

High School Diploma & Abitur - Opportunities@GISSV



German International School
of Silicon Valley

Informationsabend
11.11.2025

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Jenny Jungeblut (Director Curriculum & Instruction)



Agenda

- **Studieren in Europa mit dem Deutschen Internationalen Abitur (DIA)**
Studying in Europe with German International Abitur
- **Studieren in Deutschland mit dem American High School Diploma**
Studying in Germany with American High School Diploma
- **Veränderungen beim Übergang in die Klasse 9 bzw. Klasse 10/11**
Changes in grade 9 resp. grade 10/11
- **The High School Diploma (HSD) @ GISSV**



Die GISSV bietet einen Doppelabschluss

GISSV offers a dual diploma

School career path at GISSV

GISSV is accredited in
Germany and in the USA



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Deutsches
Internationales Abitur
(DIA)



American High
School Diploma
(HSD)

- DIA is an equivalent to “Allgemeine deutsche Hochschulreife” that is gained at an all general “Gymnasien” (“Allgemeinbildendes Gymnasium”) in Germany
- The High School Diploma is equivalent to a college-preparatory diploma gained at an American High School

Studieren in Europa mit dem DIA der GISSV

Studying in Europe with German International Abitur from the GISSV

- **DIA** is considered a **general university entrance qualification** in Europe
- **No additional requirements** necessary except university or subject specific prerequisites as numerus clausus (average grade) or entry exams / interviews
- Studying with DIA in the **different regions**:



- “Bildungsinländer”
- Same status as students with an “Abitur” gained at a general German Gymnasium



- DIA is regarded as general authorization to access an university (“Hochschulzugangsberechtigung”)



- Bilateral agreement for acceptance of DIA with [Switzerland](#) and UK
- UK: Proof of sufficient language skills necessary



Studieren in Europa mit dem DIA der GISSV

Studying in Europe with German International Abitur from the GISSV

University system in Germany



- **Broad range of public universities** across the country and a huge range of different degree programs
- **No study fees**
- **Small administration fee** per semester (max 50-150 €)
- Exceptions for a second study program in some states and for non-EU-citizens in Baden-Württemberg and Saxony (range not comparable with US fees)
- Extensive (partly subsidized) **university exchange programs within Europe** (e.g. Erasmus) and other continents
- International recognized degree system (e.g. **Bachelor, Master**)



Studieren in Deutschland mit dem HSD

Studying in Germany with the American High School Diploma



- With an American High School Diploma, students are regarded as “**Bildungsausländer**” at German universities (foreigners concerning education)
- Therefore **additional admission requirements** exists that must be met:

1

Grades and units¹

- Total of 16 academic units with High School Diploma
- Number of units: English (4), 2nd language (2), Social Studies (3), Mathematics & Science in total (5), free (2)
- Minimum grade C applies for most units

+ 2

AP courses¹

- Depending on the degree program 4-5 AP courses
- 5 AP courses for general admission: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, English, foreign language, 1 additional AP

+ 3

Language

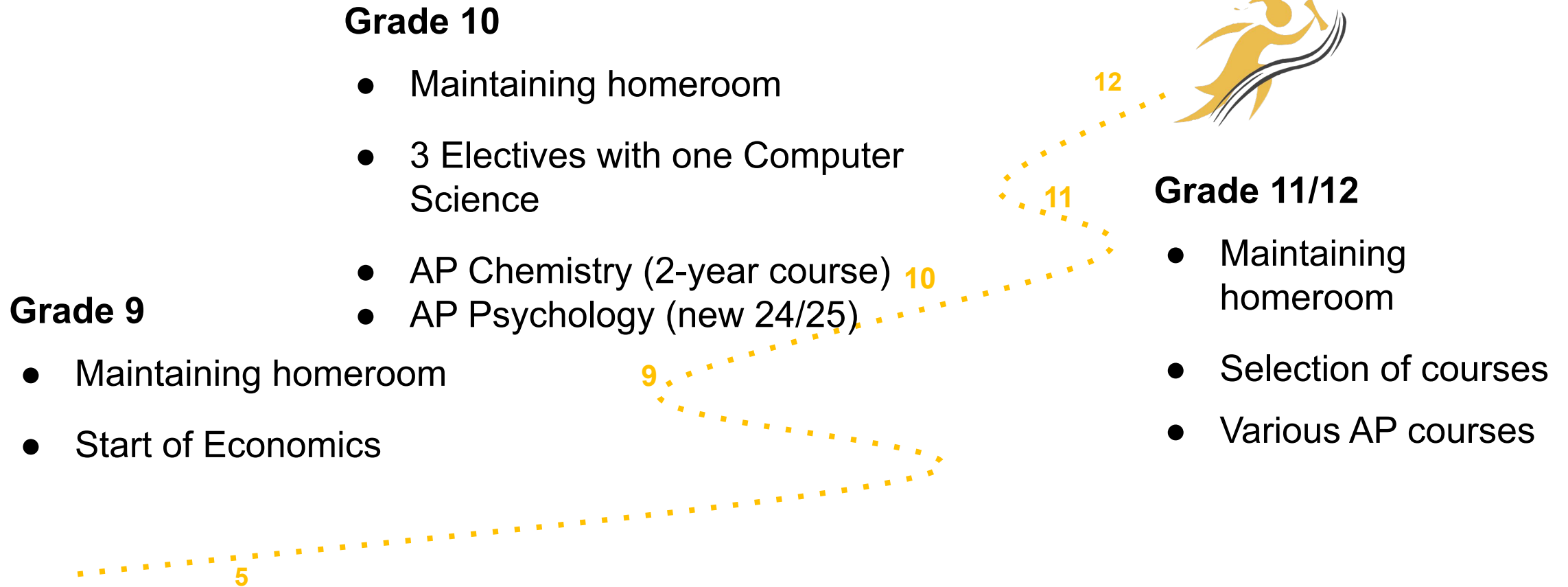
One of the following:

- Deutsches Sprachdiplom DSD II
- Goethe C2 certificate

DSD II can be gained at Samstagsschule at GISSV

Veränderungen in Klasse 9, 10 und 11

Changes in grades 9, 10 and 11



High School Diploma @ GISSV

All 4 years of grades count!

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
...	Sekundarstufe I ... MSA ZK	...	
	...		
	Einführungsphase	Qualifikationsphase	
		Semester 1	Semester 2
		Semester 3	Semester 4 Abitur Exams
...	HIGH SCHOOL		...
Freshmen	Sophomores pSAT, AP	Juniors pSAT/NMSQT, SAT, AP	Seniors SAT, AP
			HSD Transcript



GISSV offers a college preparatory high school program

Standard High School Diploma

The most common type of diploma awarded upon completing the required coursework and credits.

Typically includes a set number of credits in core subjects (English, Math, Science, Social Studies) and electives.

Provides a general education that prepares students for entry-level jobs or further education.

Vocational or Career-Technical Diploma

Focuses on preparing students for specific careers or trades.

Includes hands-on training and coursework in fields like healthcare, automotive technology, or culinary arts.

Aims to provide students with practical skills and certifications for immediate entry into the workforce.

College-Preparatory High School Diploma

Designed for students intending to pursue higher education.

More rigorous coursework, often including Advanced Placement (AP) classes or honors courses.

Equips students with the skills necessary for college success to enhance college admission prospects.



UC (University of California) Requirements		DIA Diploma Requirements (at GISSV)	
Years of Instruction	Subject	Years of Instruction	Subject
4	English	4	English
2 (3 recommended)	Language other than English	4	German
		2-4	A third language (French/Spanish)
3 (4 recommended)	Mathematics	4	Mathematics
2 (3 recommended)	Laboratory Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and/or Physics)	1-2* each (minimum of 4 years combined)	Biology
			Chemistry
			Physics
2	Social Sciences (incl. U.S. History/ Government and Ethnic Studies)	2-4* (minimum of 2.5 years combined)	History (including U.S. History / Government)
			Geography (including Ethnic Studies)
1	Visual or Performing Arts	2*	Music
			Visual Arts
1	College-Preparatory Elective	2-6* (minimum of 2.5 years combined)	Ethics
			Computer Science
			Economics
15 courses overall (150 credits)		25* courses overall (250 credits)	

Our High School Diploma fulfills and exceeds UC requirements (“[a-g](#)”)

*One course equals two academic years of a class that is taught 2 or fewer periods a week.

Grades & Transcript

9&10	Note	1 -			+ 2 -		
11&12	Punkte	15	14	13	12	11	10
	US	A+			A		
REG	unweighted GPA	4-3.7					
AP/ HON	weighted GPA	5-4.7					

School Year:	Course Title	Sem1	Sem2	Grade Level: 10	Credits
	German IV Honors	2 A	2 A		10.0
	English II	2 A	1- A+		10.0
	Spanish IV	2- A-	2- A-		10.0
	Algebra/Trigonometry 10	3 B	4+ C+		10.0
	Biology 10	1- A+	1- A+		5.0
	Chemistry 10	2 A	2+ A		5.0
	Computer Science 10	2 A	2+ A		5.0
	Physics 10	2+ A	2- A-		5.0
	US History 10	1 A+	1 A+		2.5
	World History 10	2 A	2 A		5.0
	Economics 10	2- A-	2+ A		5.0
	Ethics 10	1- A+	1- A+		5.0
	Visual Art 10	2+ A	2+ A		5.0
	Physical Education	1 A+	1 A+		5.0
Unweighted GPA:		3.78			
Weighted GPA:		3.90			
Cumulative Unweighted GPA:		3.59			
Cumulative Weighted GPA:		3.99			
				87.5	

Honors Classes

A lot of GISSV's regular coursework in grades 11-12 is considered honors level by UC requirements:

- German (10-12)
- Math (12)
- French/Spanish (11-12)
- Ethics (11-12)
- Biology (11-12)
- Chemistry (11-12)
- Physics (11-12)

[Full course list available](#)

Honors Calculus / Advanced Probability

★ UC Honors

Calculus **C** Mathematics

Full Year, 🏢 Classroom-based

Physics 11/12 Honors

★ UC Honors

Physics **D** Science

Two Years, 🏢 Classroom-based, 🧪 Labs

Ethics 11/12 Honors

★ UC Honors

Interdisciplinary **G** College-Preparatory Elective

Two Years, 🏢 Classroom-based



Advanced Placement



- enables students to pursue college-level studies while in high school.
- can lead to college credit OR ADVANCED PLACEMENT depending on qualifying exam grades.
- colleges in the US and around the world determine the credit they will award (usually for a score of 3, 4 or 5)
- Exams take place in May and are hosted by GISSV

GISSV offers as part of the students' coursework:

- AP German
- AP English Language
- AP English Literature
- AP French Language
- AP Spanish Language
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Microeconomics

Pending enrollment, GISSV offers these additional AP courses:

- AP Chemistry
- AP Music Theory
- AP Biology
- AP Calculus
- AP Psychology



College Admission Criteria

- ★ **Rigor of the curriculum** 
- ★ **GPA (grade point average)** in all high school courses* 
- ★ **Quality** of the student's academic performance relative to the educational opportunities available in his or her high school. 
- ★ Number of and performance in a-g-approved **honors and AP courses** 
- ★ **(Standardized Test scores: SAT or ACT)**
- ★ **Special talents and/ or awards**
- ★ Experiences that demonstrate **leadership qualities, initiative, a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to service.**
- ★ **Personal Statement (college essays)**
- ★ **Recommendations**

Founded in 2000, the German International School of Silicon Valley (GISSV) is a private, non-profit, co-educational college-preparatory school accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), and the German Conference of Cultural Ministers (KMK). It is the only secondary school in the Western United States meeting German government accreditation requirements, enabling entry into both U.S. and European higher education systems.

MISSION AND VISION

At GISSV, our mission is to foster academic excellence, champion belonging, and equip students with the skills to navigate languages, cultures, and the complexities of a global society. We go beyond preparing students for the future. We empower them to shape it.

AT A GLANCE

- Total enrollment: 552 | High school enrollment: 88 students
- Average class size: 15
- 90 faculty members (99% hold advanced degrees)
- Over 40 nationalities represented in the student body
- Dual Diplomas: U.S. High School Diploma & German International Abitur (DIA)

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

GISSV offers a rigorous, bilingual education combining U.S. and German college-preparatory curricula. Students take up to 13 subjects per year including Mathematics, Sciences, English, German, Social Sciences, Arts, and Physical Education. Instruction occurs in German and English; a third language (French or Spanish) begins in Grade 6 and continues through at least Grade 10. Project-based and cross-curricular instruction emphasizes critical thinking and independent learning. Exams include analysis and application tasks following Bloom's Taxonomy; multiple-choice testing is not used.

DUAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Students graduate with both the U.S. High School Diploma and the German International Abitur (DIA). The DIA is recognized for university admission in Germany, Europe, and worldwide. Abitur requirements include five comprehensive exams (three written, two oral) covering languages, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences. Final grades include coursework from Grades 11–12 and all Abitur exam results.

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

The GISSV curriculum fulfills and exceeds University of California (A–G) graduation requirements while meeting the standards of the German International Abitur. At a minimum, each student will graduate with:

- English – 4 years
- German – 4 years
- Mathematics – 4 years
- Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology) – 4 years
- Social Sciences (History, Geography) – 4 years
- French/Spanish – 2+ years
- College-preparatory Electives (Economics, Computer Science, Ethics) - 4 years
- Visual Arts/Music – 4 years
- Physical Education – 4 years

HONORS AND AP COURSES

GISSV offers 12 Advanced Placement (AP) and 9 Honors courses in grades 10–12. Due to our small class size, some of the AP courses are offered only dependent on minimum enrollment numbers.

AP offerings include English Language & Literature, German, French, Spanish, Microeconomics, Chemistry (minimum enrollment), Biology (minimum enrollment), Calculus AB (minimum enrollment), Computer Science Principles, Psychology (minimum enrollment), and Music Theory (minimum enrollment).

Honors courses include German V in grade 10 as well as Calculus, Advanced Probability, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, French V, Spanish V, Ethics in grades 11 and 12.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total AP Students	22	23	27	30	31	34
Number of Exams	53	38	41	58	47	63
AP Students with Scores 3+	22	21	24	28	27	30
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	100	91	89	93	87	88

The small number of students taking the SAT limits meaningful data.

MAILING ADDRESS

310 Easy St,
Mountain View, CA, 94043

CEEB code: 051711
Phone: (650) 254-0748
Website: www.gissv.org

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Head of School
Dr. Wolfram Schimpf

Heads of High School
Mr. Ivo Betten (Grades 8–10)
Mr. Sebastian Berk (Gr. 11–12)

College Counselor (U.S.)
Ms. Jenny Jungeblut

College Counselor
(Germany)
Ms. Cornelia Guss

THE GERMAN INTERNATIONAL ABITUR

The German International Abitur (DIA) is a highly rigorous, bilingual university-preparatory diploma recognized worldwide for its academic excellence and depth.

The final grade reflects sustained performance across two years of coursework and comprehensive final examinations, ensuring both consistency and mastery. To qualify for the diploma, students must earn a grade of C or better in at least 29 semester courses during their final two years of study.

The DIA enables students to enter university directly in their chosen field, without any additional general education requirements.

GRADING SCALE

Grades are reported on both U.S. (A–F) and German (grades 9/10: 1–6, grades 11/12: 0–15) scales. GISSV does not rank students due to small class size.

Description	Superior	Excellent		Good			Satisfactory			Failing			
American Grading Scale	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
German Grading Scale 9/10	15-13	12-11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
German Grading Scale 11/12	1	2	3			4			5			6	

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- Students participate in athletics (soccer, cross country, tennis) and other after-school extracurricular activities (MUN, Orchestra, Entrepreneur Club, Eco School, Debate).
- There are a number of student-led clubs that meet during lunch (Interact Club, Stocks & Bonds Club, Chess Club, Marine Biology Club, Podcast Club).
- Students can also run for Student Council as class representatives or Student Body Presidents and their officers as well as work as in the Steering Committee, in school development task forces, or as Student Ambassadors during public school events.
- In grades 9 and 10, students participate in a weeklong job shadowing program. In grade 9, they apply for a non-profit or service-oriented placement, in grade 10 they choose a business placement.
- Students are offered exchange programs to Germany, Chile, and France.
- Students are paired with a faculty member of their choice who acts as a consistent point of connection and guidance during their high school years.
- While GISSV has no volunteering requirement for graduation, most students engage in numerous community service projects inside and outside of school, for example as the GISSV Holiday Market.

POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT

98–100% of our students are accepted at 4-year universities both in the US and Europe.

Recent admissions include: Boston University; Cal Poly SLO; Cornell; Georgetown; NYU; Stanford; Tufts; UC Berkeley; UCLA; UCSD; UCSB;

Recent Admissions to Universities in Germany:

TU Munich, LMU Munich, Heidelberg, RWTH Aachen, Humboldt University Berlin, University of Hamburg

Recent Admissions to Other European Universities:

ECSP Business School (Paris); Bocconi University, Italy; University College London; University of St. Gallen; ETH Zurich

PATTERN OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Two semesters beginning mid-August and mid-January with a total of 180 school days.

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

Over 40 nationalities on our campus:
50% German families,
30% American families,
20% international families.

LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Students receive German and English Language and Literature instruction from grades 1–12. They start a third language instruction in grade 6 (French or Spanish), which is compulsory until at least grade 10.

The instructional program takes place in German, English, or bilingually.

Students are taught in German and English as a native language; ELL classes and the German equivalent are available.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Students have access to school counselors and academic support teams for accommodations and modification.

Standardized Tests @ GISSV

The SAT takes three hours and consists of three tests: (1) the Reading Test, (2) the Writing and Language Test, and (3) the Math Test.

- pSAT 8/9 (fall of grade 9)
- pSAT 10 (spring of grade 10)

- pSAT / NMSQT (for grade 11 in fall)
- SAT School Day in fall (for grade 12) and spring (for grade 11)

[More information on SAT](#)

Other widely recognized standardized test option:
[ACT](#)



Extracurricular Opportunities

Special Talents & Awards

- Math Competitions
- French/Spanish National Contests
- Shark Tank
- Model United Nations
- Jugend debattiert
- Entrepreneur Club
- Orchestra
- League Sports
- ...



Leadership/Initiative Opportunities

- Student Council
- Student-Led Clubs
- Steering Committee
- Junior Coaches
- Holiday Market Volunteering
- Shadowing Days
- Eco School
- ...

College Admission Criteria

- ★ **Rigor of the curriculum** ✓
- ★ **GPA (grade point average)** in all high school courses* ✓
- ★ **Quality** of the student's academic performance relative to the educational opportunities available in his or her high school. ✓
- ★ Number of and performance in a-g-approved **honors and AP courses** ✓
- ★ **(Standardized Test scores: SAT or ACT)** ✓
- ★ **Special talents and/ or awards** ✓
- ★ Experiences that demonstrate **leadership qualities, initiative, a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to service.** ✓
- ★ **Personal Statement (college essays)**
- ★ **Recommendations**

Career Counseling and Mentoring/Support

Counselor Consultant for Colleges & Universities



**Career Counselor
Germany,
German-speaking programs
and Europa**

[*Frau Guss*](#)

- Annual college and career workshops in grades 9 and 10
- Social shadowing days in grade 9
- Business shadowing days in grade 10
- 6 college and career modules in grade 11
- College and college fair visits
- College and Career Resource Center
- Individual college counseling and career guidance sessions



**Counselor Consultant for
U.S. (and UK) and English-speaking
programs**

[*Ms. Jungeblut*](#)



Homeroom teacher



Mentor



Student Support

- Health Curriculum
- CPR & First Aid



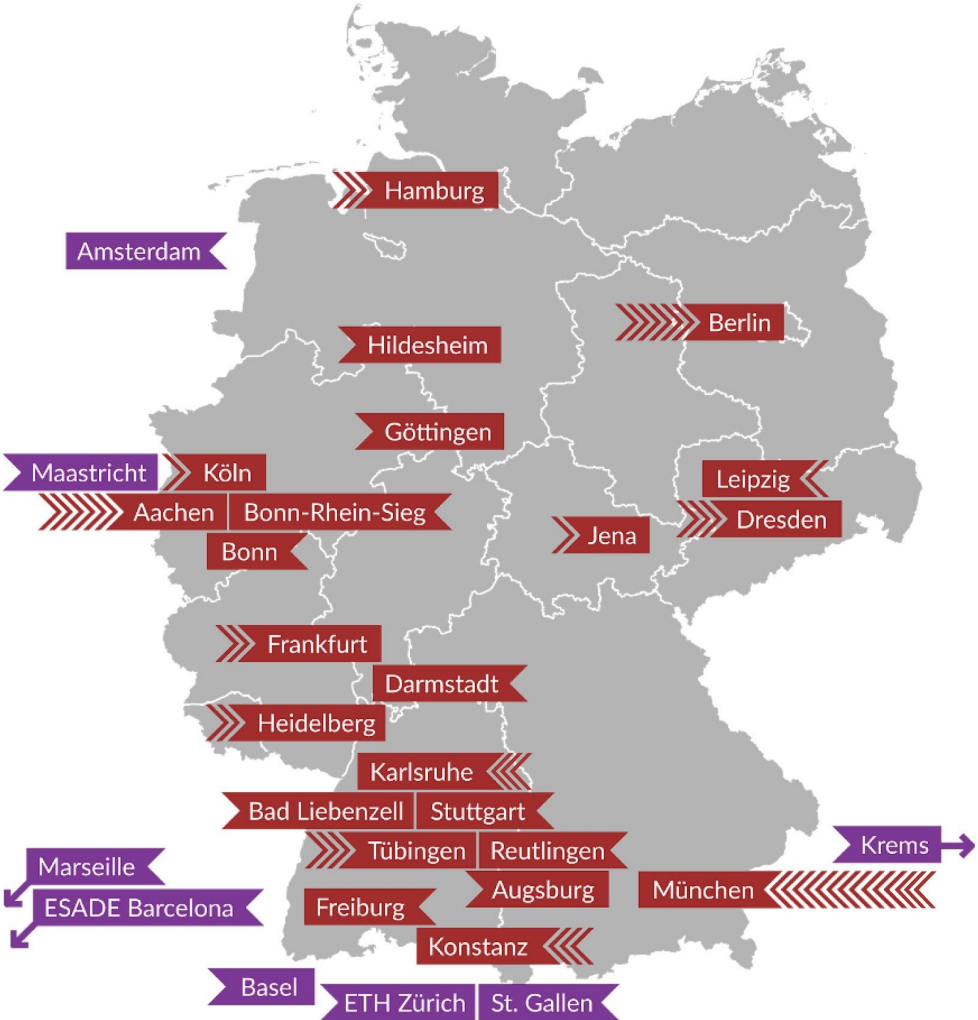
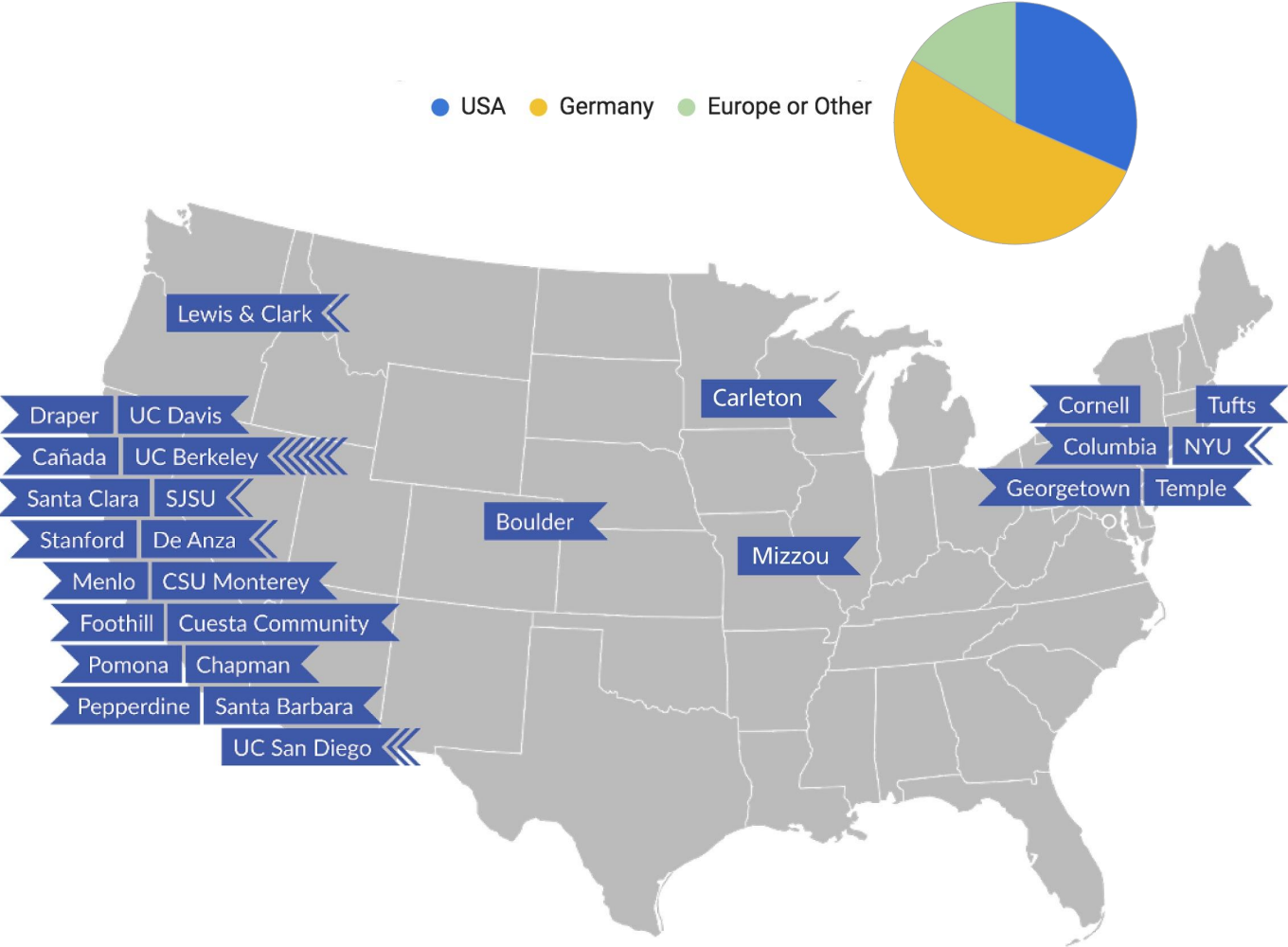
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- ★ Number of and performance in a-g-approved **honors and AP courses** ✓
- ★ **(Standardized Test scores: SAT or ACT)** ✓
- ★ **Special talents and/ or awards** ✓
- ★ Experiences that demonstrate **leadership qualities, initiative, a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to service.** ✓
- ★ **Personal Statement (college essays)** ✓
- ★ **Recommendations** ✓



Studienorte unserer Abiturienten

Study locations our graduates



High School Aufenthalt in Klasse 9

High School stay in class 9

- A school year at an American High School fits best in grade 9
- Stay for half year (first half year) or full year
- Credits can be recognized
- Early consultation with GISSV highly recommended (concerning recognition of credits)



Vergleich DIA und HSD

Comparison DIA and HSD

Abitur



12 courses per school year
Broad education (allgemeine Hochschulreife)

Rigor Curriculum means
e.g. all Students in Grade 12 are
taking Calculus

All Electives available are represented in
schedule and guaranteed

 Student led Club

High School Diploma



6-8 courses per school year
Narrow education with specialization

a-g Requirements means e.g. 3 to 4 years
of mathematics not necessarily reaching
the level of Calculus.

Broad Choice of Electives are available
but only if it fits in schedule

Student led Clubs

Sources and useful links



- Information about DIA on the GISSV website:
<https://www.gissv.org/gissv-home-english/learning/high-school-9-12/college-counseling>
- Information from DAAD for studying in Germany with an American High School diploma:
https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1728681389/gissv/oabvf9nmt1mb1zbiqzw1/DAAD_DeutscheSchulen_EnglishGISSV2024.pdf
- Admission requirements in Switzerland with DIA:
<https://www.swissuniversities.ch/themen/zulassung/zulassung-universitaere-hochschulen/laender#DE>
- Admission requirements in the UK:
<https://www.college-contact.com/grossbritannien/zulassungsvoraussetzungen>
<https://www.studying-in-uk.org/>
- General information for admission requirements in Europe:
https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/education/university/admission-entry-conditions/index_de.htm
- General information about DIA in North America
<https://www.germanapproach.org/college-acceptances.html>

