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Studies Oriental Studies with focus on Arabic Language at Marburg University
Participated in the DAAD program
“Arabic Language and Culture“
(First Semester 2014/2015)

Sharing German traditions

We came together as a colorful mixture of people from different universities in Germany and Austria to attend the new program “Arabic Language and Culture“, at the German Jordanian University (GJU) from September 2014 to February 2015.

From the beginning, students and staff had to deal with a lot of challenges: our course was the pilot event in the project between DAAD, GJU and LSI Bochum and so there was little experience yet in running the program. And then there were some suboptimal conditions, like a building still under construction. But all this was eventually overcome!

The 23 students in the course were divided into two groups and taught by a dynamic and motivated team who gave us lessons in Media Arabic, Conversation, Translation and Grammar. Other components of the curriculum consisted of the weekly tutorial as a platform for the German-speaking students working

with Arabic-speaking students to improve their language skills. We had weekly themes that structured the course, and activities outside the campus that allowed us insights into the work of organizations such as Caritas, the Deutscher Volkshochschulverband and GJU’s Vision Training Center. We also went to a concert, a poetry slam, a “dabke” dance class, and the Calligraphy and Mosaic Center. And we saw the making of Falafel and “Knafe”! These activities presented a completely new insight into Jordanian society and put us in contact with different kinds of people. Through their stories, we learned much of what might otherwise have remained hidden for us.

Also, we travelled together with Arabic-speaking students from GJU to explore Jordan. We went to Petra, Wadi Rum, and Aqaba, and to the cities of Salt, Jerash and Ajloun. And of course we drifted on the Dead Sea. Life in Amman also offered a lot: movies, political events and lectures, exhibitions and concerts. Nearly every night one or sometimes more of these cultural or civil society events could be attended.

I was in the special situation to live in a house with several other German exchange students. The neighborhood was really pleasant and in a central location. The great community in

the house lead to many joint meals and the celebration of German traditions like creating an Advent Calendar and preparing special meals during the Christmas season. We had a constantly changing constellation of people living in our apartment, which was fun, and we often sat together studying and working at our huge dining table.

I am very grateful for the last four month, in which I was able to live and study here in Amman and experience the support and patience of the people.