A Computer Science Student Travel Guide

Welcome to the Technical University Munich! This Guide was created for Computer Science (CS) and Informatics Systems (IS) students starting in the winter semester 2019/20. It might not contain all details about life as a CS/IS student, however it contains a variety of tips you will face day-to-day. In principle, everything is explained in the introduction days (SET is short for the German term), but you never know what your SET tutor might forget to mention :). It was designed and continuously extended by active students of the Fakultät Mathematik/Physik/Informatik (FSMIP). This is the group of students that realizes the SET (and much more :).

Finding Your Way Around

One of your first concerns might be where to find your lecture halls or seminar rooms. This section gives a short overview of the campus and the most important departments including the room number conventions. By understanding these conventions you can easily find all the rooms located in those buildings. In addition you can use the RoomFinder:

http://portal.mytum.de/campus/roomfinder

Campus Garcing

Math and Informatics (MI)

Most of the lectures and classes will take place at the MI building. You can see the large lecture hall HS1 on the left when you enter the main entrance. HS2 and 3 are opposite the main entrance on the ground floor. The building consists of 10 sides buildings, called fingers. Between the two halls, in finger no. 6 are the rooms of your Faculty FSMIP.

All the rooms are named by the following convention: A room name consists of three components (e.g. 01.10.652).

1st component: Floor (1 = Basement, 0 = Ground Floor, 1 = 1st Floor, etc.)

2nd component: Finger (see blueprint)

3rd component: Room number

Mechanical Engineering (MW)

The Mechanical Engineering is the biggest building on the campus. The most important rooms for CS/IS student are the lecture halls MW0001, MW2001 and MW1001. The MW2001 is the largest lecture hall on Campus Garching and is located on the west side of the building. License holders may create a lecture plan for the examination. The lecture halls have the most important rooms because some external tutorials and exams take place there. From time to time tutorials are offered in seminar rooms between.

All the rooms are named by the following convention: A room name starts with „MW“ and is followed by digits:

1st digit: Floor (-1 = Basement, 0 = Ground Floor, 1 = 1st Floor, etc.)

2nd digit: Yard (see blueprint)

3rd & 4th digit: Room number

Physics Department (PH)

Most likely, only the PH lecture hall is interesting for you. You can reach it via the foyer - just go straight in and turn left. To find other rooms in the physics department quickly, there is the useful link http://www.ph.tum.de/roomfinder.

Other Buildings

The StudiUM is the new building between the Mensa, the CH and the MW. Every student can activate his student card via TUMonline to have access 24/7. In the building you will find working rooms and one kitchen per floor. In addition, there is a roof terrace and a rehearsal room for bands is under construction in its basement.

Between the MI and MW is the Interims building with adjacent sports fields (basketball, volleyball, etc.). The new Interims II building is between the CH and the StudiUM. Both Interims each consist of two medium-sized lecture halls.

The permanent construction site in the middle of the campus is the Galileo. It will be home of a huge lecture hall (approx. 1300 seats) for lectures and concerts as well as restaurants, the first supermarket on the campus, a bookshop, hotel rooms, apartments and offices. There is also a gym, which is already open now all week, even though the rest of the building is still under construction.

In addition, there is a whole bunch of research institutes on campus, which will become interesting during your studies. South of the MI building is the Leibniz Data Centre (LRZ), for example, which operates the Munich Research Network, provides a number of IT services and is home to a super computing cluster in the (almost) cuboid building.

Campus Hochbrück

Occasionally, lectures or other events are held in an office building in Garching Hochbrück. Two office buildings have been rented as extension for some chairs of the mathematics and informatics departments.

Coming from the U-Bahn (subway) station, you can take the underpass under the B471 to the Parking. One building is on the right, the other building is across the small lake to the other side of the ring - see map.

Finding Your Way Around

Food & Drinks (Oh my coffee!)

Congratulations, you belong to the first year to directly enjoy the new Mensa (opened 11.02.2019). You can find it north of the old Mensa building and it promises to be much better than the old one: There are eight counters including salad and vegetable counters, pizza and pasta counters and a barbecue.

The food counters are open from 11:00 to 15:00 (Mon - Thu) or until 13:45 (Fri). In the lecture-free time the Mensa closes at 14:50. There you pay at self-service terminals. However, it is important to know that you must pay with your Student Card, which can be changed at one of the machines located in ground floor of the building. To do so, you hold your card (might still be placed in your wallet) against the card reader and feed it with a banknote. Alternatively you can register for Autobank: The student card is automatically recharged when the credit falls below a certain value.

By the way, it is worth having a look at the timetable of mechanical engineering freshmen, at least around lunchtime. With a class of this size you really don’t want to wait in line together. Not even if the new Mensa can actually reduce the waiting times.

In addition the StudiUM operates two cafeterias on the Campus Garching, called StruCafe. They also offer hot lunches, but are a bit more expensive. As in the Mensa, you will also pay with the Student Card. One StruCafe has been moved to the new cafeteria building, Mon - Thu 08:30 - 15:45 and Fri 14:45. The other StruCafe is located at the western end of the MW building and has longer opening hours (Mon - Thu 08:00 - 17:00 and Fri until 16:00). In the middle of the MW, Magistrat is a coffee bar, which additionally offers snacks and hot dogs. In this bar you can pay with cash as well as with your Student Card.

Only cash will be accepted for the following meal locations. In the MI building the privately run FMI Bistro offers a larger (and usually better) selection of meals, but is generally more expensive than the StudiUM’s offer. However, it is also open in the evening (Mon - Fri 07:00 - 19:00, lunch from 11:30).

In the 8th floor there is a coffee terminal, which you may have already discovered.

The bakery Riedmair near the southern subway exit is also open weekdays until 19:00. Adjacently there are two popular stalls: Onkel Luu (Asian) and a Kabab. A food truck, which is on campus Tuesday to Thursday from 11:00 - 14:00, is the Pita Booth at the parking lot in front of the ES0 entrance.

For therefore there is the big IPP-Kantine in the fenced area of the Max-Planck-Institutes, which is often used as an alternative to the Mensa. It is in the same price category as the PH bistro, but has a little more choice. To enter the site you need your student card. Show it at the IPP-Gate to enter. Here you can also ask for the way to the canteen.

Unfortunately, in the physics building you need to survive only with snack and coffee machines. They are placed in the foyer. New is the possibility to use your own cup instead of the plastic cup (and get a discount for doing so).

If you are still hungry and moreover thirsty in the evening after 19:00, there is the Campus-Pub C2.

You can find menu for many of these food options at https://hunger.tum.sexy.
Studies

Teaching

In the lecture your professor stands in front and explains the course material. Here (as well as in (almost) all other classes) attendance is not compulsory. Questions can (and should!) be asked by you even if it can take some courage to ask in front of the whole class. Remember: if you didn’t understand something, you’re probably not alone. The other students just didn’t have the courage to ask.

While the quality of lectures may vary, you will soon realize that just attending lectures is quite enough for studying successfully. What is essential is taking part in the tutorials and other exercises. In central tutorials, typically the tutorial organizer will retell some material or work some sample problems for you, deepening your understanding.

The tutorials are taught by postgraduate students or students of higher semesters. You’ll find yourself with about 3-30 people, depending on the popularity of the time-slot (or the tutor). In the tutorial either the homework or the solution to other problems are presented either by you or the tutor. You’ll be told in your first lecture in each course how to sign up for the tutorials. Most of the time if your tutorial doesn’t suit you, you can switch groups.

“Homework”?! Yes, indeed there are homeworks. In most courses you aren’t required to hand them in, or even solve them. You might take this and the fact that most questions are rather hard as an excuse not to do them. Don’t! You might have to spend a lot of time with the homeworks, but they are the only way to get a feeling for the course material and give you the skills needed to pass the exam. Try to team up with 2-3 fellow students to work on homeworks. You’ll be glad about the discussions you’ll have.

At the end of term you write exams about the courses you followed. These are usually more difficult than exams you might have had so far, but typically easier than your homework. So if you made an effort with your homework you should do fine in the exams.

Books

As an enrolled student you can borrow books from the TUM University Library. In the M1-library you’ll find all the books that are relevant for you, but many of them are not borrowable. The large textbook collection with many borrowable copies is located in the chemistry library. To search, order, or reserve books, the university library page is quite useful: https://www.uk.tum.de/en. As a rule, you can borrow books for 4 weeks. If nobody else proceedings your copy, you’ll get an automatic extension for a few months, see https://www.uk.tum.de/en/bibliothek/sachverwaltung/erneuerung.html. The books can be returned in any library section.

The current opening hours of selected libraries are:

Informatics/Math: 08:00 - 24:00 (Mon - Fri) and 10:00 - 20:00 (Sat, Sun)
Chemistry (CH): 08:00 - 21:00 (Mon - Fri) and 08:00 - 19:00 (Fri)

Lecture Notes

Printed scripts issued by some lectures and collections of previous exams can be purchased from the Fachgeschäftsstelle on www.fachschaft.in.tum.de/script-sales. The catalog can be found at: https://scripten.mpi.in.tum.de/katalog. If you’re interested in participating, you can help by selling these scripts!

Working Rooms

Of course the libraries are suitable for working on your own. In the atrium (called Magistrale) of the M1 building you have surely already found a larger number of wooden benches, these are a first possibility for group work. In the library extension of the M1 there are additional single and group rooms on the 1st floor, which you can reach via the wooden staircase at the end of the Magistrale. These are accessible 24 hours a day (and quite popular). You can also use the rooms between the fingers of the building in the upper floors, called “glass boxes” (or, if there is no copy there, at the tables in front of it).

In the MW there are tables and chairs everywhere in the Magistrale, which are also suitable for group work. There are also work-rooms in the StudiTUM.

In the M1 building, you can use the computers in the rooms 00.05.011 and 00.07.023) and in the MI library.

In the MI building, you can switch groups.

IT-security

You can enable basic protection of your data, your computer and your digital identity by taking some simple actions. At https://www.it.tum.de/en/it-security/for-students you can find out how to protect your computer and smartphone.

Students have the opportunity to download the free malware protection “Sophos Antivirus” from the LRZ website. There you will find versions for common systems. For the download and the regular update you need to connect your computer to the university’s network, which is accessible 24 hours to TUM-ID.

Since you can log in with the TUM-ID and the corresponding password to many TUM services, it is particularly important that you choose a very good password here. Of course you should use this password exclusively for the TUM identification. At https://www.it.tum.de/en/it-security/for-students/museum you will find many tips and a password card to print yourself.

Additional Links

Faculty of Informatics: https://www.in.tum.de/en
Your Fachschaft: https://mpi.in.tum.de/en
Have a look at „Entering TUM“ / „Begin of Studies“

MVV Public Transport: https://www.mvv-muenchen.de/en
Central University Sports: https://www.zs.mw.muenchen.de/en
Studentenwerk: https://www.studentenwerk-muenchen.de/en

Contacts

Direct contact persons for other concerns are:

Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Bußgarten (M1 00.10.006) - Dean
Vivija Simaite (M1 01.08.016) - Academic Student Advisor
Shytle Roden-Kinghorn (M1 02.07.39) - Academic Student Advisor
Dr. Martina von Imhoff (M1 00.09.005) - International Student Exchange Coordinator

And of course, your Fachschaft! (M1 00.06.133)

Imprint: Fachschaft MPI für MiChemische Bio-analytik in der Mobbeltstrasse 1, 85748 Garching
Tel.: +49 89 289 365-5
WWW: https://mpi.fs.tum.de/en
E-Mail: fsadmin@tum.de
Editorial Officer: Dr. Helga Schwenk
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