

Summary:

Student Susi is one of the lucky ones, who don't have to pay tuition fees. But she doesn't know why, nor does she know what other special regulations exist. Together with Susi we will find that out. Mr. Prem from the University Press Office will give us an overview of why students are eligible for tuition fee exemption, the different fees that are normally paid and the deadlines that you have to keep in mind. What very few students realize is how the money is actually used. Mr. Prem will answer this question. He also has some tips ready, for all of you, who are eligible for an exemption.

(Voxpops:) "This student public transportation pass. Administration fees are probably added on top of that." - "For the administrative costs, and then together with the student public transportation pass and it comes to 480 euros." - "To pay lecturers and for other things." - "When others are still going to university or school, don't have any income, then you are exempt." - "Yes, I actually think the fees make sense." - "It helps the state to be able to offer better universities and I think that students should have to pay tuition fees."

Narrator: Well, well, every semester they have to be paid: the tuition fees. But luckily not every student has to pay them. One of these lucky ones is Susi, because she has two younger siblings.

Susi: Yeah, thank God! Those two little trouble makers are good for something. Hmmm, two of my friends don't have to pay either, but they don't have any siblings. Why is that?

Narrator: Well, Susi, please listen closely. Klaus Prem from the University Press Office knows why.
 Right, the Bavarian Higher Education Act provides for some cases in which students in principle can be exempted from tuition fees. One example might be that if a student has to raise or care for a child that has not reached the age of 18 or that is disabled. Another example would be if a student's parents are required under law to provide support, but they receive the child benefit for at least three children. Or if the student's parents are required to provide support for another child, that is enrolled in at German university and already pays tuition fees.
 In addition, there is the so called „hardship clause“ in the Bavarian Higher Education Act. On a case by case basis, the responsible university determines if a student is experiencing unreasonable hardship.
 Foreign students are exempted from tuition fees here in Augsburg if the appropriate cooperation and partnership agreements with the university in their home country would provide this exemption.

In addition, each student has to pay the student union fee and also the costs for the student public transportation pass. Both of these are mandatory, which means that no one is exempt.

Susi: OK, I understand. But how do I apply for exemption? There must be some deadlines!

Narrator: You're right Susi. Generally there are two possibilities: you either apply for a tuition fee waiver in advance or you can apply for a refund of your tuition fees. Right. Well, if you think that you're eligible for tuition exemption for next semester, you can either apply for a tuition waiver in advance or you can re-register at first with the payment of the tuition fee and demand a refund of the amount later. Whether you receive a tuition waiver in advance or you receive a refund depends on the date that you turn in your tuition waiver request. That is why you should inform yourself ahead of time. For the winter semester the deadline is July 15, and for the summer semester the deadline is February 15 - those are the registration periods - if you submit your request by then, you can count on getting a tuition waiver in advance. If you miss these deadlines you can apply for a refund. The deadlines for refunds are October 30 for the winter semester and April 30 for the summer semester. By the way, you can find the application forms on the University of Augsburg website, on the "Studentenkanzlei" (Registrar's Office) page under "Formulare und Infomaterial" (forms and information materials).

Klaus Prem: I looked at it myself, and it's very easy to understand.

Narrator: Well, Susi, did we answer all your questions?

Susi: Yes, now I know who can be exempted from the tuition fees and how I can apply for tuition exemption. But what I'm interested in now is: what does the university do with the tuition fees?

(Voxpops): "I don't have a clue." - "I couldn't tell you what exactly they're used for." - "No, no idea."

Narrator: Well, Susi, seems like you're not the only one who's been wondering about that. But once again Mr. Prem has the answer. The administration primarily uses the fees to improve university services. So for example, they hire more staff for main offices such as the Central Advising Center or the International Office. But also other main offices that work to improve conditions for students are, with the help of tuition fees, better equipped in terms of staff and infrastructure. A

typical example would be the university library, but also the computer centre, the sports centre, the language centre, and Career Services profit from tuition fees. A part of the fees are also used to modernize the media equipment in lecture halls and seminar rooms.

The semester tuition fees at the University of Augsburg consist of the student union fee, the student public transportation pass and tuition fees, altogether about 550 euros. The money is used to improve the conditions for studying at the university. So, for example, for more lecturers, more tutorials and field trips, and also for better equipment in the libraries.

In principle, every student has to pay the fees though there are exceptions. If you take a leave of absence, attend another university as a visiting student, or participate in the ERASMUS Exchange Program, you do not have to pay. You can also apply for an exemption from tuition fees if you are raising a child, come from a large family, or have siblings who are also studying.

Please note, there are deadlines that you definitely have to keep. Therefore, it is best to inform yourself using the Studentenkazlei (Registrar's Office) page of the University of Augsburg website.

Klaus Prem: In my opinion, the most important thing is simply to remember the deadlines. If you really want to get a tuition waiver in advance, you have to remember that the deadline is February 15 for the following summer semester and July 15 for the following winter semester. If you don't want to have to go through the procedure of having your money refunded, make sure to turn in your requests for tuition fee waivers prior to these dates.

Susi: Now it's all a little clearer, but there are so many exceptions...

Narrator: There you're right, Susi, but if you or those listening are not completely sure about something, you can just call the "Studentenkazlei" (Registrar's Office). The employees are happy to help!

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