

B10 Jane / USA / German Studies

Interaction partner(s): German lecturer
Moment of enquiry: WS 08/09
Experience of difference: Ways of contacting lecturers

Jane, an American student, is spending a student year at a German university. She finds contacting German lecturers extremely difficult. In America, you can talk to your lecturers anytime and anywhere, and the lecturers usually take the time to address the student's problems, whereas in Germany, you have to make an appointment with the lecturers or see them during their consulting hours. For her first written assignment, Jane needs a lot of help and so whenever she has the chance, she asks her lecturer questions on how to write the assignment. However, the lecturer is usually in a hurry and asks her to see him during consulting hours. But even during consulting hours, Jane gets the impression that time is limited, as there are many other students waiting their turn with the lecturer. This makes Jane cut her comments shorter than she had intended. At the same time, she is annoyed because of the time pressure.

1. What does Jane expect of a lecturer, and why is she annoyed at the way the consultation system is organised?
2. Is there a reason why the lecturers are not available to consult with their students at any time and any place?