



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL STUDIES
AIMS in Graz, Austria
since 1970

AIMS Handbook

updated March 2025



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Studentenheim (Heim) entrance



*Studentenheim - home4students
Neutorgasse 46
8010 Graz, Austria*



*First floor lobby of
Studentenheim*



Cover Photo: Nathan Mitchell
Heim Outside Photo: GERAL HIRL
All other photos: AIMS Staff

Section 1

Preparing for the AIMS in GRAZ Experience

1.1 German

Start learning German now! German classes begin two days after your arrival and include “Survival German” review sessions, words and phrases to meet basic needs – ordering and paying for food, asking directions, etc. Three levels of German are offered from beginner to late intermediate. Class assignments will be posted after arrival.

1.2 Health Matters

Reduce your chances that illness or injury will spoil your summer in Graz. Please read the AIMS Medical Reminders document found in your application (singers/collaborative pianists) or registration (faculty/staff, orchestra, and visitors.)

- > Protect yourself from colds and coughs before you leave, during travel, and in Graz.
- > Wash your hands and use antiseptic gel to control bacteria and viruses, especially after riding on buses or streetcars.
- > Don't cough without covering.
- > Don't drink after someone else.
- > Wear a mask if you feel you are becoming sick.
- > Isolate yourself if you become sick.

1.3 Health Care

The Medical Advisor is available to advise and treat minor illnesses, and to help you obtain health care in case of illness or injury in Graz. Clinic hours are posted on the door to the clinic and upon request. Ask a faculty or staff member to call the Medical Advisor in case of emergencies.

1.4 Medical Insurance

Full-time participants (singers/collaborative pianists, orchestra, faculty/staff, and guests who purchase the AIMS insurance), receive coverage for emergency health care that includes 90% of the cost of medical treatment, prescriptions, and hospitalization during the AIMS program. (Braces, crutches, ambulance service and dental care are *not* covered.) If you travel outside Austria, check your personal health insurance policy to determine what coverage it provides. The fee for AIMS health insurance is \$85 and is mandatory. (If your citizenship requires a travel visa to enter Austria, the AIMS health insurance fee is \$100 and is mandatory.)

1.5 Prescription Drugs

To avoid problems with Customs:

- 1) Bring only the medicines you will need.
- 2) Bring the medicines in their original prescription containers.
- 3) Bring the quantities you will need for two months, in your carry-on baggage.

DO NOT have drugs, vitamins or anything in pill or powder form sent to you while you are in Europe. Customs officials will NOT allow their entry. Persons taking long-term medications should bring a list of the generic names of their prescription drugs. Replacing lost or forgotten medications is possible and having the generic name helps.

1.6 Special Diets

AIMS cannot provide special diets. Most restaurants have vegetarian and vegan selections. “BIO” (organic) food is available in most grocery stores but can be more expensive than “non-BIO” food. You can find the items you need if you require a special diet. We will help if you have any difficulty doing so. Austrian law now requires all restaurants to list allergens on menus which is helpful to those on special diets.

1.7 Passports

The purpose of Passports is to provide proof of identity upon your *entry* into a country and allow your *return* to the country of origin. You cannot RE-ENTER your country of origin without a valid passport. A valid passport is required for adults and children to travel to Austria and all other countries.

Many countries require your passport to be valid for 3-6 months beyond your departure date. **Check the expiration date on your passport.** Do not postpone obtaining a passport or renewing your passport as delays in issuing passports are common.

Your passport is a valuable document to you and to thieves. **Keep your passport secure at all times.**

Please make a copy of the picture page of your passport and give it to AIMS at check-in (required by Austrian hotel law). Copies save valuable time if your passport is lost or stolen. You must carry your passport if you travel outside of Graz.

1.8 Visas

U.S. CITIZENS do not need a visa to visit EU countries or member countries (Schengen) for stays under 90 days.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please click here to determine if you need a visa to enter Austria: <https://www.schengenvisa.info.com/who-needs-schengen-visa/>. If you need a visa, contact AIMS at aimsadminkc@gmail.com **immediately** to get the visa application process started. You cannot change planes in another country (for example, Germany) and continue to Austria without a valid visa to visit Austria. If you need a visa, you are required to pay the AIMS \$100 Visa Processing Fee.

1.9 Transportation to Graz

Arrival and departure dates are published on the participants area of the website. Log into the participants area at <http://aimsgraz.com/participants/> and select your category (singer, collaborative pianist, orchestra, or faculty). Arrival and departure dates are listed in the *Travel Information* tab.

1.9.1 Arrival in Graz

Group transportation from the Graz airport is available only on the designated arrival and departure dates published on the participants area of the website. You can purchase AIMS airport transportation for \$15 each way through the website. (AIMS does not provide transportation to or from the train station.)

If you arrive in Graz with lost or damaged baggage, the claims desk is *inside* the Baggage Claim Hall at the airport. **Make your claim at the desk before exiting through Customs.**

Label each piece of your luggage with the Heim AIMS office address and phone number

AIMS - American Institute of Musical Studies
Neutorgasse 46/1/141
8010 Graz AUSTRIA
Telefon: +43 (0)664 4628161

AIMS attendees have found Apple AirTags and Samsung SmartTags extremely useful in locating the precise location of missing luggage.

It is very helpful to take a picture of your luggage (each piece separately) before you check it as the person helping you find your lost luggage will ask for the size, color, and description of your bag. The person will also ask for your address in Graz (which should be on your bag!) and phone number. Please give him/her the phone number listed above. (It is the AIMS office number.) These folks are genuinely nice and help luggage-less people every day (and

they speak English.) You will be given a printout with info on it. Keep this paper!! When you arrive at the Heim and check in, please let us know you are missing a bag so we can keep an eye out for it and call later for more info.

Every summer some bags get delayed. The airport will call us and will deliver the luggage to the Heim.

After you collect your luggage, you will walk through sets of glass sliding doors into the very small terminal. Look for someone holding an AIMS logo sign - this is your transportation to the Heim.

Do not worry about getting lost at the Graz airport or being left behind! The airport has only one exit after baggage claim and the AIMS staff picking you up has a list of passengers to expect. If you are delayed for some reason and/or miss a flight DON'T PANIC! We always talk to gate agents when we are missing people and they give us updates on delayed flights.

1.9.2 General Flight Info

1) You may not check into the Heim before 10:00 AM on the arrival date for your category.

NO EXCEPTIONS. The designated arrival and departure dates are published on the participants area of the website.

2) If you arrive in Europe early or do not fly directly to Graz, plan on extra hotel and restaurant expenses. Amsterdam, Brussels, and Paris are very long distances from Graz. Vienna and Munich (2.5 and 6 hours by train, respectively), are closer but also require additional air or surface travel expense.

3) Be wary of "travel deals" which require changing airports, or that allow only 15 kg (33 lbs) of free checked baggage and charge excess baggage fees that may not include the transportation of your instrument. If you have 70 lbs of baggage, flying to Graz is the best alternative. Luggage can be stored at the Studentenheim if you want to travel before AIMS. Storing it after AIMS is possible but retrieving it must be at times when our offices are open.

1.10 Insurance

1.10.1 Flight Cancellation and Travel Insurance

Many credit card companies offer travel insurance when you use their card to purchase a ticket. Flight cancellation insurance (often part of travel insurance) can cover you if you cancel your trip or return early because of your own illness or a death in the immediate family; however, insurance companies' restrictions are very specific. Determine what is covered before purchasing travel insurance.

1.10.2 Medical Insurance While Abroad

AIMS health insurance provides very adequate coverage for participants from the beginning of AIMS until the end of the session in Graz (see section **1.4**). All singers/collaborative pianists, orchestra, and faculty/staff members are required to purchase the AIMS health insurance plan. The fee for AIMS health insurance is \$85. AIMS contributes to the cost of insurance so this fee is required to have full coverage.

1.11 U.S. Customs

1.11.1 Contraband

Traveling with prescription drugs is discussed in **1.5**. Recreational drugs are prohibited. Trained dogs are used to detect illegal substances in your baggage and on your person.

On your return to the U.S., agricultural products such as meat, vegetables, plants, fruit, and seeds are prohibited from entering, as are illegal substances.

1.11.2 Declarations

Before you leave the U.S., you may register expensive items you are carrying to Europe with the U.S. Customs Office. The receipt they issue could save time on your return if they question whether an expensive item was purchased abroad.

U.S. citizens must declare all items acquired abroad. The first \$400 of goods is duty-free; the next \$1,000 of goods is taxed at 10%. Keep your receipts for items purchased in Europe to prove their value and have them all together for the Customs Officer to see. Declare everything at the value on its sales receipt. Paying the duty prevents a hefty fine or confiscation of the item and significant delay while being interrogated.

The Austrian (VAT) tax charged when you purchase an item costing more than \$250 can be refunded. A form for each item must be issued *by the seller at the time of the sale*. This form and the item are then presented for the refund at an office in the airport from which you leave Europe.

1.12 What to Bring to Graz

1.12.1 Electricity, Adapter Plugs and 220-volt Appliances

Electricity in the U.S. is 120 Volts, 60 cycles per second AC (alternating current).

Electricity in Austria is 220 Volts, 50 cycles per second AC (alternating current).

An **ADAPTER** is needed for items that do not create heat - laptops/iPads/tablets, phone chargers, camera battery chargers, electric razors/shavers/trimmers, etc.



This is the type of adapter you will need. You can find these at Amazon.com, Target, Wal-Mart, or any travel store. Make sure the adapter is for the EU and has two round pins. They are fairly inexpensive, so bring a few extra. This device simply adapts a US plug into an EU plug - allowing the flat-blade U.S. plug to fit into a recessed wall outlet with round holes (Austrian).

A **CONVERTER** is needed for items that DO create heat - hair dryers, curling irons, hair straighteners, steamers, etc. **We recommend you do NOT bring these items.** This item converts US 110v electricity into EU 220v electricity.

DO NOT BRING A HAIR DRYER. There is a hair dryer installed next to every sink in the Heim. Also, if you use a curling iron or straightener (or some other hair styling implement that makes heat) we strongly suggest you DO NOT bring it with you and instead purchase one in Graz.

1.12.2 Clothing and the Weather in Graz

Your clothing should pack well, be washable, mix and match, require little ironing, and allow layered dressing. Average daily high and low temperatures during July and August in Graz are 77°F (25°C) and 59°F (15°C) with rain on an average of 17 days of your 42-day stay. Summer weather can be very hot for 2-3 weeks or very cool for the entire six weeks. Most buildings in Graz are NOT air conditioned, including the Heim and School. Attire for students and faculty at the school is casual. Please remember that you represent not only yourself, but also **AIMS and your country**. Please represent AIMS properly by maintaining a neat and clean appearance.

Special items of clothing needed:

Audition attire (see 7.2.2)

Concert attire (as both performer [orchestra see 7.7.1; singers/collaborative pianists see 7.7.2] and

audience member)

Party attire (Governor's Reception at Schloss Eggenberg) is very dressy: tuxedos, tie and coat, Austrian Trachten, gowns, etc.

Robe and shower shoes

Raincoat or weatherproof coat (for cool or wet evenings)

Walking shoes

Swimsuit/work-out/hiking attire

1.12.3 Necessities and Helpful Items

Necessities

Alarm clock, watch

Book bag/briefcase/backpack

Black 3-ring music folder

Scotch tape (for music)

Dress/suit bag (that folds flat for concert dress)

Umbrella

Helpful Items

Ear plugs

Folding music stand (instrumentalists)

Sewing kit

Bed linens and towels are provided.

1.13 Helpful Reminders

Airlines restrict the size, weight, and number of pieces of checked luggage. Exceed the limit and excess baggage fees are charged before you can board the plane. For International Flights, the first bag on major airlines is free. However, extra bags checked for domestic (U.S. or Europe) flights will cost around \$100. A participant's experience: Excessive baggage weight costs a person \$500 in fees (round-trip).

In case of lost or misrouted bags, distribute various types of clothing and necessities in each of your pieces of luggage to have something to wear. Pack a change of clothes and necessities in your carry-on bag just in case all your luggage is misrouted. Put your name and AIMS address/phone number on and inside every bag.

AIMS - American Institute of Musical Studies

Neutorgasse 46/1/141

8010 Graz AUSTRIA

Telefon: +43 (0)664 4628161

DO NOT mail anything to Graz because of high customs duty.

1.14 Instrument Travel

AIMS pays for cartage of large instruments only as checked baggage and arrangement for this must be made in the States with the AIMS office. Instrumentalists will receive instructions and procedures for the transport of certain instruments. Large instruments will not be carried in the cabin of the plane unless you purchase an extra seat. Instrument transport is not paid if you do not book through AIMS.

1.15 Labeling your Luggage

Airlines require luggage be labeled on the outside. It is extremely helpful to have the Heim AIMS office address and phone number on each piece of your luggage:

AIMS - American Institute of Musical Studies
Neutorgasse 46/1/141
A-8010 Graz
Telefon: +43 (0)664 4628161

This will ensure the bag will be sent to you in Graz if it is misrouted.

1.16 Money for Food and other Expenses

AIMS provides a modest breakfast daily which you might need to augment depending on your appetite/special diet, a hearty lunch on weekdays (M-F), and no evening meals. Graz has restaurants in all price ranges, so budget for six weeks of medium-priced evening meals - a minimum of \$20-25 per day. Cut costs by cooking in the Heim's communal kitchens and split meal costs with your kitchen mates. The kitchens are large and modern and provide a nice place to meet.

Additional Expenses:

1. Room and key deposit (\$50 or €40)
2. Streetcar/bus (public transit) passes (about \$85) for six weeks
3. Room deposit due AT CHECK-IN (\$50 – refundable if there is no room damage),
4. Laundry card (\$35) – unused Euros refunded
5. German textbook (\$20)
6. Health Insurance surcharge \$85 (mandatory fee)
7. Meistersinger Vocal Competition fee – \$50.

You can prepay the above fees (except for the Meistersinger Vocal Competition fee) to make check-in quicker.

You will receive instructions for purchasing pre-paid registration packages via email in April.

Other Expenses: Food, snacks, souvenirs, gifts, and weekend or day trips. ***We recommend \$1500+/- \$500 of food and incidental expense money.*** Pre-arrange a way to get more money in case of an emergency. You will probably not need it, but it is good peace of mind to know it is available.

1.17 Changing Money (also see Sections 2.2 and 4.1)

Minimize exchange fees by converting \$100-\$400 at one time. Foreign exchange and transaction fees are 5-10% of the amount you exchange and will be a higher percentage if you exchange small amounts. The closest ATM machine is outside the building in which we live. (It is built into the building on the righthand corner as you exit the Heim.)

Debit cards – This is the most economical way to obtain cash. Do not leave home without one! ATMs in Graz, airports, and wherever you travel in the EU, give you Euros at the prevailing exchange rate, and the equivalent in dollars is deducted directly from your bank account plus a 3% foreign transaction fee. Debit cards offer the lowest exchange fee rate. ATMs accept most debit cards displaying Pulse, Cirrus, Maestro, or other major symbols on the back of your card. Withdraw money infrequently to avoid numerous ATM charges.

Important: Before you travel, go to your bank, **call your debit or credit card issuer, or go online, and tell them when and where you will be traveling to ensure your debit/credit cards are accepted internationally.** If you do not do this, your cards may not work in any machine or at any bank in Europe. European ATMs recognize **only 4-digit PIN numbers.**

Credit cards are useful to buy train tickets and at hotels, and most stores and restaurants accept U.S. credit cards. Credit card companies (except certain Capital One, Chase Sapphire and Bank America) charge 3% on *all* foreign purchases.

Cash advances. VISA and MasterCard can charge a fee of 3% (minimum € 3) *plus* 1% of the advanced amount.

Personal checks and U.S. Postal **Money Orders** are not accepted.

Cash can be exchanged for a fee of €3 (up to \$600) plus 0.5% of the total amount. Carrying a significant amount of cash is not safe. Be INCREDIBLY careful with wallets and purses when in airports or train stations. Pickpockets with lightening quick hands can remove valuables from purses or pick up a piece of luggage in seconds. Always be aware of your surroundings!

1.18 Music and Repertoire

Scores and Anthologies are heavy. Bring copies of the music you intend to work on at AIMS. You can also scan music in PDF format, save it to a USB thumb drive, and print it in Graz. Many singers say they should have brought more music. The AIMS General Music Library and library at the Kunst Uni (the Conservatory in Graz) are useful sources of additional music. The General Librarian will obtain the music you need from the Kunst Uni. The AIMS Music Library is located on the second floor of the Studentenheim near the back elevator. The AIMS Library hours will be posted.

Please put your music in a 3-ring notebook. Do NOT ask a pianist to play from loose sheets. DO NOT place music inside plastic sleeves. Please, no staples! Scotch tape only.

If you are selected for public performance, you are responsible for obtaining your own music, either by buying or copying the parts needed. Please visit this page on the website for planned repertoire: <http://aimsgraz.com/the-program/concerts-repertoire/> and this page for other performance opportunities: <http://aimsgraz.com/the-program/performance-opportunities/> Bring pieces you want to perform.

DO NOT PACK YOUR INITIAL HEARING MUSIC IN YOUR CHECKED BAGGAGE!

1.19 Photos

Singers and collaborative pianists will be asked to submit a digital photo in May. This photo will be given to your coach and teacher so he/she can put your face with your name. (These photos will NOT be published anywhere and are used only for this purpose.) Please return your picture **by May 30**

1.20 Your AIMS Address is...

Your Name
AIMS
Neutorgasse 46/1 - Room Number (assigned on arrival)
8010 Graz, Austria

An airmail letter from the U.S. takes about 5-10 days. For 3 to 5-day service (business days) use "Global Priority" mail – see www.usps.com. Shippers operating in Europe are DHL, FedEx, and UPS. Please include "AIMS" in your address. Packages should NOT be sent unless essential. Customs duty may exceed the value of the package contents and if you are not immediately available to pay the duty in cash when the package arrives, it cannot be accepted. **AIMS will not pay customs fees.** Everything is available in the stores in Graz so any item you forget can be purchased.

1.21 No Telephones

There are no telephones in the Studentenheim rooms or lobby.

1.22 Setting Realistic Goals for a Profitable Summer

You have committed a lot of time, energy, and money to get to AIMS; now is the time to sit down and outline what you want to accomplish. Be honest with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses. Determine what

YOU can do to capitalize on the former and minimize the latter. AIMS offers more activities than anyone can do in six weeks. Setting goals will help. It is OK to say no to more than you can reasonably do. What is most important to your career? - performance opportunities, studying German, polishing audition skills, studying certain repertoire? What is most valuable to your development or will allow you to take advantage of the expert faculty assembled at AIMS – an outstanding group of people like none you have ever experienced?

Section 2

Arriving and Getting Settled at the Studentenheim and in Graz

2.1 Room/Key Deposit

IMPORTANT: All participants, including **ALL** faculty and staff, are required to make a **room deposit of \$50 or €40**. U.S. dollars can be used for the room/key deposit. The money will be sealed in an envelope and returned to you at the end of AIMS, provided you return your blue and white key fobs and mailbox key, have no damage to your room, and have paid all AIMS fees.

At check-in you will receive a keychain and lanyard with a set of three keys: 1 blue key fob, 1 white key fob, and 1 metal mailbox key.

The replacement cost for mailbox keys is **€20** and for blue or white key fobs is **€30**. The small metal key issued with your blue key fob is for your **mailbox** on the ground floor of the Heim. (This metal key **WILL NOT** open the locker in the kitchen.) See photos below.

Other fees (see next paragraph) must be paid in advance or in Euros in Graz. Please change or obtain money in Euros in advance of check-in! Only cash is accepted.



The blue or white key fob opens the door to your suite, the door to your sleeping room, the door to your assigned kitchen, and your locker located inside the kitchen.

The blue or white key fob also opens the front door of the Heim, and basement classrooms and practice rooms



The metal key opens ONLY YOUR MAILBOX ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE HEIM.

Please, do not try to open ANYTHING else with this key! The keys are lightweight and will break. You are responsible for paying for broken keys.

2.2 Changing Money

Using a debit card, any ATM in a European airport or city will give you Euros 24/7. The nearest ATMs are on the corner of the Studentenheim building.

If you plan to arrive on Saturday or Sunday and **do not** have a debit card, change money at your connecting European airport or before leaving the States (both are expensive ways to change money) because banks will not be open in Graz.

You will be sent an email about Pre-Paid Registration Packages. We **highly** recommend you purchase the package containing all the items you will need upon arrival. Doing so will reduce the time you stand in line at registration! (All prices are the same as you would pay in Graz and AIMS makes no profit from this.) Pre-paid registration packages cost \$115 - 135 depending on contents and include:

Streetcar (public transit) pass for the first 4 weeks

Laundry card for 8 loads of laundry

SINGERS/COLLABORATIVE PIANISTS ONLY: German textbook

These items are not available individually online before arriving in Graz. Individual items may be purchased at registration in Graz in Euros. (No U.S. dollars are accepted as payment for these items.) After check-in closes, these items may be purchased from the Bursar.

2.3 Streetcar/Bus Tickets (Public transit tickets)

Straßenbahn tickets (public transit tickets) will be available in Pre-Paid Registration Packages and for separate purchase from the Bursar, while supplies last. This transit pass allows you to use any Graz streetcar or bus for one month. A Straßenbahn pass is essential for the 6 weeks of AIMS because the school, rehearsal halls and other daily and special events are a 20-minute ride from the Studentenheim. After the month pass expires, purchase a week pass from the Bursar at the Heim or from the GrazMobil transportation app. See Sec **4.7** for more information.

2.4 Photocopy of Passport

Austrian law requires that AIMS receive a copy of your passport at check-in. Please make copies *before you leave home* for your carry-on and one to submit at check-in.

2.5 Late Arrivals

There is no receptionist at the Studentenheim so late arrival is not recommended. If you do arrive after 5:00 p.m., instructions will be posted beside the intercom at the front door. Please try not to arrive later than 10.00 p.m.

2.6 Jet Lag

Expect some symptoms of jet lag after you arrive in Graz. Plan to sleep on the plane, maintain hydration, drink no caffeine or alcohol, and convert your sleeping schedule to Central European Time *as soon as possible*. On arrival, resist the temptation to sleep until at least 10 p.m. To help you stay busy, AIMS plans a City Tour on each arrival day. Check the AIMS Events Calendar for times.

2.7 Time Difference between Graz and the U.S.

Eastern Daylight-Saving Time (DST) minus 6 hours (midnight in Graz is 6 p.m. in New York.); Central DST minus 7 hours; Mountain DST minus 8 hours; Pacific DST minus 9 hours.

Section 3

Living in the Studentenheim (Heim)

You can read more about the Studentenheim on the website: <https://aimsgraz.com/accommodations/>

3.1 Studentenheim Layout

All buildings in Europe have a ground floor (das Erdgeschoss), and the floors above the ground level are numbered erste Stock (1st floor), zweite Stock (2nd floor), etc. The Studentenheim building is a large rectangle with an interior courtyard (Hof). There are four stairways and two elevators, one on the front (Neutorgasse) side, the other on the back side. AIMS occupies floors 1, 2 and 3 and Graz students occupy the 4th floor. Commercial offices and the Post Office occupy the ground floor.

Laundry facilities, an exercise room, four classrooms, and two music rooms are in the basement (Keller). These can be reached only by the back stairway and elevator. On erste Stock is the AIMS Lobby, the AIMS Info Desk, AIMS Offices (Rooms 141 and 142), and the copy machine. The AIMS Clinic is also located on the erste Stock.

The Neutorgasse Studentenheim IS SMOKE-FREE ALL YEAR.

All rooms and hallways are nonsmoking.

The cleaning charge for smoking in your room is €300 (\$400).

AIMS IS FRAGRANCE-FREE.

Please do not wear fragrance at any time!

This includes cologne/perfume, body sprays, and scented lotions/creams.

3.2 Practice Rooms

There will be at least 6 practice rooms in the Studentenheim: in the basement classrooms and Musikzimmer 1 and 2. Locations will be posted. Other practice rooms will be located at the school. Practice rooms are open on a first-come, first-serve basis *during non-Quiet Hours*. On Sunday evening of each week, a new schedule is posted on each practice room door. You may then reserve ONE HOUR PER DAY PER PERSON. **When practicing, you must keep the doors and windows of the practice rooms or your bedroom closed.** This is Austrian law! There are residences, offices, and businesses nearby and they will call the police if too much noise is heard. Practicing in your room is encouraged and is permitted during non-Quiet Hours. When practicing in your room, ALL WINDOWS MUST BE CLOSED.

All AIMS rooms at the school are available for practice when not in use for a class or lesson. Check the schedule posted by the door before entering a room and vacate it if it is needed for a lesson or class. Windows MUST be closed so that we can avoid complaints from the nearby residents.

3.3 Sleeping Rooms

3.3.1 Contents

All rooms in the Heim are single and arranged in duplex and triplex clusters (suites). Each room has a smoke detector, intercom speaker connected to the front entrance door of the Heim, bed, desk, chair, bookcase, TV, internet connection box for connecting via cable, closet (both hanging space and shelving), and large window. Either two or three bedrooms are connected by a small hallway in which there is a 5-cu. ft. refrigerator shared by 2 or 3 people. The shower/sink and toilet rooms open onto this hallway and are shared. Both the shower and toilet rooms are equipped with exhaust fans. The toilet fan turns on and off automatically. The shower fan must be turned on and off manually. Please use this fan to remove humidity during/after showering but do not leave it running for more than 20 minutes. An electric hair dryer is installed by every sink. There are two 220V electric outlets by every sink. Bed linens (sheets, duvet, pillow), five coat hangers, and towels (hand towel, bath towel, bathmat) are provided, but no washcloths or soap. For more information on room contents see <https://aimsgraz.com/accommodations/> and click on "Rooms" on the left-hand navigation bar.

The **smoke detectors** will react to incense, excessive candles, hairspray, and tobacco smoke. Calling the fire

department is automatic and only the firefighters can turn off these alarms! **You will be responsible for the fine** (€425 or \$500) if the fire department must respond to an alarm from your room. AIMS is not responsible for your fine.

3.3.2 Electricity (Also see 1.12.1)

Each room has multiple 220V outlets. Please turn off all lights and appliances when you leave a room for safety and to conserve electricity.

3.3.3 Security

Access to the front door of the Heim is with your blue or white key fob. **You must always carry this with you for access to the front door, the door to your suite, the door to your sleeping room, the door to the kitchen assigned to you, and the door to your food locker in the kitchen. Locks lock automatically (electronic lock system). Do not lock yourself out of your bedroom or suite!** If you do lock yourself out of your room during the day, find a staff member to help you. For late night/early morning lockouts, see the on-call list on Room 142 and go to that staff member's room for assistance. Orchestra members, please check the Orchestra Board for the on-call list.



IMPORTANT!! How to *NOT*** lock yourself out of your bedroom:**

In addition to the suite doors, the bedroom doors require your blue or white key fob to unlock. These doors can VERY EASILY slam shut by themselves (leaving you locked out of your room), but there is an easy way to avoid this!

PUT YOUR KEYS ON AN AIMS LANYARD

AND HANG THEM ON THE OUTSIDE HANDLE

OF YOUR SLEEPING ROOM DOOR.

NOTE: The small metal key with your blue key fob is for YOUR MAILBOX in the front entrance hall to the Heim. **DO NOT TRY TO USE THIS METAL KEY IN THE FOOD LOCKER IN THE KITCHEN ASSIGNED TO YOU.** Your blue or white key fob allows access to the kitchen assigned to you and also opens your private food locker in that kitchen. The sensor is located near the lockers. Swipe the blue or white key fob across the sensor and the food locker door can be opened for a few seconds. (Your assigned kitchen is the same color as the front door of your suite. Each kitchen locker has a room number on it.) See pictures of the blue or white key fob/metal key in Section 2.1

3.3.4 Your Responsibilities

If there are any problems in your room, please email Theresa Ruperd with your room number and description of the problem. (Burned out light bulb, clogged toilet, missing trash can, etc.) You are responsible for the general upkeep and cleanliness of your room. Damage happens every year and you will be billed for repairs. Maid service will clean your room and change sheets every two weeks and towels weekly. **ALWAYS close your window when you leave for the day.** Thunderstorms form in minutes in Graz even on clear days. Late afternoon downpours are common in summer and can flood your room and soak your belongings. You are responsible for any water damage to your room.

Each room has a magnetic whiteboard on which you can apply magnets or Post-It sticky notes. Do not use Scotch tape or thumb tacks. DO NOT tape anything on the walls or doors. You will be billed for damage to the room, including water damage caused by wet clothes/towels and/or to make repairs/paint, breakage, etc. Rooms will be inspected for damage before checkout. (Refer to the AIMS Events Calendar for room inspection dates.)

3.4 Breakfast

Breakfast hours are 7:00am to 9:15am.

Breakfast at the Studentenheim: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

Breakfast buffet at Café Kaiserfeld: Tuesday & Thursday

Dishes and eating utensils will be placed in your locker in the kitchen assigned to your room for your use. Shared cooking utensils (pots, pans, knives, cutting boards, strainers, etc.) will be available in each kitchen. Various breakfast items including coffee and teas, cereal, bread, jam, and cheese will be served daily in the main lobby. Please help yourself to containers of milk and juice found in the 1st floor lobby refrigerator. You may purchase additional breakfast food at local grocery stores and prepare it in the kitchens.

You are responsible for cleaning the kitchens, and washing the eating and cooking utensils that you use. Only persons assigned to each kitchen have blue or white key fobs that will open the door. A list is posted on the kitchen door for each person to take a turn at cleaning.

You do not need to bring dishes to Café Kaiserfeld.

3.5 Overnight Guests

Guest housing is available on a first-come first-serve basis and is billed per person per night.

AIMS will try to accommodate last-minute requests, but space may not be available.

Austrian law and AIMS policy prohibit guests sharing your suite; all persons in the Studentenheim must have his/her own bed. Room reservations for guests are required for any length stay and can be made by contacting AIMS at aimsadminkc@gmail.com. Rooms are ~€41 per person per day including breakfast (does not include lunch). Pre-payment is required and AIMS will be in touch with you regarding payment for guests.

All rooms are single but arranged in double and triple suites (with shared shower and toilet) to accommodate 2 or 3 people. A couple would be assigned a double suite.

Check in: 3:00pm

Check out: 11:00am

NOTE: Guest keys must be returned to office 142b at check out.

3.6 Ironing Rooms

Ironing boards and irons are available in the room adjacent to the laundry room. Please do not remove the ironing equipment from this room.

3.7 Kitchens and Refrigerators

3.7.1 Kitchens

There are 12 kitchens/common rooms. Each person has a private dry food locker that is opened with your blue or white key fob. The lock is electronic. DO not insert the small metal key on your blue key fob or try to unlock your locker with this metal key. Kitchens have an electric cook top and oven, exhaust hood, microwave ovens, sink, and receptacles for paper, plastic and metal recycling, and food (bio) disposal. Austria recycles, so please do your part!

Kitchen rules:

1. Only people assigned to a kitchen may use it. Blue or white key fobs are coded and the rooms assigned to each kitchen are color coded (yellow, green, brown, purple, etc.). Eating utensils, plates and cookware are provided. Each person is responsible for keeping the kitchen and dining table clean.
2. After EACH USE, clean the kitchen, including the drain basket in the sink, and store your dishes. Leave pots and pans out for use by all.

3. Separate paper, glass, plastic, and cans; place food scraps in the BIO bucket for spoilaable garbage. *There are no garbage disposals.* Do NOT dispose of even small pieces of food in the sink drain!
4. Report maintenance problems by email to Theresa Ruperd, including the kitchen color and floor.
5. If you open a window in the kitchen, you must close it before you leave.

3.7.2 Refrigerators

Each double or triple suite has a refrigerator that is shared by 2 or 3 people.

3.8 Laundry

Washing machines and dryers are available in the Keller. Sign-up for laundry time at the Lobby Info Desk. **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE START TO WASH CLOTHES WITHOUT A RESERVED TIME.** If you have not claimed your reserved time within 10 minutes, another person may claim it. Your cooperation is essential and will be appreciated by all. You can sign up for **two washers only. Instructions for payment and use of the washers/dryers are posted in the Laundry Room.**

Laundry fobs are included in Pre-Paid Registration Packages, or you can purchase one from the Bursar. Laundry fobs are black and look like this:



3.9 Maid Service Schedule

- Monday - Friday: Trash collection and sweeping
- Weekly: Towels changed
- Bi-weekly: Bed linens changed (days vary by room)

You are responsible for keeping your room in order. The maids will not “pick up” your clothes and shoes to clean your room – instead, it will be skipped. The scheduled days your room is to be cleaned will be emailed to you at the beginning of the summer. If at the end of AIMS, the room is dirty, unkempt, and undue work is required to clean it, your room deposit will be withheld.

3.10 Mailboxes

As soon as you arrive, please notify your correspondents to put your room number on your mail to speed sorting. Mailboxes are on the ground floor (E for Erdgeschoss) inside the front entrance. The SMALL metal key opens your mailbox. A Post Office is also on the ground floor for stamp purchase and mailing.

3.11 Quiet Hours

Respect Others’ Rights and Obligations 24/7. This is a residence for people of all ages and a "hotel" for AIMS' guests, masterclass teachers, conductors, and guest lecturers.

AIMS asks you to maintain an atmosphere in our residence hall that respects the rights of others 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We take this very seriously for the benefit of the AIMS program. Austrian law requires that windows and doors be closed when noise can be heard outside the building - practicing, singing, playing, talking in bedrooms, the kitchens, etc. You can be heard easily in the inner courtyard and there are residence apartments

directly across the street on three sides of the building. It can get hot and stuffy - but it is the law. You are responsible for the noise level of ANY gathering in your room. During Mittagspause and in the evening, **you must keep windows closed if there is noise** because there are adjacent residencies, businesses, and offices below. If you must engage in loud behavior, do it elsewhere.

When returning to the Heim at any time, but especially after 11 p.m., NO TALKING (or smoking) in front of the building, on the front steps, in the lobby, in the courtyard, or in the hallways, elevators or staircases. The courtyard and sidewalks around the building are also off limits for congregating and smoking. People in their rooms have the right not to be disturbed or smell smoke coming from below. **This is not a college dorm.** For most, the workday begins at 7 a.m. Their obligations to teach and coach are essential to the success of AIMS. No one appreciates partying or loud talking at night or an aria or vocalizing in the halls **at any time**. Monitor yourself and politely remind your friends of the necessity NOT to disturb others.

AIMS reserves the right to terminate *without refund* a participant's stay in the Studentenheim if that person disturbs others at night or engages in behavior that disrupts or is not in the best interest of the AIMS program, and who infringes on others' rights after being suitably warned.

Quiet hours are as follows:

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Quiet*	Quiet	Quiet	Quiet	Quiet	Quiet	Quiet
08:00		Okay to practice					
09:00		Okay to practice					
10:00		Okay to practice until 11.59					
12:00		Quiet until 14.59. This is the law.					
15:00		Okay to practice until 20:59					
21:00		Quiet hours resume until 08.00					

*Arrangements will be made for singers with Sunday morning performances.

3.12 Telephones

There are no telephones in the Studentenheim from which you can make or receive calls.

3.12.1 Room Phones

Calling from one room to another is not possible. At the main entrance of the Heim there is an intercom phone from which you can call any room by dialing the room number + bell symbol to ask the person to allow you to enter the building. They can open the front entrance door by pushing a button on their intercom.

Calling the U.S. from Austria Dial: 001+Area Code + number. The cheapest way to call the U.S. is via SKYPE or a similar service.

3.12.2 Public Phones

There is no pay telephone in the Heim or nearby.

3.12.3 Cell Phones

Determine your international cell phone rates before you leave the U.S.

Renting or purchasing a cell phone and using prepaid cards to load the phone with minutes is possible but the per-minute cost is high.

3.13 Common Courtesy and Acts of Kindness

Living with 250 people can challenge anyone's social skills. *Always* be aware of how your actions impact your neighbors—nearby, down the hall, across the inner courtyard, in the buildings around us, the offices below, etc. Considerate living 24/7 makes everyone happier. Try to commit a daily act of kindness. If there are incidents that you would like to discuss with a staff member, we are always available and want to be helpful.

Section 4

Living in Graz

4.1 THE EURO (also see Section 1.17)

On January 1, 2002, the European Union (EU) adopted the Euro (€) as its common currency. Now you can travel within the EU without changing money. The Euro is valid in: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. EU members who do not accept the Euro are Denmark, Great Britain, and Sweden. Switzerland is not an EU member. The 10 newest EU members still use their own currencies e.g., Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovenia, but accept Euros now.

One Euro consists of 100 cents. Paper bills are issued in seven denominations: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500. Coins are issued in 1 and 2 Euros and 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents. The side of each coin with the numbers is the same in every EU country. On the reverse side, each country imprints their own images, however, all Euro coins are valid currency in all participating EU countries.

The exchange rate for the Euro fluctuates daily (see www.xe.com). The rate you obtain at banks and ATMs will be higher than the quoted rates: add 3 - 5 cents per dollar. There is no need to obtain Euros before leaving the U.S. if you have a debit card. ATMs offer the best exchange rate at the lowest cost.

Bursar and other staff members familiar with money matters will be happy to answer your questions.

Personal checks and U.S. Postal Money Orders **are not accepted**.

4.2 Personal Services

The Heim Info Desk can help you with local services.

Laundry and Dry Cleaning

STROSS Dry Cleaning and Laundry. Annenstraße 25 8020 Graz

A man's shirt is €5; cleaning a man's suit or woman's dress is €20 and up. For delicate items, ask for Spezialreinigung (expensive).

Hair Care

There are 300+ Friseurs for men and women in Graz. If you plan to color your hair yourself, bring EVERYTHING you will need. Hair coloring products in Europe are quite different. There is a hair stylist across the street from the Heim.

4.3 Food

4.3.1 Lunch

AIMS provides an AUSTRIAN-style noon meal Monday through Friday. A vegetarian selection is offered every day and weekly menus will be emailed and posted on the Facebook group. **Lunch is not served on weekends.** Beverages are **not** included in the AIMS lunch. Pay the cashier for anything other than water. Special diets are **not** provided. Lunch is **not** included in the room price for short-term visitors (<15 days).

4.3.2 Restaurants

Graz has restaurants of all cuisines and in all price ranges. The Heim is in the center of Graz so there are many places to eat. Part of learning about a foreign country is discovering its native cuisine. In Austria, the food is of high quality and delicious. Chefs and waiters must go through a prescribed course to get jobs. Most restaurants post menus outside so you can read the selections and prices. All indoor dining is now non-smoking and many have outside gardens.

Only expensive restaurants have a host to seat you. It is common to share a table with another party. If you do not see a free table, ask if a chair is "free" and sit with others (a good opportunity to speak German). When you are ready to leave, say to the server, "Zahlen, bitte" ("pay, please"). Service is included in the meal price, so tipping at U.S. rates is NOT necessary. Round up your bill by 4 - 5% to the next number. For example, if the waiter says the cost of the meal is €12.40, reply "13". In other words, tell the server the total amount you want to pay rather than leave change on the table.

Among the most expensive food items are beverages – bottled water, coffee, tea, Coke, wine, beer. A "Big Gulp" size (32 oz.) Coke would cost \$10+ if you could find one. A full cup (8 oz) of coffee is \$8 without refills. Beer and wine are more expensive. "Beverage bankruptcy" has happened to AIMSers. Refill your water bottles at the Heim or Schule. Graz tap water is high quality and safe to drink. Order *Leitungswasser* (tap water) at restaurants for a nominal fee of 50 cents or so.

Take-out and Delivery

There are food delivery services; order with other people to keep the delivery charge low.

Vegetarian/organic/special diets

AIMS cannot provide special diets. All grocery stores have organic products, in Europe called "BIO". A nearby vegetarian restaurant in Graz is Mangolds. Most restaurants offer vegetarian selections. AIMS breakfasts and lunches offer vegetarian selections; however, you may need to supplement your diet. A Denn's BioMarkt grocery store is close to the Heim. The Heim Info Desk has a list of vegetarian/vegan restaurants.

All restaurants are required by Austrian law to list ingredients and allergens on the menu for each item.

4.3.3 Grocery Shopping

Near Studentenheim

Spar: *Near McDonald's at Jakominiplatz.* Closest to the Heim.

Spar Market: Multiple locations close to the Heim: *around the corner on Kaiserfeldgasse and about 3 blocks away, on Hans Sackgasse; in the basement of the K&Ö Department store on the Hauptplatz; and on Line 7/1 behind Park Hotel.* Also, in MurPark and CityPark Shopping Malls.

Billa Market: *At the Jakominiplatz in the Keller of the Steierhof Building*

Spar Market and Billa provide a full range of groceries, sandwiches, and salads made fresh daily and to order.

Kaiser-Josef-Platz (Line 7/1)

Farmer's market (behind Graz Opera House); Open 6 days a week, 7 until noon; a must-see Graz tradition and a great way to learn the German names for common vegetables, meats, fish and local specialties. Also, stand-up eateries.

The Vendors at the Jakominiplatz and Hauptplatz

First quality fruit, vegetables, bakery, and food stalls

Hauptbahnhof (Line 7/1/3)

Spar Market - the only grocery store in Graz open on Sunday.

CityPark Shopping Mall Bus #35 from Jakominiplatz.

Large InterSpar Supermarket, many stores, food court, InterSpar Cafeteria with hot food and a large salad bar on the fourth floor. Inexpensive place to eat.

MurPark (Line 4, direction Liebenau)

Large InterSpar Supermarket, electronics stores, coffee houses, other stores, and restaurants

Using a shopping cart

Most carts require a deposit for use. Next to the handle of the cart are slots to insert a 1- or 2-Euro coin which releases the chain attached to the next cart. Return your cart, attach the chain to the cart next in line and your coin will be returned. Markets do not supply grocery bags. Buy a bag to carry your groceries home or bring 1-2 bags with you. Bag your groceries *as you are being checked out* (if you have only a few) or return them to the grocery cart and move away from the cashier to bag them. The cashiers scan your items so fast you will not have time to bag them before being asked to pay.

4.4 Water

Refill your water bottles at the Heim or Schule. Graz tap water is high quality and safe to drink. Buying water is unnecessary. In the rare case when water is not safe, e.g., on trains, a sign "Kein Trinkwasser" is posted. Water is not served in restaurants unless you ask for it. *Mineralwasser* (mit oder ohne gas) is expensive. *Leitungswasser* (tap water) is free or costs a nominal fee of approx. 50 cents.

4.5 Mail and Post Offices

Deposit outgoing mail in any yellow Post Box around town. The closest Post Office is at the entrance to the Studentenheim. Purchase stamps at the Post Office or a Tabak Trafik. Letters and post cards require the same amount of postage to the U.S. (about \$2.50 each). If you want Austrian postage stamps (Briefmarken) ask for them; otherwise, the postage will be printed by computer. Post Office locations: see www.post.at

Main Post Office: Neutorgasse 46

Mon-Fri: 08.00-16.00

Sat and Sun: Closed

Hauptbahnhof Post Office: inside main railway station

Mon-Fri: 07.00-20.00

Sat: 08.00-15.00

Sun: 15.00-20.00

4.6 Shopping

Die Altstadt

Explore the unique shops and restaurants in the Altstadt (old town) - open daily until 18.00 and Saturday until 17.00; closed Sunday. These range from top designer stores to moderate quality merchandise, boutiques, antiques, shoe stores, Austrian Trachten. Do not miss the view from the top of Kastner & Öhler, a large department store. K&Ö is also an economical place to eat. Cheaper merchandise is found on the west side of the Mur River on Annenstraße (Lines 1/3/7) near the Hauptbahnhof. Major stores and malls do not observe

Mittagspause (midday closing); smaller stores close between 12.30 and 14.30.

CityPark Mall

A shopping mall with 100 stores; from Jakominiplatz bus #35 takes you to the mall entrance. Open Mon-Fri 09.00-19.30; Sat 09.00-18.00; closed Sundays). City Park features specialty clothing shops, Saturn (electronics, fans, CDs), InterSpar Market, specialty food and coffee shops, KFC, Chinese food, Nordsee (seafood), Drei Goldene Kugeln (schnitzel), InterSpar Cafeteria (hot food and large salad bar), etc.

MurPark Mall

A shopping mall with 90 stores; trendy clothes, sports shops, fast food, large InterSpar market, electronics and many more. Open Mon-Fri 09.00-19.30; Sat 09.00-18.00; closed Sundays). Take Line 5 (direction Liebenau) to the mall.

Seiersberg

A large shopping mall near the Graz airport with many of the same stores as CityPark, a large Media Markt (electronics) and large grocery store (Merkur). Ask for directions.

Music and Book Stores

If you can't find a particular edition of a score in the AIMS or MusikUni libraries, you can find it in Graz and more likely in Vienna. The main book and/or music store in Graz is Moser, Am Eisernen Tor 1 at Hans Sachsgasse (near Heim)

4.7 Straßenbahn / Bus Tickets (Public Transit Tickets)

The most economical ticket is a Monatskarte, a monthly streetcar (public transit) pass is valid for 30 days on all Graz streetcars, city buses and the Schlossbergbahn (but not the Schlossberg elevator €3). Purchase Monatskarten in a Pre-Paid Registration Package, or from the Bursar.



The streetcar pass (public transit ticket) is a piece of paper about the size of a credit card.

The first time you ride, you must insert your ticket into an orange machine that will stamp the date on your pass. (See the arrow on the ticket.) The 30 days are counted from that date. **DO NOT STAMP YOUR PASS TWICE!** This invalidates it. For example: if you ride for the first time on 7. Juli, the ticket will be valid until 6. August at midnight.

Before your pass expires, buy a new pass (Wochenkarte, etc.). Always stamp your ticket immediately. If you do not, the full fine applies. Always carry your pass with you as you may be asked to show it while riding the streetcar or bus. The passes are transferable, and if lost, cannot be replaced.

The following are the types of passes and costs: (Prices as of March 2025)

Monatskarte	€ 64,70
Wochenkarte	€ 19,50
24-Stundenkarte	€ 6,80 (Valid for 24 hours)
Stundenkarte	€ 3,10 (Single ticket valid for 1 hour)

Children < 6 years old with an adult ride free.

How to Ride

Board the bus or Straßenbahn at a designated Haltestelle (marked by round signs with a large H). When the bus/streetcar comes to a stop, push the button beside a door to open it. If you have purchased a ticket other than on the Straßenbahn, your ticket must be validated (time and date) as described above the first time you ride. Keep your ticket until you complete the trip (checkers check frequently). If you have no ticket, you must purchase one *immediately* after boarding from the machine. Credit cards are accepted.

Riding without a valid ticket (Schwartzfahren) is against Austrian law. Inspectors board buses and streetcars randomly and ask riders to present their tickets. They may board at any stop and are not in uniform. There is a fine of €200 due *immediately* for violation of this law. If you cannot pay the fine at that moment, you are taken to the police station. Make sure you have your pass before leaving the Heim. Every year unthinking AIMSers are caught by checkers.

Straßenbahn Etiquette

Certain seats are reserved for the elderly and disabled (marked with picture-graphs). It is customary for younger riders (regardless of sex) to give their seats to older riders.

It is considered rude to talk loudly or talk at all on public transportation. You can easily be heard because few Grazers will be talking. Large numbers of people speak English in Graz. *Never assume they do not understand you.*

Mobile Phone apps for Graz public transportation



Search Google Play or the app store for the **BusBahnBim** Verkehrsauskunft Österreich app. This will give you Straßenbahn and bus directions. Street addresses for AIMS venues are found on the last page of the AIMS Events Calendar.



Also search Google Play or the app store for **GrazMobil**. This app will also give you Straßenbahn and bus directions. You can also purchase public transportation tickets through this app.

4.8 Taxis

You cannot hail a cab on the street. Call a cab company and ask to be picked up at a particular address or go to a taxi stand (nearest to the Heim is at corner of Kaiserfeldgasse and Herrengasse). There are taxis waiting at the train station and airport. If you call for a cab, you will be charged the fare from the nearest taxi stand to the pickup point and for the fare to your destination. Walking to the taxi stand saves money. Large tips are not customary. Round up the fare about 4-5% when paying. *Always* use a cab with a company number on the roof. These have standard rate.

Taxi stand locations:

Close to Studentenheim:

Schmiedgasse at the Rathaus (Hauptplatz)

Kaiserfeldgasse - Eisernen Tor (2 blocks from the Heim)

4.9 Drinking and Driving in Graz and Austria

Austrian defines drunkenness as a blood alcohol of 0.5 *promille* – a level easily achieved with 1-2 small glasses of

beer or one glass of wine. Your driver's license is forfeited while driving or riding a bicycle when drunk because you are showing insufficient responsibility to participate in traffic. **Fines for intoxication start at €850! Take a cab. Do not risk it.**

As of June 1, 2012, a Graz city ordinance was passed prohibiting drinking alcoholic beverages outside in public, except when at a café. You can be ticketed and given a fine for this infraction. Do not sit on the front steps of the Heim with an open container of alcohol as you can be fined.

4.10 Driver License

Obtain international driving licenses, rules, and regulations from AAA. Study European road signs before you drive. If you plan to rent a car, you must specify in which countries you want to drive the car when you reserve it. Most former eastern bloc countries are restricted because of rampant auto theft and require large surcharges (several hundred Euros) to rent a car for these destinations.

4.11 AIMSers in Graz

We "Ausländer" are guests of Graz and Austria. Life is not the same here as it is at home. Respect Austrian culture and learn from it. Grazers will remember and appreciate AIMSers who are courteous, who offer their seat on the Straßenbahn, who honor the sanctity of their churches, who try to communicate in their language, and who behave maturely. Maintain an awareness of yourself and observe those around you and be a good ambassador of the U.S. or home country.

Section 5

Getting Down to Business

5.1 Information Desk

The Info Desk at the Heim will open on the first day of AIMS and the Info Desk at the School will open on the first day of classes. If you have a question that is not answered in this handbook or need clarification, go to the Info Desk.

If you are unable to attend classes/lessons for any reason, *immediately email Theresa Ruperd* and inform your teachers and coaches. Do not be a NO SHOW – this is unprofessional and will not be tolerated. (You will be sent an email list at the beginning of the summer.) ALL participants, including faculty, should give pertinent information to the Info Desk to facilitate answering questions accurately.

The Info Desk maintains the bulletin boards at the School and the Heim. Check the boards every time you pass by and definitely several times a day. Join the AIMS Facebook group and CHECK YOUR EMAIL FREQUENTLY!

5.2 Time and Dates in Europe

Europe uses the 24-hour clock for schedules: 8:30 a.m. is written 08.30; 8:30 p.m. is written 20.30. The date is written dd/mm/yyyy – July 14, 2025 is written 14.7.25 or 14 Juli 25

5.3 AIMS Weekly Schedules

The schedule of upcoming AIMS activities is listed on the AIMS Events Calendars. These are available at the Heim Info Desk. Also check the whiteboards at the Heim and school for updates. PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN! Many updates, notices, and information are sent via email. General updates and announcements are also posted on the main AIMS Facebook group.

5.4 The First Week at AIMS

5.4.1 Hearings

Starting two days after you arrive in Graz, hearings are held to determine performance levels of singers to assign voice teachers and coaches, and to cast public performances. The Hearings are attended by teachers and coaches who prepare you for these performances. If you want to audition to sing a particular aria, list it on your “Hearing Repertoire” that you will be asked to provide several weeks before coming to AIMS. For your performance preferences to be available to those who cast performances, PLEASE complete this form online at least two weeks before you leave for Graz. Changes can be made up to one week before AIMS.

Check the AIMS Calendar of Events for Hearing locations.

Generally speaking, the voice teacher and coach assignments are based on YOUR choices. Of course, the allocation of the number of people to each teacher/coach is also a factor. You will be asked to submit your first, second and third choices. Most people get their first or second choice. This assignment is generally made prior to AIMS, but at the hearing is reviewed for appropriateness.

An AIMS Staff Pianist will be assigned to each singer for these hearings. This pianist is for the hearings ONLY and not for the entire AIMS Experience. See the whiteboard at the Heim for your assigned pianist. **As you will have only one rehearsal with this pianist, do not miss your rehearsal!** Your music should be organized in a 3-ring binder, in the proper keys, with ALL cuts clearly marked, with pages Scotch-taped back-to-back, etc. No plastic page holders; no staples.

5.4.2 Masterclasses

Masterclasses are held throughout AIMS at various venues. Check the white boards at the Heim for singers and collaborative pianists assigned to specific masterclasses. When a lesson is in progress, be QUIET in the lobby and enter the hall QUIETLY *only between* singers.

5.4.3 Class Schedules

At the end of the first week and immediately before teacher/coach registration, you will receive your schedule and meet with your voice teacher and coach. A conference with Sarah Halley can be arranged later to answer questions and to make adjustments if changes need to be made.

5.4.4 Scheduling Lessons/Coachings

The teacher/coach registrations are held at the end of the first week (**see Calendar of Events**). **These registration events are mandatory for you to attend** to ensure that all singers receive two lessons and two coaching sessions per week without conflicting with others.

5.4.5 German Class Placement and Survival German

You will choose your German language class level placement when you apply/register online. German classes begin on the third day of the first week. Your assigned teacher and location will be posted after you arrive. If you feel your German class level is too easy or too difficult after a few classes, you are welcome to change levels. Please contact Theresa Ruperd and ask to change levels.

5.4.6 The School Building

Directions to the *Augustinum* school building used by AIMS will be posted and printed on handouts. It is located at Lange Gasse 2, 8010 Graz on Streetcar Line 4 or 5 from the Hauptplatz (Haltestelle Lange Gasse). All coaching, voice and piano lessons, and most rehearsals, classes and lectures are held at the school. The Info Desk is located at the main entrance and is staffed from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. M – F. Studio and classroom locations will be posted at the Info Desk.

Policies applicable to the school building

1. There may be events in progress other than AIMS. Only rooms designated for AIMS may be used.
 2. Any AIMS room may be used for practice if there is no scheduled lesson or class. Please vacate a room if it is needed by a faculty member for a lesson, coaching or class.
 3. **When practicing in any room WINDOWS MUST BE CLOSED.** Please help us avoid complaints from the neighbors about noise!
 4. The School building closes at 18.30 on weekdays. Check the Calendar of Events for weekend hours.
 5. **Close all windows and turn off the lights** when you leave a room, regardless of time of day. Rainwater causes damage and electricity is expensive and wasteful. We use the building with permission of the Graz diocese schools and this can be withdrawn if it is abused.
 6. Smoking is not permitted in any room or corridor of the school.
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Section 6

AIMS Services – How can we help?

6.1 AIMS Administration (Email addresses are found on the last page of the Handbook.)

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

- **Suite 141A** office of Sarah Halley, General Director
- **Suite 141B** office of Clemens Anton Klug, Intendant
Clemens makes physical Graz arrangements for concerts/tickets, visas, police matters, and other details that make AIMS possible. A Graz native, he loves to help with local matters.
- **Suite 142** offices of Theresa Rupert, Administrative Director; Pat Zidar, Bursar; and Medical Advisor/Clinic

Bursar – Suite 142C

Pat Zidar, the Bursar receives and disburses money for AIMS and receives room payments for guests. See office door for office hours.

Medical Advisor/Clinic – Suite 142A

The Medical Advisor is available for any illness and to answer your health questions, and to arrange necessary medical care with local physicians. Clinic hours are posted on the Clinic door; in case of emergency during other hours (see Info Desk or on-call person); or by appointment. In an emergency, try to locate the Medical Advisor, or call a taxi or an ambulance or go to the emergency room (EBA) at the Landeskrankenhaus (LKH) by taxi. Ambulance service is not covered by AIMS insurance but is not expensive. It is recommended to take a friend who can communicate with the AIMS staff while you are in the ER or afterward. PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO SEE MEDICAL ATTENTION WHILE AT AIMS!

General Music Library (Located on Floor 2 near back elevator of the Studentenheim)

A collection of vocal scores and music reference works. Lending policy: BOOKS may be checked out for 1 week; SCORES may be checked out for 2 days. A maximum of 5 scores may be checked out at one time. Please make copies of music you wish to use and return the books or scores. Faculty members are responsible for all materials checked out in their names. *PLEASE limit your use to the shortest possible time. Thank you.*

Music Library at KunstUni

See AIMS General Librarian for info on its availability to AIMSers. The librarian will check out materials for you.

Orchestra Library

The Orchestra Library is maintained by the Orchestra Librarian and staff; a collection of orchestral scores and parts, and chamber music for use by instrumentalists; includes some vocal music with instrumental accompaniment. The Orchestra Library is located at the Heim in Room 220.

Info Desks

The Heim and School Info Desks can direct you to the proper person for your problem and often can answer all of your questions. Answers to most questions are here in the Handbook or on the FAQ section on the Participants Area of the website.

6.2 Photocopies

The copy machine is in the Heim Lobby on the first floor.

6.3 Computers and Internet Access

The Heim has free and open Wi-Fi.

Wi-Fi at the School is also free, but requires a username and password.

Stop by the School Info Desk to pick up your assigned username and password.

Laptop computers operate on dual voltage so adapters (not converters) for Austrian electrical outlets are necessary (see **1.12.1**).

Section 7

AIMS General Policies

7.1 Academic Credit for Study

Toward the end of the program, participants will receive an email with a transcript request form attached. Those wanting to receive a transcript for AIMS classes should fill it out and return it with payment. The fee is \$10.00.

AIMS provides transcripts with the knowledge that credit given is at the discretion of the participant's University.

Your school determines what credits will be accepted. Transcripts are mailed to universities and individuals in the fall.

7.2 Agent Auditions

7.2.1 Agent Audition Policies

The number of singers is limited at the request of agents and to remain within time constraints. Preference is given to singers who have sung fewer auditions and who are professionally ready. No singer sings for every agent. No faculty member is allowed to sing for an agent.

7.2.2 Audition Attire

Ensure that your attire does not detract from your singing.

Please choose the dress code closest to the gender with which you identify.

MEN

Dark, conservative suits, shirt and tie are required. Wear shoes that can be shined. Trousers should be tailored so they do not 'puddle' around your ankles. ALWAYS button your suit coat or tuxedo when you sing.

WOMEN

Conservative dresses or skirt and blouse combinations. Do not overdress. Your hair should not cover your face. This is a major way in which you communicate when singing. Closed toe pumps are the most flattering shoe style.

See Section 7.7.2 for more information and suggested guidelines.

7.3 Masterclasses

Singers and collaborative pianists are assigned to AIMS Masterclasses. Not all participants will be able to sing/play for a masterclass. If you are ready to do so, speak with your teacher, coach, or email Sarah Halley. Singers are selected to fit the master class teacher's demonstration purposes and to match the repertoire that he/she wants to coach. Masterclass teachers may specify the voice types and repertoire they will coach. These preferences are beyond AIMS' control.

7.4 The AIMS Festival Orchestra Concert Series

An important part of AIMS' professional training program, these concerts are intended to be professional presentations and are received as such by the public and the press. Programs are planned to best use the available talent. To give each student the opportunity to audition, the works under consideration for these performances are published in advance – click here to view the Planned Repertoire: <https://aimsgraz.com/the-program/concerts-repertoire/> Not all vocal works will be performed and depending on voices available, changes might be made. You must arrive knowing the arias for performances that involve the AIMS Orchestra. If you want to perform a particular aria, list it on your Hearing Repertoire. (You do NOT need to sing these selections for your Hearing, but you are welcome to do so if you like. Call backs are often held for orchestra concert casting.) Only people whose performance is considered to be professional or near-professional will be presented. Casting of the concerts is done from the initial Hearings. Casting is a committee decision and is competitive, just as it is in the real world.

7.4.1 Approval for Performance

Please read these guidelines carefully: *Performance quality takes precedence over equality of opportunity just as it does in the professional world.*

1. **Participation in public concerts is by audition.** About 90% of participants will qualify for a public performance. **No participant is guaranteed a public performance.**
2. Preference is given to Opera Studio members in performance of operatic music, and to Lieder Studio members in performance of Lied and chamber music. Every effort is made to include as many singers as possible in public concerts and a log of performances is kept for each participant. Final decisions rest with the Casting Committee.
3. All participants are advised to prepare, in advance, works for which they wish to audition. (You do NOT need to sing these selections for your Hearing, but you are welcome to do so if you like. Call backs are often held for orchestra concert casting.) List all the works that are performance ready in your "Performance Preferences". *No work will be presented which has not been coached by members of the AIMS faculty.*
4. Preliminary programs may be published on the website; however, they should not be considered final. Final programming and casting is done in Graz. Be sure you have the music edition in which the work will be performed.

7.4.2 Rehearsals

Singers chosen for a public performance should give a copy of their schedule immediately to the coach in charge of that performance to avoid scheduling conflicts. If a conflict arises, it is the performer's responsibility to notify the affected teachers of *any* anticipated absence and to make arrangements to make up the missed lesson or class. Do not let a teacher or coach wait needlessly because you "forgot" to inform him/her of your rehearsal. Be professional and be proactive!

Rehearsal Sites

Piano concert rehearsals – the school or the Heim

Piano concert dress rehearsals – at the performance site before the concert

Orchestra conductor coachings – the school or the Heim

Orchestra rehearsals – the Festsaal at the school

Orchestra dress rehearsals – held on the morning of the performance at the performance venue

7.5 Orchestra Rehearsal and Concert Policies

1. For out-of-town events, AIMS furnishes transportation and meals *for ONLY the performers*. If space permits, non-performers may accompany the group on the bus (space available basis). Seats are limited. Watch for emails about extra space on buses for non-performers or contact Theresa Ruperd. *No tickets to the event and no meals are provided for non-performers. They may be able to be purchased separately.* AIMS does not have access to free tickets. Contracts with out-of-town presenters regarding tickets and meals are negotiated under very specific terms and include only performers.

2. Dress rehearsals are open to all AIMS participants and you are encouraged to attend.
During rehearsal ABSOLUTE QUIET IS REQUIRED.

3. No flash photographs may be taken during a rehearsal or performance.

4. Recording requires prior permission at all rehearsals and performances. You are not permitted to post performances on the internet without permission.

7.6 AIMS Artists in Recital

AIMS Artists in Recitals are currently on a break and are not scheduled for 2025.

7.7 Performance Attire Policy

7.7.1 Orchestra Members

Please choose the dress code closest to the gender with which you identify.

FOR MEN:

- Black tuxedo, white tux shirt, black bow tie, black socks, and black concert dress shoes (that can be shined).
- Operetta concerts on August 8 & 9: Solid black dress shirt (long sleeve-button down) and black dress pants (no tux pants)
- OPTIONAL: Dark suit for chamber music concerts, the Governor's Reception, etc.
- No excessive jewelry.
- NO COLOGNE.

FOR WOMEN:

- All black.
- Full length formal black dress or skirt/blouse combination with long sleeves.
- Black “dressy” pants are allowed.
- The keyword here is *elegant*. No short-sleeved tops, no bare midriffs, and no skirts above the knee.
- POLISHED BLACK SIDED CONCERT SHOES. NO OPEN TOE SHOES OR SANDALS.
- No excessive jewelry.
- NO COLOGNE.

7.7.2 Singers and Collaborative Pianists

As a performer, you are in the business of marketing and selling your voice and artistry. What you look like when you perform influences what an audience hears and the impression you make. The person who offers your next job might be sitting in the audience. If you feel that you are dressed appropriately, it will enhance your confidence and performance. We offer this advice: *keep it simple*. Fancy, glittery, flashy, fussy, bold, flowery, and large-pattern clothing can detract from your singing. Choose carefully. Short dresses look much shorter when you are onstage. Do not distract the listener! Your hair must allow your face and eyes to be seen as you express your emotions. A distracted listener cannot fully appreciate how well you sing!

For many years, the Handbook has included a plea for women to avoid strapless gowns. They are not a good performance choice for many women. No, the fashion police will not drag you offstage if you wear one, but they can be easily modified by a complementary shawl or wrap to cover bare shoulders. Also, wear comfortable and secure shoes that give you a solid footing when maneuvering stair steps and standing onstage.

Please choose the dress code closest to the gender with which you identify.

MEN

Performances with the AIMS Festival Orchestra and the Lieder Concerts presented by the Lieder Studios: Tuxedo required; white shirt, black bow tie, black socks, and black shoes that are shined. ALWAYS button your coat during your performance. Your tuxedo trousers should be tailored to the proper length, not 'puddle' around the tops of your shoes, but hang straight. This makes you look taller and sharper.

Lieder Concert matinee:

Tuxedo or dark suit (same as audition attire)

Recital performances:

Dark suit, long tie or bow tie, dark socks, and complementary shoes that are shined.

See Audition Attire for hearings and masterclasses (see 7.2.2)

More helpful information for men:

The suit - When you are purchasing a suit, make sure it is made from good quality fabric such as cotton, wool, silk, rayon, etc. AVOID POLYESTER SUITS - especially 100% polyester. When purchasing the suit made from wool or cotton you will invest your money well. This garment will serve you much longer and will look more sophisticated and elegant on stage. The fabric will breathe and feel comfortable. Always read and follow the garment's care instructions.

Your **suit should be ironed and well-tailored**, which means the size of the suit should be correct. Your trousers are not “resting” too much on your shoes but touching the shoes and the shoelaces. The trousers

should fit in the rear. The length of the jacket sleeves should cover your wrist and your jacket should button easily.

The shirt you are using for auditions should be a little bigger size than normal because during singing your ribs expand. We do not want to see the buttons on your shirt exploding! Similarly, the size of the collar should be a little bit bigger because when you sing your neck expands a little. Do not roll up your shirt sleeves under your jacket. Your shirt sleeves should touch the first bone of the thumb when your arm is straight and should be longer than your jacket's sleeves.

The shoes you wear with your suit on stage should be elegant and polished. NO SPORTS or CASUAL SHOES. **Socks** should be dark or coordinate with the suit color. **The belt** should be new looking, without marks from weight changes, etc.

Wear **a tie or a bow tie**. Make sure you know your neck size, so the tie is not too tight.

Personalize your look according to your complexion and style. Choose the right color of suit, a tie or bow tie, pocket square, and tie pin or suspenders. You should choose an **elegant timeless look**, rather than sporty or casual one.

The tuxedo - When purchasing a tuxedo remember the **fabric quality rule**. If you spend a little more on the quality, your tuxedo will serve you for many years. Since fashion does not change much in this area, all comments in the suit section also apply to tuxedos.

Wear **a tuxedo shirt and cufflinks**. Suit shirt rules apply to tuxedo shirts. Wear **a cummerbund, a bow tie, and a vest**. **Shoes** should be polished.

Your hair should be **nicely styled**. If you have long hair, use hair products or hair elastics to secure it in place. Shave or trim your beard. **AIMS has a no fragrance policy; do not wear cologne.**

WOMEN

Performances with the AIMS Festival Orchestra and the Lieder Concerts presented by the Lieder Studios:

Full-length concert gown. Hair style that highlights your face, closed toe shoes, polished. Brighter colored dresses will help you be seen in front of an orchestra dressed in concert black and tuxedos.

Recital performances:

Tasteful, dressy, simple concert attire, below/at the knee for daytime; may be long for evening. Simple, elegant, unfussy designs and solid colors are preferable. Do not overdress. Monday night AIMS Artists Recitals do not require long dresses. Long dresses are needed for most other evening performances, such as operetta performances. Wear comfortable and secure footwear.

Lieder Concert matinee:

At or below the knee tasteful dresses and appropriate footwear.

SPECIAL NOTE: Ladies who perform on an AIMS Festival Orchestra concert in a church, or on the Spirituals & American Sacred Music Concerts are required to wear floor-length gowns with modest necklines and to have their shoulders covered. (No exceptions) Austria is a conservative Catholic country, and modesty and covered shoulders in churches is expected. Plan ahead and bring a coordinating scarf, wrap, or shawl with you.

See Audition Attire for hearings and masterclasses (see 7.2.2)

More helpful information for women:

You will need several audition/cocktail dresses (semi-formal) and concert gowns (formal). You should bring at least **2 audition dresses** and **2 concert gowns**.

Before you choose your outfits read these suggested guidelines:

AUDITION DRESSES – SEMI-FORMAL

Your dress should be made from good quality fabric such as cotton, wool, silk, rayon, etc. AVOID POLYESTER DRESSES. Dresses made from 100% polyester expose all imperfections of the body, the fabric clings to the body and has no movement. When purchasing the dress made from wool or cotton you will invest your money well. This garment will serve you much longer and will look more sophisticated and elegant on stage. It will breathe and be more comfortable. Always read and follow the garment's care instructions.

Your dress should have **at least 2 layers of fabric** to make a perfect look, hiding all imperfections, panty lines, and belly button.

Your dress should be **long enough to cover your knees**. You should wear proper undergarments, and for a perfect look, nude pantyhose. Consider investing in a shaping bodysuit for a polished look.

The color of your dress should complement your complexion and colors other than black are encouraged. **A print dress** could work but make sure it does not overpower your stature, and your neckline does not show too much cleavage.

DON'T WEAR TIGHT DRESSES ON STAGE - Remember when you sing your ribs expand, so your dress should be a little bit loose.

The shoes you wear on stage should be comfortable heels, black or nude color, closed toe, and without ankle straps. (No character shoes, please.)

To personalize your look, you should wear accessories. Use some "bling" but always remember **LESS IS MORE**: If you are using jewels in your hair and your gown is beaded, do not use any other accessories. You should have in your wardrobe: belts (one thin, one wide), decorative flowers made of fabric, long chain necklaces, long and short earrings, bracelet, brooch, an elegant scarf or shawl made from a lightweight fabric.

If you are a **mezzo-soprano singing pants roles** you should invest in a suit or elegant trousers and a vest. Make sure you feminize your look to maximize your chances for ladies' roles, too.

Makeup – when you are making a statement with your eyes, use less color on your lips. Lipstick is always required! **AIMS has a no fragrance rule, so do not wear perfume.**

Hairstyle – style your hair in an elegant way, do not be casual, but don't go crazy with the hair product. Your hair should frame your face and not cover your eyes.

CONCERT GOWNS – FORMAL

There are many choices of formal gowns, but whatever you choose make sure your gown has 2 or more layers of fabric.

Make sure your dress style and color complement your beauty and is not showing too much or too little skin. You should feel comfortable and beautiful on stage, but if you are unsure about your choice, ask a friend or a family member for help and an honest opinion.

7.8 Tickets for AIMS Concerts

Your non-AIMS friends and family may purchase tickets for the AIMS Festival Orchestra concerts online or at the *Abendkasse* (evening box office) prior to the concerts.

Full-time AIMS participants are offered one comp ticket to AIMS events. There may be no free tickets for certain events. Please pick up your comp ticket at the School Info Desk.

Ticket Policies

1. **One ticket** per person for singers; collaborative pianists; orchestra members; and faculty/staff members is available for performances in Graz at the School Info Desk the day before and until the day of the performance. Tickets also may be purchased at the Info Desk for visitors if you wish to sit together. **Everyone must pick up his/her ticket in person.** All people must have a valid ticket to be admitted to an event where tickets are sold. If you did not pick up a ticket, come to the *Abendkasse* at the venue and you will be given a ticket.

2. AIMS has no free tickets for venues where AIMSers perform outside of Graz. Ticket information about these performances is available from Clemens Anton Klug (Suite 141).

3. Performers and orchestra members appearing in an event may give their tickets to outside guests. The sale of free tickets is expressly forbidden. (Performers do not need a ticket to enter the venue.)

7.9 Busking / Street Performing

The Kulturstadt (Culture Office) of Graz permits AIMSers to perform on the street and to accept gratuities. The city requires no fee but imposes certain restrictions. All performers should see Clemens Anton Klug or the Orchestra Manager. AIMS sets the following conditions for street performance and will deny permission to perform to those who do not strictly follow these rules. (Busker rules and map are posted on the white board in the 1st floor Heim lobby.)

A group or performer:

1. Cannot perform the day of their dress rehearsal or performance
2. Must wear or display an AIMS T-shirt or sign
3. *Must carry an official copy* of the rules (both English and German) as a permit. See Clemens Anton Klug.
4. Must move to another location when requested to do so by police, merchants, or businesspeople
5. Must perform only well-prepared and rehearsed music. Grazers enjoy the AIMS performers because their skill exceeds the other street performers.

The following is an extract from the translation of the rules established by the City of Graz for street performers which is updated annually.

General Conditions of Street Playing in Graz

- a. This activity may not interfere with safety or flow of traffic.
- b. Loudspeakers, stages, and other furniture are forbidden.
- c. A group of musicians may be no larger than 5 people or play in the same location for more than an hour.
- d. Groups must stay at least 15 meters away from one another.
- e. Business entrances must be left clear.
- f. Street performing is allowed 09.00-12.00 and 15.00-20.00.

7.10 Sexual Harassment Policy

The Policy Statement

The American Institute of Musical Studies (AIMS) is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees, faculty, staff, and participants (singers, pianists, and orchestra members), free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment, including sexual harassment. AIMS will operate a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment.

All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimized for making such a complaint.

Definition of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient.

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Physical conduct

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors

Verbal conduct

- Comments on someone's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

Non-verbal conduct

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. AIMS recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

AIMS recognizes sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships.

Anyone, including faculty, staff, and participants (singers, pianists, and orchestra members) at AIMS who

sexually harasses another will be reprimanded in accordance with this internal policy.

All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within AIMS premises or outside, including at any social events sponsored by AIMS.

Complaints procedures

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should approach either Sarah Halley, General Director, or Brian Bridges, Director of Operations, who will:

- immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s)
- ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants
- ensure that the victim understands AIMS' procedures for dealing with the complaint
- keep a confidential record of all discussions
- respect the choice of the victim

Implementation of this policy

AIMS will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons.

Section 8

Directions to Buildings and Concert Venues

Directions to buildings and concert venues are printed and are available at the Info Desk at the Heim.

Additional directions are posted on whiteboards and in the Heim elevators.

Additionally, directions are posted on the Facebook group and are often emailed.

PLEASE USE THE DIRECTIONS PROVIDED AT THE INFO DESK! Many times, during the summer, construction forces change in streetcar and bus routes which will alter the standard directions listed below.

Section 9

Excursions

AIMS is truly an "Experience" and can be an overwhelming one. If you feel this way do not hesitate to talk to one of the various directors who has attended AIMS for many years. We love to hear your concerns and help where possible. For relaxation, find time to put aside music, auditions, and rehearsals to take care of yourself. Get out of the Heim; walk to the City Park, take the Straßenbahn to Mariatrost, or climb the Schlossberg, Gösting or the Schöckl. All are wonderful destinations and great therapy. If the weather is warm enough, take Line 1 (direction University Hospital) to the Schwimmbad Eggenberg. This is a very modern facility, recently rebuilt at a cost of 43 million Euros.

9.1 The Book Box

Take and borrow books you wish to read. Donate any books that you do not wish to keep to the Book Box under the 1st floor stairs by the elevator at the Heim.

9.2 City Excursions

9.2.1 Sights

Graz is a city of history, magnificent architecture, natural beauty and cultural vitality. Its Altstadt (old city) is one

of the best restored in Europe. See www.graz.at. AIMS offers guided city tours the first and second days of your arrival to give you an overview of the Altstadt. At registration, you will receive a Welcome Bag with a map and tourist information about the sights of Graz and surroundings. There are excellent guidebooks available at bookstores and in the AIMS General Library.

The **Graz Tourist Information Office**, Herrengasse 16 (look for the big "i") has multilingual brochures on both Graz and Styria (the Austrian province of which Graz is the capital) and an English-speaking staff. A fun way to see Graz is to use your Straßenbahn pass to ride all the lines to the end and back.

9.2.2 Cultural Events

Included in the Tourist Information are calendars of cultural events in and around Graz and you will see posters in the city for concerts and exhibitions. AIMS students (not faculty or staff) may purchase discounted student tickets to many of these events.

Tickets are available at the following locations and online:

Tageskasse der Vereinigten Bühnen (City Theaters) located at Kaiser-Josef-Platz 10

9.3 Trips in Graz and Styria (Steiermark) – *"The Green Heart of Austria"*

GÖSTING

A short ride on Line 40 bus from the Jakominiplatz. The bus line ends at the Schlossplatz at the base of the mountain on which the ruins of a castle are located. The castle is about a 30-minute climb from the Schlossplatz. Nice views. On the way down, follow the signs to Jungfernsprung (Virgin's Leap) for a view of the Mur River Valley.

MARIATROST

Beautiful Baroque pilgrimage church. Take Line 1 (direction Mariatrost) to the end of the line and walk up to the church. Spectacular interior and views. Also, can be reached by walking through the Lärchen Forest (about 6 km) from the "Hilmteich" on Line 1. The Hilmteich offers tennis and a café by the lake. Recently the Linien 1 has been under construction and transfer to a bus is necessary to get to Mariatrost.

SCHLOSS EGGENBERG

Formerly a palace and now an art museum and park. The palace, one of the most beautiful buildings in Graz, houses the Landesmuseum Joanneum's department of pre- and early history paintings and *objet d'art* spectacularly displayed. Guided tours of the elegant state rooms on the second floor are offered from 09.00 to 13.00 and 14.00 to 16.00 (call for time of English tour). Admission is charged with a reduced student rate. Schloss Eggenberg is easily reached. Take Line 1 (direction University Hospital) to Schlosstraße Haltestelle, then walk to the end of Schlosstraße to the gated park entrance.

ÖSTERREICHISCHES FREILICHTMUSEUM at Stübing.

This open-air museum offers a glimpse of old rural Austrian life with numerous reconstructed farm buildings and equipment in an outdoor setting. The trip may be made by bus, train, or car. Bus service is recommended because it takes you directly to the entrance. The train station is a 45-minute walk to and from the museum. Admission fee charged. Take a lunch. There are many buildings to see.

GESTÜT PIBER

This village, near Köflach, is the stud farm of the famous Lippizaner horses that are trained to perform at the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. Piber can be reached by car or bus; admission is charged. Check at Graz Tourist Office, Herrengasse 16 for current info.

LURGROTTE

Stalactite caverns are accessible from Peggau and Semriach. Safe and easy cement walks run through these beautiful grottos. The Peggau entrance can be reached by train (only a few minutes ride from the Hauptbahnhof), while the Semriach entrance is only accessible by car or bus. Admission fee.

RIEGERSBURG

An impressive, formidable 12th century castle atop a 400-foot stone cliff, one of Christian Europe's fortifications against invaders from the East. It never fell to the Turks. Magnificent views! Take a bus (travel by train is not recommended) directly from Graz. Riegersburg is a part of the "Castles and Chateaux" tour offered by the Graz Tourist Office, Herrengasse 16.

ST. RADEGUND/SCHÖCKL

The town of St. Radegund is a health resort offering 26 miles of walking paths, swimming in summer, skiing in winter, etc. Hike up the Schöckl mountain, which is steep and takes several hours, or take the funicular (4,741 ft.) for a view extending from the Alps to the Hungarian plain. Two restaurants are at the top. An easy trip from the Heim. Take the #250 bus at the Jakominiplatz (across the street from the Dorotheum). Buy a ticket to St. Radegund from the driver. Show your Monatskarte for a discount. The bus line ends at the funicular station. Buy a ticket for the funicular. Highly recommended.

STIFT REIN

Cistercian monastery, originally Romanesque, rebuilt in the 18th century. *Magnificent church and library of books about ancient herbal medicines.* Buses directly to Stift Rein leave from the Lendplatz. Beautiful countryside.

WEINSTRASSE

In southern Styria, the road from Ehrenhausen to Leutschach winds through beautiful vineyard-covered hills and past many wine restaurants (almost all closed on Sunday), each offering its own Eigenbauwein (house wine). If there is enough interest, a tour can be arranged for a Saturday afternoon departing 14.00 and returning 18.00 for about €25 including a 'Brettljause' (snack of cold cuts, cheese, and bread on a wooden board).

9.4 Longer Trips

Easy one-day trips by train include Maribor, Lubljana and Vienna (1 - 2.5 hours). Requiring 3 days and more expense are Salzburg (4 hours), Venice (6 hours by bus only), Florence (8 hours), Budapest (thru Vienna) and Prague.

9.5 Renting a Car

If you plan to rent a car while in Europe, you must be 25 years of age. Although not mandatory, an International Driving License from AAA may help if the police officer who pulls you over can't read your American driver license. If you choose not to obtain one, you must know the date of issue of your driver license and this may not be listed as such on it. Arrange in advance to rent a car with automatic transmission unless you are proficient with a manual gear shift. Fuel is currently ~\$8 a gallon.

There are many special regulations concerning speed limits and parking. Parking fines are €40-60 and towing costs are €140+ plus the police fine. Cameras that photograph your license plate are everywhere. You must purchase a parking permit (Parkschein) to place on the dashboard in "blue" and "green" zones. Parking monitors check cars every 20-60 minutes. Speed controls are extremely strict; police use radar pistols and permanently installed cameras issue tickets automatically for everything from going the wrong way, running a red light, to speeding. Familiarize yourself with the signs and the laws.

Auto rental agencies in Graz are Hertz, Budget-Sixt, Europcar and Avis. Renting cars and hotel rooms when you purchase your airline ticket online before you leave the states might be cheaper. You must have a credit card or substantial cash deposit when you check out the car. (See Brian Bridges who is an experienced car renter.) Travel to certain countries incurs a substantial surcharge (several hundred Euros). Tell the rental agency where the car will be driven and have this noted on the rental agreement. The accident rate is high on Autobahns especially at night.

If you drive in Austria on the Autobahn, your car must have a current "Vignette" sticker on the windshield. Check your rental car to verify the Vignette is current. Buy a Vignette at a Tabak (~€8 for 10 days). The fine is ~ €75 for non-compliance.

9.6 Airplane and Train Transportation

Ticket service for airlines is available only at the Graz airport. Airline information and reservations can be made through Austrian/Lufthansa Airlines, Tel. 0 (517) 66-72-00. The airport may be reached for only a few Euros from the Hauptbahnhof by train or bus. There is also an airport bus from near the Jakominiplatz on Radeztkeystraße. There are travel agencies in town, for example, Ruefa at the Hauptplatz, for ticket purchases.

See www.oebb.at for train schedules. Determining the best schedule for trips outside of Austria is best at the train station information desk. Tickets can be purchased online or at the train station. Groups of 5 or more who travel together get very favorable rates. There is a train almost every hour to Vienna during the day. The last train returning to Graz leaves Vienna about 8 p.m. and after that there is no way to get to Graz until the following morning. The underground subway is the quickest way to go into the city.

Section 10

Getting Help

10.1 Heim Maintenance and Repair

For any problem with the electricity or plumbing in your room contact Theresa Rupert

10.2 Illness or Injury

The AIMS Medical Advisor is available in the Clinic during the hours posted for any and every health concern. She/he will advise what might be done and help with an appointment with a local doctor if you require one. Please consult her/him before you go for emergency treatment. If you suffer an injury or an onset of an illness needing immediate attention during off-hours and can't locate her/him, follow the instructions posted on the Clinic door. In an acute emergency, call an ambulance or taxi and go to the emergency room (EBA) at the Landeskrankenhaus (LKH). Take a friend with you to communicate with us here at the Info Desk or Heim. Please notify the Medical Advisor and/or an AIMS Staff member of your illness. The AIMS medical insurance company is Wienerstädische Versicherung and the business office at the hospital knows how to deal with this.

10.3 Information

If you have a question that this handbook does not answer, if you are unsure about whom to contact regarding a question, ask the Info Desk.

10.4 Piano Repair and Tuning

If mechanical or tuning problem with an AIMS piano arise, please contact the Schule Info Desk. Be sure the correct room number where the piano is located is included in the request.

ACHTUNG! ATTENTION! Do not place ANYTHING on pianos – books, music notebooks, purses, backpacks, water bottles, or allow jewelry or belt buckles to touch a piano! Thank you. Every year AIMS is charged for scratches,

gouges, damage, etc., to the highly polished surfaces of pianos. Please help avoid this unnecessary expense. Please report any damage to a piano.

10.5 Instrument Repair

Orchestra members should contact the Orchestra Manager for the names and locations of local firms who can make the necessary repairs of their instrument. Instrumentalists are reminded that any damage to an instrument that occurs during air transit must be reported to the airline before the instrument leaves the airport.

10.6 Lost and Found

Lost and found boxes are maintained by the Info Desks. Inquire about items left on Straßenbahn or Autobuses at the Verkehrsbetriebe Graz Linien office at the Jakominiplatz or **online**. The Hauptbahnhof's Fundbüro has records of items found on trains in Austria. Reporting lost items on trains is now managed only **online**. Make your report as soon as possible! There is a good chance of recovering your lost item. See www.oebb.at.

10.7 Lost Passports

A lost passport requires a trip to Vienna to the embassy of the country that issued the passport. Keep your *passport photocopy* separate from your passport as you travel. Guard your passport constantly. If you lose your passport in another EU country, there are no border controls, so you can return to Graz and then go to Vienna to apply. Applying for replacement and an appointment in Vienna is managed **online**. If it is lost in a non-EU country, there ARE border controls, so before you can return to Graz, go to the embassy for the country that issued your passport/visa and apply for a replacement. Always carry several copies of your passport in separate places (in your luggage, backpack, wallet, purse, etc.). Consult AIMS Administrative Staff for assistance.

10.8 Luggage Damage

Report damage to your luggage before leaving the Baggage Claim area at the airport. The claims desk is inside the Baggage Claim area. Please send a message to the AIMS person meeting your flight that you have been detained.

Section 11

Departure: Going Home or Moving On

11.1 AIMS Contact List

A list of names, addresses and email addresses of AIMS in Graz attendees is compiled every summer. You can help by promptly verifying, correcting/updating the list when it is posted. Your telephone number and email address will be included unless you request otherwise.

11.2 Reconfirming your Return Flight is unnecessary.

Info on departing flights and transfer to the airport on designated travel days will be posted about a week before the end of AIMS. You may make changes by writing on the list. We need to know your departure date, time and flight or other mode of travel. It is your responsibility to double-check your departure information!

11.3 Changing your Return Flight

If you must change the departure date or destination of your return flight, talk to Sarah Halley for assistance/advice. There is a charge for any change. In many cases, you will have to purchase a new ticket at the higher current fare. Most tickets are non-refundable, so be sure of your plans before you make the change. If you purchased flight cancellation insurance, changes due to illness or death in the family might be covered.

Only the airline or travel service who sold you the ticket has access to your reservation. **You must contact them directly.** Important: The name on the reservation, ticket and passport must agree or you will not be permitted to board the aircraft. You cannot sell your ticket or buy a ticket issued to someone else.

11.4 Checking Out of the Heim

For the AIMS designated departure dates, we will process the return of deposits before departures. Watch for announcements about this on the whiteboards and emails.

Laundry card refunds are offered near the end of AIMS when you are finished using them.

Return your blue and white key fobs and mailbox key to the AIMS staff person supervising departures to receive your deposits. If there is damage to your room (or the hallway, shower or toilet connected to your room) or if you owe money to AIMS, the deposit will be retained and a bill prepared for damage repair. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR KEYS IN YOUR ROOM WHEN YOU CHECK OUT.**

If you plan to leave before the end of the AIMS regular session, notify Theresa Ruperd of your departure date *in advance* so your deposit can be ready.

Specific Departure information for every flight will be posted. Check that your name is on the list for the correct day and flight time. It is your responsibility to double-check your departure information!

11.5 Transportation to the Airport

People who purchase bus transfers on designated departure dates will be transported to the airport by bus/van after checking out of the Heim. Some of these buses leave *very early* in the morning, so arrange a wake-up call from a friend who is on the same bus. If you miss the bus, your transportation to the airport is at your expense (see section 4.8 Taxi Service).

Purchase either a one-way or round-trip transfer online at the AIMS website (before arriving in Graz.) Specify your flight date and time and check the list when posted to ensure your name and departure time are correct. **It is your responsibility to double-check your departure information!**

11.6 Stay in Touch with AIMS

AIMS Directors and Staff wish you every success in the pursuit of your career. News about alumni is published on the AIMS Facebook page. We want to hear about your accomplishments! AIMSers want to read about your successes. Please email your updates to Theresa Ruperd at aimsadmin@gmail.com

11.7 The Future of AIMS

If you, members of your family, friends, or sponsor are able to make donations to AIMS in the future, the AIMS Experience can be perpetuated for coming generations of singers, collaborative pianists, and orchestra members. Only through the generosity of individuals and businesses in America and Graz can the AIMS program continue. Try to help AIMS in the future by giving back. Contact Sarah Halley at aimsgraz@gmail.com to receive information about *Methods of Giving* or to ask for information about AIMS to be sent to potential supporters such as your friends and family. You can also visit the website www.aimsgraz.com and click on the “Donate” button on the homepage for more information on ways to help support AIMS. As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, AIMS can accept all types of donations.

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