German 101 Assignment 2 – "Are You Informed?"

In this assignment you will take a tour through the course resources and respond to some questions about them. The purposes of the assignment are:

1. to make sure that you know what your course materials are and how they are organized;
2. to get you to think about how the course fits - or doesn't fit - your picture of language learning and your previous language courses, if you have had any;
3. to begin familiarizing you with the principles and methods of language teaching and learning - a topic that will be dealt with more closely in a later assignment.

Directions: Do the three activities listed immediately below, taking perhaps an hour for them. Then respond to the items further below. You will probably need no more than half an hour to give your responses. If you are reading this document as a PDF, red print indicates a link that will take you to the corresponding file if you are connected to the internet.

1. Read the "Course Description & Initial Syllabus," if you have not already read it carefully, and do Assignment 1, if you have not yet done it already. NOTE: DO NOT DO Assignment 2 in the Course Description; it has been replaced by this assignment.
2. On the *Wie, bitte?* CD-ROM or the WWW version (www.cosmolingua.pdx.edu), whichever you expect to use more, look at the following: a) the Purpose of Wie, bitte? - Proficiency" (menu "Main Resources" > Purpose); b) the other "Main Resources" that are available (some have not yet been enabled); c) the context resources for Kontext 1 ("List of Contexts" > "Kontext 1" > popup menu "Context Resources." Just look at the resources - don't yet try to learn German from the materials. Don't bother looking yet at the "Context Activities." Ignore any features that are tagged "not yet enabled."
3. On the first-year German website (web.pdx.edu/~fischerw/courses/ firstyr_g/html/default.html), explore each of the links at the left on the opener screen, from "what's new" through "äÄöÖüÜß on the computer." Two of the links ("about language learning" and "chatroom") have not been created yet, Look closely at the "FAQ" items (Frequently-asked Questions – some still under construction) and the "Survey of Materials," which shows how the *Wie, bitte?* website, the CD-ROM, and the photocopy version compare with each other.

Now print out and fill out the survey sheet on the next few pages. The response to each item may have up to four parts:

1. the information you provide from your "tour;"
2. your judgment about how that feature of the course corresponds (or does not) to the view of language learning you brought to the course, and which way you prefer it if there is a difference;
3. if you have had some other language course (not necessarily German), how do this course and its material compare to it, and which way you prefer that, if there is a difference;
4. your comments or questions, especially if there is something we can do to help.

The last page of this document has the Scoring Guide for the activity. You may use it as a guide to how to get the score you want. Your grade on the assignment will be based on the complete-ness and informativeness of your responses. When the items deal with actual facts, such as the structure of the course or the content of the materials, we will grade for correct information. But when it comes to your opinions about the course and materials, we are not looking for right or wrong answers, or for a - perhaps insincere - positive response at the very outset. Instead, we need to know whether you have become familiar with the course and its materials, and whether we need to provide more information about how languages are learned.

Language Learning Preferences & Preconceptions Survey

Name: _____

If you have NOT had a language class before (anywhere, any time),skip to Item 1 below.

If you have had a language class before, wherever and whenever it was, please describe it briefly here:
(example: three years of French in high school)

(If you have had more than one language-class experience, for example French in high school and Spanish in the Peace Corps, choose one or the other of those experiences and use it for comparison throughout this survey. You're welcome to add comments about your other experiences, though.)

If that class included significant use of computers and the internet. please describe the resources and activities with them here. (Word-processing alone does not count as significant.)

1. **The chief linguistic goal of our course is "proficiency." What does that mean?**

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

2. What - from what you can tell by looking at the course materials - is intended to be the chief activity during classroom time in our course?

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

3. Many beginning language learners want "word-for-word" resources. Are there English-German vocabulary lists in our course materials?

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

4. In our course, spoken German is often taught with model dialogs. Are there English translations of the dialogs?

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

5. Are there explanations of German grammar in our course materials?

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

6. List the 3 major factors or areas of coursework that count in grading in our course.

How closely does this feature of our course fit your prior concept or "image" of language study? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

If you have had a language class before, how closely does our course resemble your earlier experience with regard to this feature? Circle ONE response.

no similarity at all	more different than not	I had no prior opinion about this feature	more similar than not	very similar

What is your initial response to this feature of OUR course? Circle ONE response.

very negative	somewhat negative	It doesn't matter to me.	somewhat positive	very positive

Comments and questions about this feature

Other comments and questions

Return this form to any first-year German instructor.

Presenter _____ Scorer _____ Date _____ Total Score _____ Grade _____

Scoring Guide for Assignment #2 "Are You Informed?" - Explore Materials and Compare to Expectations

Rule of thumb for 4/satisfactory: knows how the materials are organized, as indicated by ability to find key components; has a generally accurate if not precise understanding of the purpose of the course; can compare, without distortion, main features of the course and materials to a notion of language learning and language-learning materials that either was there before or was generated during the assignment; contributes one comment that has a specific content (not just "Yuk!" or "I need help!"). Scorers: Use the "Gateway check" (next paragraph) to determine whether it's worth going on to score the specific features. Do NOT let the student's negative OR positive attitudes toward the course and materials influence your scoring.

Gateway check: **Before the assignment can be scored**, the following items must be present. Item 1: Must show an explanation of "proficiency" (even if it is wrong). Items 2-5: MUST respond to 2 of the 3 queries about each item. Item 6: Must list 3 factors, even if ALL are wrong. If ANY of the above are missing ANY of the parts listed here as required, return the assignment for more work. Use the original date for scoring column 4.

	Part 1 (30%) Understand the materials and policies (short fill-in answers)	Part 2 (30%) Compares our course to a prior notion of language teaching & learning (marks the scales)	Part 3 (20%) Active learning	Part 4 (20%) on time?
6	Gives a reasonable statement about proficiency. Identifies speaking as chief classroom activity. Correct answers about vocabulary lists (NO), dialog translations (NO), grammar explanations (YES), and grading (tests, projects, short assignments)	Marks ALL 6 of the scales for "prior concept," with NO selection of "had no prior opinion." Marks ALL positive/ negative scales. If item 1 includes reference to previous language study, then must also mark all scales for comparison to earlier experience, also with NO selection of "had no prior opinion."	Adds a genuine comment about EVERY individual item, and ALSO a final comment.	before next class (or sends message about it)
5	Understands concept of proficiency and importance of speaking in class. Elsewhere only one inaccuracy about materials and policies.	MOST of 6-level behavior (not just half of it).	Genuine comment about MOST items, and ALSO a final comment; or else comments about ALL items but no final comment.	next class meeting (or sends message)
4	Understands concept of proficiency and importance of speaking in class. Elsewhere only two inaccuracies about materials and policies.	Marks 3 of the scales for "prior concept". Marks ALL positive/ negative scales. If item 1 includes reference to previous language study, the total number of responses can be the same (i.e., does half of each).	4 comments out of the possible 7	one week after the activity in class
3	Concept of proficiency is vague ("survival German") but not directly wrong ("memorized phrases for everyday use"). Elsewhere only two inaccuracies about materials and policies.	MOST of 4-level behavior (not just half of it).	3 comments	less than two weeks
2	Concept of proficiency as in 3 above. Elsewhere multiple errors.	half of 4-level behavior	2 comments	less than 3 weeks
1	Directly wrong concept of proficiency ("accurate knowledge of grammar and sentence structure"). Elsewhere multiple errors.	less than half of 4-level behavior	1 comment	sometime after that