

Contemporary Germany: Introductory German II

GERM 1002, Summer Session II 2025

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MTWR 5:30–7:25pm, ICC 221B
Office hours: by appointment

Materials

1. Textbook and workbook for *Kontakte* (Terrell, Tschirmer, Nikolai, Genzmer) New York: McGraw Hill, 9th edition, 2021.
2. Course materials consisting of authentic German texts and other materials are made available for students via the course's canvas site. Due to copyright regulations, students must print course packets themselves.
3. Audio & video program to accompany *Kontakte* available online at the McGraw-Hill website.

Course Goals

The overall goal of Level I courses is to help students develop cultural and linguistic knowledge that allows them to feel comfortable thinking of themselves as users of German, in listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Level I courses introduce students to cultural notions of time and space as they play themselves out in such topics as talking about oneself and others (family and friends), referring to activities and events (in present and past storytelling), occupations and pastimes (school, work, and free time), and the world around us (environment, residence, etc.). Comparisons to current German life and society build the foundation for cultural literacy and familiarity with the German-speaking world.

By the end of the summer session students will be:

- able to use German creatively and independently, based on thorough preparation in the four language modalities: listening, speaking, reading, writing;
- able to understand and produce a variety of text types, from personal and interactional to routine and public, supported by reading and listening development;
- able to communicate effectively beyond immediate and person-centered areas of interest, incorporating broader cultural knowledge into a variety of topics and issues;
- familiar with authentic materials and audio-visual resources, including those found online.

In order to reach these goals, it is important that students participate in all classroom activities and keep up with out-of-class assignments, such as independent projects, partner work, and daily written homework. Throughout this course, we emphasize effective communication and gradual development of linguistic accuracy. Creativity, breadth of expression (through syntax and vocabulary) and variation of language (“style”) in different social contexts and for different tasks, in oral and written language, are critical to long-term language development. Therefore, we favor a communicative approach which highlights reading and writing right from the beginning. A balance of activities that always incorporate cultural knowledge will ensure the gradual but continual development of differentiated language abilities in all modalities.

Assessment of progress will occur in diverse tasks across all modalities and throughout the course.

Approach

Our philosophy of what learning a language is all about and our goals and approaches in language teaching challenge learners to take on active roles in which meaning conveyance, not grammar for the sake of grammar, is central. Such a focus on content requires you as the learner to take responsibility for your own learning (rather than passively memorizing things), to work steadily throughout the semester (no last-minute cramming!), to be engaged and creative at all times, take good risks, work collaboratively with others in the class, and to have fun in learning to communicate in German.

The course is the foundation course in our sequence which aspires to bring students to professional-level competence in German over a four-year period. While we do not expect everyone to study the language for that period of time—though you are certainly invited to do so—it is important to proceed in a way that makes this goal possible. In particular, rather than focusing on grammar as a set of independent rules, the course proceeds on the assumption that German is best acquired in a content-oriented and task-based learning and teaching environment. Content pertains both to the culture of the German-speaking world and to language content—grammar, vocabulary, organization of texts in spoken and written language. We will engage in a range of communicative tasks that involve listening, reading, speaking, and writing in an integrated fashion. This communicative approach does not mean that we do not have to attend to accurate use of grammar and vocabulary—we most definitely do!—but it means that we will learn those language features only in order to accomplish certain communicative purposes in specific communicative settings.

Language learning is a long-term process. One does not learn German by learning its subcomponents—grammar or vocabulary—perfectly and then just adding these perfectly mastered building blocks one after another. Instead, language learning takes place in a series of ever better approximations of what one ultimately wants to accomplish with the language. Seen from an end point, these “approximations” would be called errors or mistakes that should be avoided. But seen from a developmental standpoint, these approximations are part and parcel of learning the language. The problem is not with risking and making errors; the problem is with not overcoming them over time! In other words, progression and progress are among the key things we will be looking for.

As your instructor, I will make every effort to give you ample opportunities to make those initial trial steps in a sheltered and supportive environment, while also having fun. Perhaps the best way of doing this is with a partner or in a small group, both inside and outside of class. I encourage you to take advantage of this kind of collaborative and supportive context since it reduces the risks that you think you are taking and sets you on a path for making remarkable progress in a relatively short period of time. Different learners have different learning strategies and styles. I will help you find yours, individually and as a class. Do not hesitate to come to me when you need help or are experiencing difficulties. I look forward to making this a very successful and enjoyable learning experience for you.

Assessment

Student progress is assessed in all areas of language use—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—using a range of assessment instruments.

- A. **Class Participation (20%):** Class participation is an essential foundation for learning a language. Consistent and constructive participation will enable students 1) to build up confidence in using German; 2) to experience and learn to negotiate the complex relationship between comprehension and production, between content and language form; 3) to shape intended communicative intentions creatively within the available resources, cognitive, knowledge-based, and linguistic; 4) to learn to negotiate and find a useful balance between accuracy, fluency, complexity, and comprehensibility and appropriateness of a message; 5) to obtain feedback from me regarding areas of language use in speaking that need further attention. Unless absolutely necessary and cleared with me in advance, you should *not* have your phone out in class. To minimize distractions, you may only use your devices in class to view your homework and our course documents or to take notes. Your class participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

Grade	Criteria
A	always well-prepared always is attentive and eager to volunteer always tries to use German with classmates and instructor always makes the most of each exercise shows real resourcefulness and imagination when using the language always responds to and engages classmates in a respectful manner remains critical and open-minded toward target and native culture
B	usually well-prepared usually is attentive and volunteers occasionally usually tries to use German with classmates and instructor completes exercises with some imagination and resourcefulness makes some effort to engage fellow students shows some development of cultural sensitivity
C	adequately prepared and attentive occasionally needs to be reminded to use German with instructor and classmates responds and completes exercises with minimal imagination
D	usually unprepared makes little effort to participate or complete exercises rarely tries to use German with instructor or classmates
F	makes no contribution to class whatsoever

- B. **Homework (20%):** A sustained and consistent level of preparation for all aspects of classroom work is critical 1) to ensure regular engagement with focused material outside of class, leading to better preparation for class; 2) to practice and improve accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical forms, particularly through writing to learn activities (e.g., workbook practice); 3) to engage in more extended language use that cannot be

accomplished in class (e.g., listening comprehension with audio-visual materials, reading comprehension, and beginning writing tasks); 4) to provide an opportunity to work with other students in the class on more comprehensive communicative tasks. Late homework (assignments not turned in by the start of class) will be assessed a penalty.

Note: You are permitted and even encouraged to use the answer keys in the back of the textbook and workbook to check your answers and to help you complete the homework assignments effectively. However, there should be a clear indication on your homework (e.g., a different color ink) where and to what extent you have used the answer key to assist your completion of the assignment. Failure to do so could result in your receiving no credit for that homework assignment.

- C. **Quizzes (20%):** At the end of each chapter, short quizzes will assess students' knowledge in specified areas of thematic and cultural as well as linguistic knowledge. Quizzes will comprise reading, writing, and listening skills. Quizzes cannot be made up.
- D. **Writing tasks (15%):** Over the course of the semester, you have many informal occasions for learning to write in German (e.g., through workbook assignments). In addition, there are graded writing assignments. Over the course of the semester, they gradually increase in length and complexity.
- E. **Speaking tasks (10%):** You will complete graded speaking tasks during the semester. The speaking tasks will have been modeled by me and students will have had an opportunity to rehearse a similar task in an ungraded situation. Students will have had time to prepare their presentations, shape them for appropriate and interesting content, discuss them with me, create visual aids, and plan them well with regard to fluency and accuracy of language use.
- F. **Written Final Exam (15%):** While quizzes pertain to highly targeted specific features of the language and expect relatively high levels of formal accuracy, the final examination focuses on integrated tasks (e.g., reading and listening comprehension, short writing assignments, speaking) and address both language and content knowledge.

Grading scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	65-66
F	below 65

Attendance

You are required to attend every class and arrive promptly so that class discussion can begin at the stated start time. If you are unable to attend class or will be delayed, you are expected to let me know ahead of time, or as soon as you are able, in order to have this absence excused and prevent it impacting your participation grade. In-class assignments cannot be made up and any conflict must be cleared with me in advance, or no credit will be given. Per the [university's religious holiday policy](#), I am happy to accommodate you if you need to miss class or reschedule an assignment because you are observing a major religious holiday; you must, however, notify me at the start of the semester. Should you be affected by chronic illness or disability, a personal or health emergency, or something similar and can provide proof of the need for an absence, I am very happy to work with you to develop a tailored attendance policy.

Office Hours

I am always happy to meet with you! Please email me to schedule an appointment. Office hours can be used to discuss the course content, upcoming assignments, your progress, concerns you have about the class, grammatical concepts you are struggling with, and the like. I am here to help!

Auditing policy

Auditors must officially register for the course as an auditor through the University Registrar's office. A sustained and consistent level of preparation for all aspects of classroom work is critical, even for the auditing student. In order to foster a positive learning environment for auditors and graded students alike, auditors are required to fulfill all tasks (i.e. written assignments, oral presentations, etc.) that graded students perform, maintain a C average in the course, and attend class regularly. The Graduate School will be informed if these requirements are not met, and the auditing student will be required to withdraw from the course.

Help on writing and speaking assignments

Independent work on writing and speaking assignments is required. The following is an example of acceptable and unacceptable resources for help on the writing tasks:

Acceptable resources	Unacceptable resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online dictionaries (e.g., dict.cc, pons.de) • your instructor (issues addressed in emails sent less than 24 hours before a deadline may not be responded to or accounted for during grading) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online translators • error correction and proof reading by native speakers, experts, or students who took the class in the past • generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT)

Honor Policy

All courses in the Department of German strictly adhere to the Honor Code of Georgetown University. Your work in class and on all take-home assignments should be your own. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic honesty within the framework of this course, please speak with me. In cases of alleged violations, the procedures described in the Honor Code will be followed.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and want to receive accommodations in this course, then you must register as a student with a disability with the [Academic Resource Center](#) (ARC). ARC is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies. ARC is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 338. Please note that it can take up to four weeks for ARC to process accommodation requests so I would encourage you to reach out as soon as possible. If you have any undocumented access needs that you would like me to be aware of, or any new needs/limitations arise during the semester, please let me know so I am able to best support your learning.

Mental Health Resources

If you are struggling with your mental health or need to talk to a professional about a problem you are facing, I encourage you to make use of the university's [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](#) (CAPS). Additional resources available to you can be found through the [Georgetown self-care resource guide](#).

Sexual Misconduct Resources

Georgetown University and its faculty and staff are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to me in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), I have to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to you to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. Please note that you are not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator and no action will be taken without your awareness. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the [Sexual Misconduct Website](#). If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include [Sexual Assault Response and Prevention](#) and [CAPS](#).

Resources for Pregnant Students

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant students. At any point throughout their pregnancy students may request adjustments/modifications based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication or medical need. Students may also request accommodations following labor and delivery based on a complication or medical need. More information about pregnancy modifications can be found on the [Title IX Georgetown University Website](#). To request pregnancy modifications, please complete the [SCS Pregnancy Modification Request Form](#).

Resources for Trans and Non-Binary Students

Follow [this link](#) to learn about campus resources for trans and non-binary students. Should your pronouns or preferred name change over the course of the semester, please let me know. If you feel comfortable, I can also share this information with your classmates.

Bias Reporting

If you experience hate or bias at Georgetown, you are encouraged to report the incident to the [university's bias team](#).

How can you do well in this class?

- Come to every class with homework completed and ready to actively participate. Get involved by asking questions and making comments in class to demonstrate that you have read and thought about the materials.
- Dedicate enough time to complete assigned readings/viewings and jot down notes, questions, and other thoughts about the texts. Focus on only this one task (eliminate distractions).
- Actively read by marking passages and making notes in your readings. I strongly encourage you to read on paper whenever possible or, if reading online, to use software that allows you to annotate the text. Develop an active and critical reading practice by talking with me and peers about reading strategies.
- Ask questions when you do not understand something or when something strikes you as particularly interesting.
- Come to my office hours.
- Show me and your classmates kindness and respect.
- Be open, curious, and thoughtful.