solving Techniques* (BM3) are only offered in the winter semester, and *Machine Learning and Data Analysis* (BM2) is only offered in summer semester. You don't **have** to take basic modules in the first semester, but it is recommended, since these modules are meant as introductions to their fields and you generally need to have taken them to have the skills and background knowledge for advanced modules and projects.

So for your first semester, you'll have something like this: **FM + BM + BM = 6 + 9 + 9 = 24 credits**. If you need to take a second FM, that will fill up your 30 credits; if not, you can fill up your credits with an AM of your choice. However, it is common to do less than 30 ECTS, especially in your first semester, so don't push yourself to take more classes than you can handle. If you don't want to take all these classes at once but aren't sure which ones are most important or most difficult to do first, feel free to ask upperclassmen for advice—they've been through this before, after all!

**Where do I find Study and Examination Regulations? (Studien- und Prüfungsordnung)** The Study and Examination Regulations are the legally binding description of the program. You can find them [here](#) (German version + legally non-binding English version). They are also linked on the [program's website](#). You can find the general bachelor-master regulations ("BAMA-O") [here](#).

**How many AMs or PMs am I allowed to take?** To finish your studies you have to do two PMs and two to four AMs (one AM less for each FM you had to take). You can take up to two AMs from the same field (Computational Intelligence, Computational Linguistics, Machine Learning). For PMs only one PM from a field can be taken. This means that if you have to do three AMs, you can do two Machine Learning AMs plus a Computational Intelligence AM, one of each or a similar combination. You can take more AMs or PMs than you need and decide at the end of your studies which of those you want to be included in your final grade.

**I want to take an FM that I am not obliged to take (the coordinator did not tell me to take it). Is it possible?** No, it is not. Imagine you are a linguist and want to take the linguistics FM for easy credit — that would be unfair to others and you probably wouldn't learn anything new. Of course, you can still attend the classes if you want to, just not get the credits for them.

**Can I take more AMs than needed for the completion of my studies?** Yes, you can, but this only applies to AMs. Here is what the Bachelor-Master study regulations (BaMaO, §31 (2)) say:

"(2) If the student has successfully completed more elective modules than were required by the credit point requirements for elective modules, then the elective modules that the student has designated to the Office of Student Affairs count towards the grade for the degree program

or subject. The designation of elective modules that are meant for inclusion in the grading process must be submitted in writing at latest by the time at which the master's thesis is submitted. This designation may only be done once. If this designation has not been done by the time at which the master's thesis is submitted, then the elective modules will count in the temporal sequence of their completion until the required total of elective credit points is reached. The other elective modules will not enter into the overall grade, but they will be listed in the transcript of records."

The form for acknowledging your classes at the Office of Student Affairs can be found [here](#).

## 1.4 Research Groups

There are various research groups at the [linguistics](#) and [computer science](#) institutes. Sometimes the researchers post jobs on our mailing list, but don't hesitate to ask them or write them an email if you are searching for a tutoring or research assistant job. There is a *jobs* channel on Slack.

You can also do projects, e.g. PMs or the IM, in one of these research groups or in collaboration with groups from other departments.

## 1.5 PULS & Moodle

[Moodle.UP](#) is a central E-Learning platform of the university. It only works if you are enrolled, and it's the main way of communication between lecturers and the participants of the classes (homeworks, lecture slides, messages). However, some lecturers prefer to use other communication platforms.

There is a general [Moodle course for the CogSys program](#) including FAQs and a list of potential thesis topics.

Via [PULS](#) you can register for exams and classes. You'll need your TAN list which you will receive by mail in the beginning of your studies from the university. TANs are single use one-time passwords, and they are very common in Germany (e.g., online banking). It is recommended to generate a PDF with TANs (also possible via PULS) and keep it on your computer, so you don't lose that single sheet of paper. PULS will remind you when you are running out of TANs and will suggest that you generate a new PDF with them. You will need two TANs to generate a new PDF.

**How do I register for classes?** You register via PULS. You find the class in the course catalogue, and click on "Jetzt belegen/abmelden". You'll need your TAN list for this. You will find the course catalog under "Courses" on the top of the page.

**How do I register for the IM?** You don't register for an IM in advance like with other classes. Instead, you register once you've finished it. First, you have to find an instructor to be your supervisor and agree on a topic, then you do your project. When you're done with it, the instructor will create a course on PULS for it just for you. Then you register for it in the usual way. Some professors might handle this differently, though.

**How do I register the Master's thesis?** The Master's thesis is registered differently. On PULS under "My Functions", go to "Submit Applications", scroll down until the end of the page to find "Application for assigning the topic for the final thesis" under "My Degree". Fill out the form, and let it sign by your two supervisors and the director of the Examining Board. For CogSys, that's currently Prof. Stede. You cannot register your thesis before you have at least graded 60 CP + the registration for courses that are worth 30 more CPs.

**My grade isn't in PULS yet. What do I do?** Wait. Usually, it takes some time until the grades are added to PULS by the examination office. If it takes too long, ask the instructor of the class, sometimes they forget to send the grades to PULS.

**When is the course list for the next semester going on-line?** Around September 15 for winter semester, and March 15 for summer semester. However, the courses' time-slots may not be finalized until much closer to the start of the semester.

**Where do I get the certificate of enrollment for the current semester?** Make sure you've paid the fee for the respective semester. You can then find it in PULS under *My Documents* (Study reports).

## 1.6 Exams

**What happens if I fail an exam/do not submit a project etc.?** Not submitting a project is the same as failing an exam, so you are going to see a 5.0 (failed) in PULS. You can now either retake the exam (it's a bit more complicated with projects, better talk to your lecturer), take the class in the next semester or year or just totally forget about the class and do something else instead (if it's not one of compulsory ones, of course).

**What happens if I take longer than 4 semesters?** It's totally fine if you need more than 4 semesters to finish the program (especially if you are working part-time at the same time), but remember that you are not allowed to take more than eight semesters (four years), unless you get an exceptional extension.

**How many tries do I have for an exam?** Every exam (except for the Master's thesis) can be repeated twice (see Bachelor-Master regulations §13.2). Examinations not passed in the first semester are treated as if they were not taken (§13.1). The examinations not passed in the 1st semester are only marked "failed" in PULS system, but they will not count as a failed try.

**How do I register for exams?** You register via [PULS](#). You'll need your TAN list for this.

**How much time do I have for registering?** Usually four weeks.

**What happens if I miss the register deadline?** You can't take the class for credit.

**What happens if I don't show up to an exam I registered for (e.g. illness)?** You need to have a medical certificate to be allowed to do the exam on another day.

**What happens if I registered for a class but do not complete the class?** You will get "failed" in PULS, but you are allowed to retake the class.

**Is there anything I can do if I want to improve my grade after passing the exam ('Freiversuch')?** Once you've passed the exam, you can't retake it. There is no way to improve the grade of your exam afterwards.

## 1.7 Studying & Working

**German students** German students keep their student status as long as they don't work more than 20 hours per week. Your working hours are summed over the entire year, so you could for example work less during lectures and more during semester holidays. Don't forget to tell your health insurance and BAföG office where and how many hours you are working. Also, remember that you have a right to go on vacation and that your work has to provide you paid holidays (proportional to your working hours).

**Non-German students** See section 2 for more detailed advice for international students.

**Doing projects at work** You can do your IM or thesis at a company or research institute of your choice, as long as one supervisor is a Uni Potsdam lecturer. PMs are a little bit more complicated, since usually the examination board doesn't like "outsourcing" them, and PMs are done in groups. The researchers at our institutes provide a lot of projects that can get you involved with other institutes at UP or somewhere else.

## 1.8 Scholarships

There are many different scholarships, not all of them require perfect grades, but focus more on social involvement, origin or field of study. See these websites for a broad overview of German scholarships:

1. [myStipendium](#)
2. [e-fellows.net](#)

**Germany scholarship** Probably one of the best known scholarships in this country is the Germany Scholarship. Students get 300 euro per month, half of it is paid by a sponsor and the other half by the German state. The university currently awards around 120 scholarships, which are especially given to students with good grades and social involvement. The application deadlines for the following academic year is usually in summer. For more information look [here](#).

**DAAD** Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service) or [DAAD](#) is the place to look for scholarships for foreign students studying in Germany or Germans who want to go abroad. There are many kinds of scholarship, based on nationality, subject of study, volunteering and much more. Additional information can be found in [DAAD scholarships page](#).

## 1.9 Dates & Deadlines

**What are the important dates and deadlines of the semester?** Important dates and deadlines can be found [here](#). Semester specific dates and deadlines can be found [here](#).

**What happens if I miss the deadline for paying the fee?** You'll have to pay around 10 euro for being late, and you will get a reminder. "If you have not re-registered despite overdue notices and the threat of de-registration, then you will be de-registered officially at the end of the current semester." ([source](#)).

## 1.10 Student-ID card

All University of Potsdam students receive a chip card (PUCK = Potsdam University's Chip Card) that serves as their student ID. Your PUCK has the following functions:

- Student ID with security features as the owner's proof of identity
- Semester ticket (valid in VBB zone)
- Library card
- Copy and print card
- An electronic wallet for small amounts to make payments in dining halls, cafeterias, and libraries

The VBB zone includes all public transport in the state of Brandenburg and Berlin. Usually the 'faster' trains EC, IC and ICE are excluded, but there are some exceptions, which can be seen on the website of the [Deutsche Bahn](#) (only in German). More information on the semester ticket can be read on the website of the [AStA](#) (including options of semester ticket refund).

You can add money to your electronic wallet at one of the charging stations located at the three university campuses. Some of the charging stations only take cash, while others only take EC card—it depends which location you go to. More information on PUCK can be found [here](#).

If you wish to continue your studies at the University of Potsdam in the following semester, you must renew your registration. You must complete your re-registration between June 15 and July 15 for the following winter semester, and between January 15 and February 15 for the following summer semester. Information on re-registration (fees, etc.) will be sent by e-mail to your University of Potsdam e-mail address.

**I am a first semester student, but I didn't get my Student ID card yet, so I don't have a semester ticket although I already paid the semester fee. Do I have to pay for train/bus ticket every time?** No, you don't have to spend any extra money! The General Students' Committee (AStA) of the University of Potsdam can issue you a temporary semester ticket in the [AStA office](#). This is valid for a maximum of four weeks. To be presented to the AStA are the admission letter and a proof (bank statement) that the semester contribution has been paid.



**I lost my student card. What do I do now?** You can get a new one. Here you can find information [how](#).

### 1.11 On Campus

**Campuses** University of Potsdam has 3 campuses: Campus I Am Neuen Palais, Campus II Golm and Campus III Griebnitzsee. You can find the plan of campus Golm in the appendix. You can find more information on university buildings at [this link](#).

Classes for our program take place in Golm. Usually the classrooms are given in the format [Campus] [Building] [Room]. Campus Golm is number two. This way, *Raum 02.14.0.35* would mean Golm, house number 14, room number 0.35.

The train schedule can be found on-line on either [BVG](#) or [Deutsche Bahn](#) websites (both services have good smart phone apps as well). You can also take the bus to Potsdam Hauptbahnhof (main station) from Golm.

**Food** The Studentenwerk Potsdam (student service) provides a canteen (Mensa) with wide range of meals on each campus. You can check the menu [online](#). There are meal discounts for students.

There are also [different cafeterias and coffee bars on every campus](#). You can either pay in cash or with your student-ID card at all canteens of the University of Potsdam. One exception is Ulf's, the cafe on the HPI side of campus at Griebnitzsee—it's not an official Uni Potsdam cafeteria, despite being on campus and being listed in the app, so you can't pay with your PUCK card there.

**Library** There are three locations at the university. Note the different [opening hours](#) for each departmental library. Students are already automatically registered at the library, your PUCK student-ID card is also your library card which allows you to check out books. Your online user account allows you to keep track of the items you borrow and to extend their loan periods [online](#)). Please don't forget that you will be charged a library fine for overdue items.

Each library has reading spaces and computer workstations. There are also rooms for group work. All library buildings provide WLAN access. The library at Golm allows you to bring in bags and backpacks, but the libraries at Griebnitzsee and Neues Palais require you to leave bags in a locker outside; bring a padlock!

Literature and media for your academic work can be found in the [UP Library Online Catalogue \(OPAC\)](#). It will also show you which library holds the book or medium you are looking for. You can also access scientific resources through university services, if you:

1. Go to the [university library's website](#)
2. Select "Literature Research" — "Databases"
3. Select DBIS

Unfortunately, the DataBase InfoSystem (DBIS) page is in German only, but basically all you need to do is to search for the resource you are looking for, click on the link and you should have access to the papers and journals.

**Internet** The *eduroam (education roaming)* network connection gives students and staff at the UP wireless access to the internet in all university buildings. Furthermore in scientific institutions which are part of the eduroam network program all over the world it is possible to use the eduroam network as well.

To use the eduroam network you only need a central Potsdam University account. The eduroam user login consists of username followed by *@uni-potsdam.de* (e.g. name@uni-potsdam.de) and your university account password. You can find more information to eduroam/WLAN settings, configuration and installation on [ZIM's website](#).

[Here](#) you can find information on how to set up VPN, so that you can use university services from anywhere.

**BoxUP** The University provides cloud storage for every student with [Box.UP](#). Just visit the link and login in with your credentials (the same ones you use to access you uni mail). You get 30 GB of storage and can even [install](#) Box.Up on your PC to get basically the same functionality as something like Dropbox.

**Printing & PC Pools** Scanners, photocopiers and printers are available in all branch libraries and PC pools. Students at the University of Potsdam can use the *uniflow printing service* to send print jobs from all library computers and all student printers on the campus. Printing costs five cents per page (or nine cents per double page) and is deducted from your PUCK card balance. Unfortunately, you cannot print from a USB stick on the copy machines. UP students can also make copies in any Departmental Library with their PUCK card at a rate of five cents per page.

You can find all the locations of copy machines [online](#), together with the instructions for printing. There are also several book scanners in our Departmental Libraries, and they can be used for free. Don't forget to bring your own USB stick to save your files.

If you have followed the instructions from the [link](#) and sent your documents to be printed you'll have to go to any printer with your PUCK. Next to each printer you should see a small card reader, where you have to insert the PUCK. Then you should see your balance on the screen of the card reader and on the touchscreen of the printer you should see something like in this [image](#). The printer will show you all documents you sent it to print. You can delete selected documents with *Löschen*. With *Drucken+Löschen* all documents are printed and then deleted from the queue. The green checkmark next to each document tells you whether you have enough money on your PUCK to print.



Figure 1: Printer touchscreen

**Socializing** On campus Golm in house 14 you can find an alternative open space called *Lesecafé*. This is a café for students for students with fresh coffee, tea, clothing swaps and cozy sofas. It's a great place for chatting and chilling and also a location for various events.

The University of Potsdam also offers a selection of cultural activities for students. There is a choir [Campus Cantabile](#), an orchestra [Sinfonietta](#) and a [brass band](#) which welcome musically and vocally inclined students from all departments.

## 1.12 Sport Courses

Potsdam university offers various sport classes throughout the year, you can find almost everything from kick-boxing and yoga to quidditch. If you are interested in one of the sports classes, you can enroll [online](#). There are four programs offered during the year, two each semester—one during the lecture period and one during lecture-free period at the end of the semester. The participation fee is quite low for students and staff members and entitles you to visit a class for the whole program duration. The courses are often booked very fast, be sure to check the enrollment date at the [Academic Sports Service website](#).

## 1.13 Going abroad

You can find more detailed information about possibilities for going abroad on the website of the [International Office](#).



**Erasmus+** If you want to study one or two semesters in another university in the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Turkey or United Kingdom, [Erasmus+](#) is a convenient program. With the Erasmus+ program you do not have to pay any study fees, and you get financial support for the time you are abroad and help during the preparation.

You apply at [your department](#) for a place at a partner university. Because our program is interdisciplinary, we can apply for Erasmus+ 'spots' from both the linguistics and computer science departments. It is also possible to apply at another department if there is no cooperation between your department and your favourite partner university.

The deadline for the next study year is usually in January. There's only one deadline for winter and summer semester, and if you want to do an Erasmus during summer semester, your application needs to be in during January *of the year before* (i.e., to do an Erasmus during Summer Semester 2025 requires your application to be completed in January 2024).

**Hochschulpartnerschaften** Uni Potsdam also has [partnerships with universities outside of Europe](#). As part of these partnerships, you don't have to pay tuition fees at the partner university, but you do need to pay all other costs (flights, housing, living expenses, etc.). As with Erasmus, applications for the upcoming Winter and Summer Semesters are due at the same time, but deadlines differ based on the academic year of the host country, so be sure to [check the website](#).

If you'd like to study at a university that isn't an official partner university, there are also [options for arranging something on your own](#).

**Internships** Another possibility to go abroad is an internship. Of course, you can find and apply for internships on your own. The university has [helpful resources and useful information](#) for those interested in doing so during their studies. This includes an overview of scholarships and a list of websites with internship offers, so be sure to check it out if you're interested.

However, the university also has partnerships with certain companies and institutions where you can do an internship. Check [here](#) for more information and a list of partner institutions.

## 1.14 Individual Equality Measures

In case you are pregnant, have children, health issues, a disability or have to take care of a close relative, you can apply for Individual Equality Measures (Nachteilsausgleich) which exist to avoid disadvantage of students in producing work or in examinations. In order to apply for one, you need to fill in an [application](#). This form has to be signed by Prof Stede. More information can be found [here](#).

## 2 Information for non-German Students

### 2.1 Student Visa

**Can I work in Germany during my studies?** Yes. If you are a full-time student from outside of the EU, you will be limited to working up to 120 full days or 240 half days per year. However, the 120-day limit for non-EU students does not apply to student assistant and uni jobs (wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft). The 20 hours per week limit and its exceptions apply to non-German students the same as German citizens.

**How can I get the residence permit?** The German Embassy usually gives students a 3 months visa. Once students arrive in Germany, they are expected to apply for a residence permit with the respective Immigration Office responsible for their country.

The first and most important step that students need to undertake once they arrive in Germany is to register their address with the Citizens' Services Office (Bürgeramt). The next step is Ausländerbehörde. For the residence permit you need a certificate of the enrollment from the university, the registration from the authorities, a proof of financing and a valid health insurance contract. A residence permit for the purpose of studying is usually issued for a period of two years, and it must be extended before it runs out.

Appointments for registering your address and getting a residence permit tend to fill up super fast, *especially* in Berlin, so make sure to schedule yours as soon as possible. If there aren't any appointments available to schedule for a very long time (not uncommon), there is usually a scheduled time each week where people can come without an appointment. You usually have to arrive *well* in advance and wait in

line for a long time to be seen during this period, but it's often the easiest way to get your papers in order in a timely fashion, especially in Berlin.

**Can I use my residence permit as identification with the authorities?** An electronic residence permit on its own is not sufficient to prove identity and legal residence with authorities and the police. For this, the electronic residence title must be submitted together with the passport and the additional sheet (Zusatzblatt).

In most states in Germany residence permits are issued as ID-1 (credit card size) plastic cards and the additional provisions are printed on a separate sheet of paper, so that residents have to possess (but not carry around) up to three different documents: a passport from their country of citizenship, their residence permit, and the supplementary sheet (if applicable). For reasons of capacity, the Berlin Foreigners' Registration Office issues residence titles and additional provisions as stickers, which are affixed to pages inside the passport.

Carrying passports and residence cards is only compulsory when crossing borders ([source](#)).

## 2.2 Language Classes

There are language courses offered at [Zessko, the Center for Languages at the University of Potsdam](#). The classes are free for master's students, and they usually take place at the Neues Palais campus.

If you want to take German as a Foreign Language courses (DaF), be aware that space in those courses fills up quickly, especially at the lower levels. Registration for these courses generally requires applying during the week or two before the semester starts, and if you want to take a course above A1 you'll need to take a placement test during that time.

See [the Zessko website](#) for more details based on which level specifically you'd like to get into. If the instructions on the website aren't clear enough for you, don't hesitate to [email Herr Lehker](#) about it—he and the others at Zessko are generally very helpful with this sort of thing.

## 2.3 Housing

You can apply for the student dormitories through the ([Studentenwerk's website](#)).

Some other helpful websites for finding a room in a shared flat or an apartment:

- [WG-Gesucht](#)
- [Kleinanzeigen](#)

There's a huge demand for places to live in Berlin and Potsdam, so there's usually a lot of competition for any decent listing. Start looking early and be prepared to spend a fair amount of time searching for a place. Don't hesitate to ask any friends and acquaintances if they know of any open places—often, that personal connection is the best way to find a place.

## 2.4 Other Miscellaneous Information about German Universities

- The German grading scale:

Grade	Text	Declaration
1.0	sehr gut (very good)	bestanden (pass)
1.3	sehr gut (very good)-	bestanden (pass)
1.7	gut (good)+	bestanden (pass)
2.0	gut (good)	bestanden (pass)
2.3	gut (good)-	bestanden (pass)
2.7	befriedigend (satisfactory)+	bestanden (pass)
3.0	befriedigend (satisfactory)	bestanden (pass)
3.3	befriedigend (satisfactory)-	bestanden (pass)
3.7	ausreichend (sufficient)+	bestanden (pass)
4.0	ausreichend (sufficient)	bestanden (pass)
5.0	nicht ausreichend (unsatisfactory)	nicht bestanden (fail)

- The [Prüfungsamt \(Central Examination Office\)](#) is your contact for all technical, organizational, and legal questions relating to exams as well as diplomas and certificates.

- Teaching assistants are *not common* at German universities.

### 3 Cognitive Systems Slack

[Slack](#) is our main way of communicating, organizing social events, sharing information, posting pictures of puppies, etc. This section is intended to give you some general information about the app, as well as hopefully making your transition into the existing ecosystem a little easier.

#### 3.1 General Information

##### Organization

Slack organizes people into *workspaces*. Our workspace is [Cognitive Systems](#).

**Channels** Within a workspace, members may create channels for specific topics. There are two types of channels: Public and private. Any member of the workspace may join all public channels: Simply click on *Channels*, browse the list, and join any you may like. Also, anyone in the channel can invite other people to join. Private channels are invite-only and don't show up in the channel list for non-members. Use these if you a) don't want others to join your channel or b) the channel is only intended for a few others and you don't want to pollute the list of channels for everybody else (e.g. your three-people project group for some class).

**Messages** Slack also offers private messages directly between members. Just click on *Direct Messages* and search for the person(s) you want to write. You can also have private chats with multiple people. The difference to private channels is: Newly-invited members can see the history of a private channel from *before* they were invited; this is not true for private chats. You can convert private chats to private channels at any time.

##### Settings

You will probably want to update your *Preferences* after joining. Here are some important ones:

- *Notifications*: You most likely don't want to be notified for *every* message someone posts in some channel. Instead, you can choose to only be notified for direct messages, or when you're "mentioned" in a channel.
- *Notifications* again: By default, you enter "do not disturb" mode between 10pm and 8am. You will not receive any notifications during this time. You might want to edit these times or deactivate this feature completely (why not set your phone to dnd instead of single apps?).
- *Language & Region*: Make sure this is set correctly!
- *Messages & Media* and *Sidebar*: The main ways to customize how your Slack looks.

##### Customization

There are lots of possibilities to customize the Slack experience, and some of us probably spend way too much time doing so. Via *Customize Slack*, you can:

- Create custom emoji!

There's other things you can do, but who cares? Custom emoji!

#### 3.2 CogSys Specifics

##### Interesting Channels

Once invited to the workspace, you automatically join the "most important" channels. However, there are others that you might find interesting. Because the amount of currently existing channels might be somewhat overwhelming, here is a selection of channels that might be worth a look along with a short description:

- Default channels (you join these automatically, but can leave them if you wish (but why would you?)):
  - #announcements: A channel where a bot posts the emails from the CogSys mailing lists for those of us who are too cool for old-fashioned stuff like ‘email’ but still wanna get all the important news and announcements.
  - #freshers: Your number one channel to ask questions regarding the enrollment process, German bureaucracy, life in general etc. Remember, there are no stupid questions here!
  - #general: The one channel you can’t escape from. Use this for important questions or announcements that concern all students and don’t fit in any other channel (or warrant creating a new one). Lengthy discussions should be avoided here—less serious questions and conversations are more suited for #random.
  - #jobs: The channel for posting job listings and opportunities for both working students and recent graduates.
  - #party-like-gatherings: The ‘social channel’. Whether it’s a birthday party or just meeting for a beer, you should consider organizing/announcing it here. Don’t be shy! It’s definitely more convenient than writing emails.
  - #random: Things that aren’t particularly important and don’t fit anywhere else.
  - #stammtisch: A semi-regular social gathering throughout the semester that usually dies at some point during the break. If you’d like to get together with some classmates for drinks and conversation, feel free to suggest a time and place here to see who’s interested.
- Course channels: Usually someone creates a channel for pretty much every class there is. Here are the most relevant for the first semester:
  - #advancednlp
  - #answersetsolving
  - #fmcomputerscience
  - #linguistics
  - #mathematics
- Other channels: Channels catering to ‘special interests’.
  - #conferences-etc: Share info about cool conferences, find people to go there with you etc.
  - #food: Post recipes, discuss cheese, or anything else food-related.
  - #fsr: Here, the student council discusses meeting times, agendas etc. Member or not, feel free to join! Rumor has it this is also the place to post your vacation pictures...
  - #late-nights: Kinda like random, but for particularly deranged posts late at night.
  - #music: Share your favorite songs!
  - #python: Questions specific to the most-used programming language in the program.
  - #sports: Meet up with other people for your favorite physical activities! Boulderling, cycling, dancing...
  - And many more!

Feel free to create your own channels if you think any are missing. No need to ask permission (but do consider whether this channel is *really* needed)!

### Fun facts

- Students only! No instructor can read the stuff you write here, with the rare exception of former students who have since become instructors.
- It’s run entirely by students and is, in principle, completely independent of and separate from the study program. If you want to have an official conversation, better to do it via email or some other service.
- Only admins can invite new people. Generally, the members of the student council are the admins. Again, students only! Please don’t ask us to invite your friends.

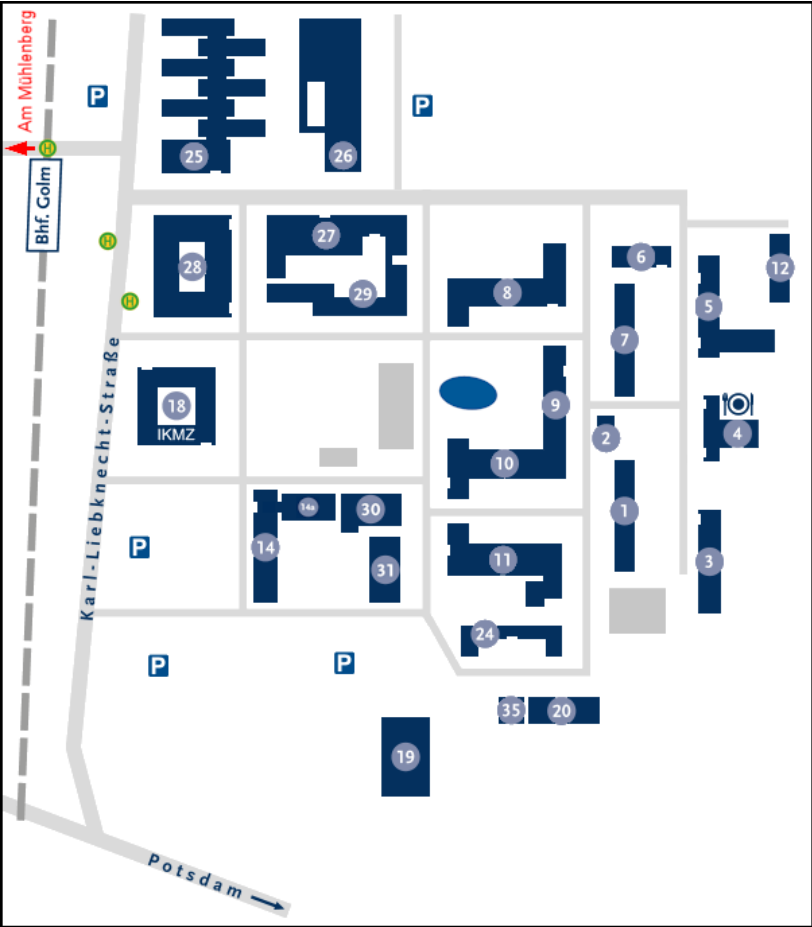
### On the Limits of Free Stuff

Slack is a commercial app; we are using the free version. This is *mostly* irrelevant: It means we don't have access to some advanced customization as well as analytics, which doesn't matter that much in the grand scheme of things. However, there are two main limitations you should be aware of:

1. We only have access to the *last 10,000 messages posted*, including private messages. Older messages will 'disappear', meaning you won't be able to look back at them later. This includes PMs with other members, so the 10,000 can fill up very quickly. Don't expect your posts to stay up forever, and have conversations you want to keep a long-term record of elsewhere.
  - Private messages to yourself (yes, you can message yourself) and to slackbot seem to be unaffected, so you could use this as a kind of permanent storage.
  - Admins can create *exports* of the data that will contain older messages as well. However, this does not include private messages/channels.
  - Files are stored separately, so they don't count towards *this* limit.
2. There is a 5GB limit on file storage. If this is filled up, *nobody can upload anything*. For this reason, please refrain from uploading large files. This includes stuff like sharing books etc. Use a dedicated file-sharing service instead. In general, try to avoid things like .pdfs or large image files like .pngs. **Do not upload datasets for your projects etc.** We might ask you to delete old unneeded files if the storage fills up. **Unfortunately admins cannot delete other people's private files so everyone is responsible here.**

The paid versions of Slack are prohibitively expensive for a group of students. However, if by some chance you can spare a few-thousand euros per year, we could get rid of the above limitations, so let us know if that happens to be the case. There are free alternatives to Slack that don't have this issue, like Mattermost, but we've decided against switching for now, as these alternatives usually require a server to host them yourself.

Golm Campus Map



Campus Golm