

Contemporary Germany: Introductory German I
GERM-001, *Summer 2018*

Instructor: Aliza Kroek
ak1578@georgetown.edu

Class meeting time: MTWR 3:15pm to 5:15pm and location: ICC 209B

Office hours: Monday 2pm to 3pm in ICC 460 or by appointment

Materials:

1. Textbook and workbook for *Kontakte, A Communicative Approach* (Tschirner & Nikolai) New York: McGraw Hill, 8th edition, 2017. And accompanying Workbook.
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 course site <https://campus.georgetown.edu>

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 one's self and others (family and friends), referring to activities and events (in present and past story-telling), 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 first semester 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 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 the World Wide Web;

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 semester.

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 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 both you and your instructor will be looking for.

We 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. We 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. We will help you find yours, individually and as a class. Do not hesitate to come to us when you need help, experience difficulties, – and also when you feel that things are going well! We look forward to making this a very successful and enjoyable learning experience with you.

Attendance

You are required to attend every class. Extended illnesses and family emergencies will be treated as exceptions, and absences for these purposes will be excused. Be prepared to show proof of the need for the absences, however, if your instructor asks for it. Note that quizzes cannot be

made up and that any exam conflict must be cleared with the instructor in advance, or no credit will be given.

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** (15%). 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 instructor regarding areas of language use in speaking that need further attention. 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 usually makes the most of each exercise 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 does not engage classmates beyond the minimum requirements for an assignment
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

NOTE: You will be given a 0 for class participation for every session you miss.

B. Homework (15%). 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., work book 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 will be assessed a penalty.

Note: You are permitted and even encouraged to use the answer keys in the back of the textbook and the 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 (15%).** 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 (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. In the first semester, these tend to be relatively short.
- E. Speaking Ability (10%).** There will be a variety of short graded speaking tasks, both individual and with partner(s).
- F. Midterm (15%) & Written Final Exam (15%).** While quizzes pertain to highly targeted specific features of the language and expect relatively high levels of formal accuracy, the mid term and final examinations focus on integrated tasks (e.g, reading and listening comprehension, short writing assignments, speaking) and address both language and content knowledge.

Grading scale (from undergraduate bulletin)

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

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 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 Assignments

Independent work on writing assignments is required, as you are learning to make meaning in the foreign language through composing about particular topics within our content themes. 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"> • dict.cc or leo.org • linguee.com • German Department help desk • your instructor 	<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

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 your instructor. In cases of alleged violations, the procedures described in the Honor Code will be followed.

Instructional Continuity

In the case of university closure, instructional continuity will be maintained through synchronous or asynchronous means and students must remain available during regularly scheduled class times.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and want to receive accommodations in this course, then you must contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) to find out how to register as a student with a disability. The Center 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. It is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335.