

Language Courses offered by the Department of German as a Foreign Language (Trier University, as of winter semester 2013/14)

Dear (prospective) students, dear colleagues,

The following is an overview of the language courses that are, as a rule of thumb, offered each semester by the department of German as a Foreign Language for exchange students and other short-term students (free movers).

The placement for the language courses is decided based on the results of the placement test. The placement test will be given on the last day of the orientation program that is offered by the AAA (International Office) prior to the beginning of the lecture period.

The first four courses are for students with language levels A2 to B2. In these courses students will receive a graded certificate based on regular attendance and participation, tests covering certain skills or a midterm examination, and a final examination.

Intensive course (A2 - “Intensivkurs”)

10 hours per week / 10 ECTS credits

The participants of the intensive course start out with limited knowledge of the German language. An up-to-date textbook for German as a foreign language for level A provides a structure for the course.

Course content: everyday communication, basic grammar, basic vocabulary, simple listening and reading comprehension exercises, writing letters, pronunciation practice, and language acquisition techniques.

The goal is to prepare students to take the bridging course (“Brückenkurs”). At the end of the course students will take a final examination that is made up of a grammar and vocabulary section, a reading comprehension, a listening comprehension, and a composition. Students will receive a graded certificate based on this examination.

Bridging course (B1 - “Brückenkurs”)

10 hours per week / 10 ECTS credits

The participants of the bridging course have the basics at their disposal and are expected to reach the language level B1 by the end of this course.

An up-to-date textbook for German as a foreign language for level B1 provides a structure for the course.

Course content: everyday communication, extension of grammar and vocabulary skills, understanding simple but authentic texts and audio clips, practical and argumentative writing assignments, pronunciation practice, and language acquisition techniques.

The goal is to prepare students to take the intermediate course (“Mittelkurs B1+”). At the end of the course students will take a final examination that is made up of a grammar and vocabulary section, a reading comprehension, a listening comprehension, and a composition. Students will receive a graded certificate based on this examination.

Intermediate course (B1+ and B2 - “Mittelkurs”)

6 hours per week / 5 ECTS credits

The intermediate course is aimed at participants who have already reached level B1. The class is offered at level B1+ and B2 – depending on the results of the placement test at the beginning of each semester.

Productive and receptive skills will be further built upon through work with authentic texts, including various types of texts; grammar and vocabulary exercises are integrated into the text assignments. Course content: understanding lectures, presentations and news reports, taking one’s own position in an argument, understanding and categorizing longer authentic texts at a moderate level of difficulty, writing argumentatively and academically (summary and discussion), and using complex sentence structures and subject-specific vocabulary.

At the end of the course students will take a final examination that is made up of a grammar and vocabulary section, a reading comprehension, a listening comprehension, and a composition.

German Phonetics (B1+ and B2 - “Phonetik des Deutschen”)

2 hours per week / 2 ECTS credits

The phonetics course is available for participants of the intermediate course.

The goal of this course is to instruct students in the standard German pronunciation, as it is used in official communication, in the media, in schools and universities, as well as in business and administration. In this course the main tasks are to correct pronunciation mistakes and to learn the correct pronunciation of vowels and consonants as well as the rules of intonation and prosody. Practice in the language lab also serves to attain these goals.

In this course students will receive a course certificate based on regular attendance and participation and a final examination.

Courses in the module system:

The six specialized courses described below are available for exchange students and other short-term students (free movers) at level B2 and higher as well as for degree-seeking students who have passed the DSH (German language exam for university admission) and for students of the German as a foreign language “Kurzstudiengang”.

In these courses students will receive a graded certificate based on the results of the final exam and the work done throughout the duration of the course (including preparation of additional assignments before and after class).

Intercultural Communication (B2/C1 - “Interkulturelle Kommunikation”)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

The goal of this course is to accustom the participants to intercultural communication situations and to develop intercultural skills, particularly those in the area of language. How do we communicate effectively with people from other cultures? How do we deal with misunderstandings and difficulties?

Course content: Through comments, discussion and role-play, the linguistic methods of intercultural communication will be developed and practiced.

Intercultural skills:

Sensitization to intercultural differences, reflection on the self-image and the image of the “other,” analysis of intercultural misunderstandings

Language skills:

Comprehension: text comparison of academic and media texts (e.g. diagram, chart, dictionary entry, pictures, news reports)

Speaking: discussion, role-play

Writing: expressing one’s views, debate, commentary

Additional requirements: short presentation and/or midterm examination

Images of Germany in Film and Literature (B2/C1 - “Deutschlandbilder in Film und Literatur“)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

The goal of this course is the development and advancement of intercultural communication skills and a deeper cultural understanding.

Course content: lectures on and discussions of current German-language literature (short stories, poems, songs, novellas, novels, and/ or excerpts), as well as discussion of current film productions (short films, film sequences).

Course topics: current topics with an intercultural perspective; getting to know everyday culture

Language skills:

Comprehension: language usage specific to literature and film; culturally specific vocabulary

Speaking: discussions about readers’ perceptions, interpretation discussions, role-play

Writing: interpretation, revision and critique

Additional requirements: short presentation (e.g. presenting a book) and/or midterm examination

Cultural Studies: current - historical (B2/C1 - “Landeskunde: aktuell - historisch”)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

In this language class, students’ basic knowledge of Germany will be broadened. Current topics within the realm of German cultural studies will be discussed through the use of authentic material (e.g. newspaper articles, radio broadcasts and video clips). Emphasis lies not only on the information presented, but also on the ability to communicate this knowledge and to speak about topics in intercultural studies.

Course topics:

Knowledge about current political, economic and social topics (with student-influenced selection)

Key contextual knowledge of a historical and political nature (with student-influenced selection)

Language skills:

Comprehension: text analysis of academic articles and media sources (e.g. illustrations, charts, dictionary entries, reports and commentaries)

Speaking: discussion, short presentation

Writing: summary, commentary

Additional requirements: short presentation or midterm examination

German Vocabulary and Grammar (C1/C2 - “Wortschatz und Grammatik des Deutschen”)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

In this course students learn lexical and idiomatic knowledge and skills as well as grammatical and syntactical skills that are necessary to understand academic texts and to be able to compose such texts. The vocabulary and grammar work is principally based on texts and is aimed at academic language usage.

Language skills:

Collecting, organizing, and using vocabulary found in texts; recognizing and using culture-specific vocabulary; dictionary work;

On the basis of authentic academic texts and expressions: analysis of academic structures (nominalization, enhanced participial attributes, grammar of the spoken and written languages) exercises in converting grammar structures (verbalization, active-passive, dependent clause constructions, prepositional constructions)

Additional requirements: seminar-relevant exercises and a midterm examination

Academic Writing (C1/C2 - “Wissenschaftliches Schreiben“)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

This course is a writing course. The participants independently compose academic texts, including various types of texts (research papers, protocols, excerpts, abstracts, term paper chapters). In doing so, specific skills will be practiced: summarizing, excerpting, paraphrasing, using annotations, using citations, and revising.

Language skills:

Summing up and comparing academic texts, using citations and annotations.

Additional requirements: composition of 3-5 academic texts

Lecturing, Presenting, and Discussing (C1/C2 - “Referieren, Präsentieren, Diskutieren”)

2 hours per week / 3 ECTS credits

In this course students will be trained in the verbal language skills necessary for academic situations, e.g. giving a lecture, joining in a discussion in a seminar, taking an oral exam. In doing so, typical skills will be practiced: structuring lectures for listeners, speaking intelligibly and correctly, properly debating and discussing.

Language skills:

Speaking: discussion, short presentation (impromptu), lecture (prepared), orienting a presentation to an audience and a situation; integrated: vocabulary and syntax of the spoken language

Writing: lecture outline, creating a lecture handout, summarizing sources

Comprehension: working with sources

Additional requirements: seminar-based exercises, for example attentive listening exercises (oral and written), written evaluations for presentation feedback