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### STAFF, CLASSROOM, WEBSITE, COURSE MATERIALS, AND ACCESS INFORMATION

Course Director: Prof. William B. Fischer, Ph.D.  
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 (see [course website](#) for other contact information)

#### Second-year German faculty:

Adjunct Professor Kathie Godfrey  
 Teaching Assistant Katharina Kozik  
 (see [course website](#) for contact information)

Inquiries about matters specific to your own class should be directed to your instructor. Contact the [Course Director \(email\)](#) if you have questions or comments about the course itself– design, materials, policies, etc. **Please do not occupy class time with inquiries or comments that concern you alone; use email or office hours for that.**

**All regular meetings of all sections of the course are in NH 446 (Electronic Conference Room, 4th floor of Neuberger Hall).** Kinds and frequency of tests are discussed below. Tests are conducted in the regular classroom, in PSU computer labs, in faculty offices, and over the internet on participants' own computers. No test will be conducted without prior announcement twice in class and on the course website, beginning one week before the test.

Assignments that consist of text (or even text with graphics) should be turned in by e-mail. You may use your own private email account, or your PSU Odin address. If you do not yet have one, get one immediately (go to SMC 118 or [www.account.pdx.edu](http://www.account.pdx.edu).)

**IMPORTANT:** We use email filters to sort course email. When you send us ANYTHING by email, include the following code in the subject line: “Deutsch\_101\_” + the section number of your class (001, 002, 003 or 004). Observe the spelling (Deutsch), the upper/lower case distinction and the underscore characters; use **NO blank spaces.**

The course website is reached from <http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw> and from other links as well. The default screen shows the link to “First-Year German.” If you somehow land on another page, click the link “Stuff for Students” at the left side of the homepage. You can then bookmark the course website. Almost all assignments and other individual class items are available on the web site, many of them only there, to save both paper and class time. You are expected to check the site regularly (minimum: weekly) for announcements and other updates. You are also expected to have an everyday knowledge of technology: voice-mail, email, browser management, and related internet skills (downloading “Acrobat” PDFs, etc.). Even so, staff will help with the basics, and in class we will teach German expressions for the basic operations. In class we will also cover such matters as special characters for languages, browser plug-ins, etc.

### CALENDAR (FULL VERSION ON WWW)

#### Fall 2003 Class Schedule

<i>begins</i>	<i>instructor</i>	<i>final exam</i>
MWF 0900	Reiling	T 09 Dec. 0800
MWF 1015	Fischer	W 10 Dec. 1015
MWF 1130	Pratum	Th 11 Dec. 1230
TTh 0800	Bergstrom	Th 11 Dec. 0800

**Holidays:** M 10 Nov., ThF 27-8 Nov.

### CHIEF GOALS

**The primary goal of Introductory German is to acquire the practical proficiency and confidence that will allow you to use the language in everyday situations, primarily for speaking.** Much of the classroom time is used for partner and small-group practice of face-to-face communication. A rich collection of authentic cultural materials – menus, currency, radio broadcast clips, photos of everyday scenes – provides genuine language input and a sense of “being there.” The secondary goal of the course is to give you the knowledge and skills to make use of the German language and the related culture in your other areas of personal interest and your career pursuits. Classroom instruction, assignments, tests and grading are all consistent with these two chief goals.

## COURSE MATERIALS

The course is based on *Wie, bitte?*, a multi-media program produced at PSU and earlier published as a conventional textbook. It is available both on the internet and free of charge on a CD-ROM which you can use on your own computer or in PSU computer labs. Hard copy may be printed from the course website or the CD-ROM (on PSU computers or your own), or purchased at **Clean Copy** on Broadway across from Cramer Hall, at a cost of about \$30.00. There is no expensive commercial textbook to buy, and you may not even want or need to buy the photocopy package. Use the money you save here to finance your initial “Have fun with German” project.

**Other materials for the course** may include office supplies (binder, blank audio or video tape, etc.) for your course performance portfolio. Your expense for such items should be no more than \$10, and may even be nothing if you have materials on hand to recycle.

A small paperback dictionary may be useful. Ask your instructor for recommendations. **Other language books and study aids are NOT recommended. DO NOT BUY 501 German Verbs**, grammar reference books, or the various “quick fixes” the bookstores carry, at least not in the belief that they can give you something you think your course materials lack but that is nevertheless somehow necessary for success in the course. In themselves they won’t give you the knowledge you’ll need, and diverting your time to them may keep you from learning what you actually need to know. If you think you need a **tutor**, make sure that the tutor knows what you are supposed to learn and how you will be tested.

**Access:** Announced PSU policies will be followed. If you need help with materials or media, please inform your instructor.

## MAJOR COURSE ACTIVITIES

In class: Most classroom time will be devoted to using German, not to talking about it, and certainly not to grammar lectures and exercises. Language will be modeled in context, you will try to use it yourself to accomplish a real communicative purpose, and your instructor will help you do it better. There will be much speaking with partners and in small groups—and not just in class.

Also important is exposure to the modeled language through listening and reading materials from a variety of sources. Your instructional materials contain a rich collection of genuine graphic and sound items. You will be encouraged to encounter them as though you were living in the target culture—not translating them, but rather using them to communicate with others.

Some classroom time and assignments, especially in the first quarter, will be devoted to helping you understand how you learn, and how language is learned. Misconceptions in these areas can lead to wasted time and effort. Similarly, the

purposes of learning activities and the standards by which performance is judged will be made clear, so that you will know what to do to succeed—both on the first try and later, when you will be asked to improve deficient work.

Some classroom time will also be devoted to preparing you for long-term (even “life-long”) learning. That is, we want you to develop a sense for how knowledge of a language and its culture can be of value later, whether in your career or in the enrichment of your personal life.

Where possible, testing and bureaucratic activities will be moved outside the classroom. This is one benefit of the grant support that our course has attracted (see “Course Background” below).

Outside class, expect to invest two hours of preparation or follow-up for each hour of classroom time (total: 12 hours/week). Your activity includes preparation for in-class activities and completion of outside assignments, such as personalized projects. Some of your study time will consist of “hitting the books” (or software). Some of it, however, will involve activities that are not so “bookish” (“softwarish”?), and are possibly even fun, such as eating in German restaurants, viewing German movies, or using the internet to find out whether some German group pursues the same weird hobby you do.

**Other activities:** Formation of study groups will be encouraged. There are also several regularly-scheduled local extracurricular German activities, including informal conversation groups. Information will be announced and posted.

## COURSE BACKGROUND

The 2003 version of Introductory German is a revised stage of a course that was completely restructured in 1997-98. There are four major changes from the years before that: 1) The basic course materials are multi-media and are provided free of charge. 2) The class is conducted in an electronic conference room. 3) There is more emphasis on “customizing” the course content to the individual student. 4) The course has been revised to harmonize with the methods and standards now being used in Oregon public schools and expressed in the PASS requirement established by the Oregon University System for admission to state universities, including PSU.

This year the resources have been expanded again (400 new color graphics!), and student assessment and portfolio management are being further articulated with K-12 and PASS standards. Some of that activity has been supported by grants that have recognized the quality of the program. In 2001 the FLL Department also received a multi-year \$200,000 Pew Foundation grant to redesign large-enrollment language courses (<<http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw>>; follow links from “Projects & Publications”). Innovations in first-year German were important to our successful application, and further innovations will lead the way for the larger courses in other languages.

## TESTS AND OTHER GRADED ACTIVITIES

**Tests** in first-year German will measure your ability to communicate in real-world situations, not your intellectual knowledge of grammar or your ability to memorize vocabulary lists. Standards will be presented clearly. You will be coached to meet them, asked to evaluate yourself, and offered the opportunity to improve your performance and raise your grade.

You will be asked to learn vocabulary and grammar that are less complex than is attempted in traditional courses, but you will be required to learn them better. You will also be taught essential communicative strategies that let you make better use of the language you do have. The time gained from not attempting the unnecessary or impossible should help you learn better. It will also allow you to explore how German can relate to the rest of your life.

**Languages are meant to be used**, not just studied. At the very beginning of the course you will begin projects that let you explore how and what German can contribute to your career, your leisure interests, and your cultural enrichment. You might, for example, watch a German soccer game (or classical concert) on TV, look up some basic vocabulary, and send your fellow students and teacher a simple message about what you did. Or, if you are of German ancestry (and there is a very good chance that you are), you might look into your genealogy and tell the class briefly (in German) about the old photo or family Bible you brought with you.

**Tests and other assessments** will consist of (1) Evaluations of classroom performance, outside study activities, and projects; (2) (If needed) frequent classroom evaluations and periodic quizzes (perhaps ungraded but in any case required) that will help you prepare for (3) Formal evaluations of your speaking, writing, reading and listening proficiency in comparison to the Oregon second-language benchmarks. There are no “blockbuster” mid-terms or finals, in the sense of tests that can by themselves devastate your course grade, or let “cramming” save you from otherwise poor performance by allowing you to get by on short-term memory. But major evaluations will occur around the fourth and seventh weeks of the course and during the last week of classes and finals week. You can expect 3 major oral and writing tests, occasional quizzes, and probably 2 major listening and reading tests.

At least once during the year you will take one or more of several kinds of baseline test, such as the WebCAPE or ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. The test are being introduced to improve placement, assess teaching quality, and gather research data for improving language programs at PSU and nationally. The tests are required, but your scores will not affect your grades. You may choose to have your data excluded from study. If you do consent to its use, your identity will be kept private.

## GRADING

**Grading is NOT on a curve.** The **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, <[www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)>)** has established the standards for performance that are now dominant in our field and that form the basis of the state K-16 standards in Oregon. These standards have generated scoring guides much like those now being used in Oregon K-12 schools. The staff will explain those standards to you and will rate you according to them. Sometimes you will rate yourself too.

The ACTFL Proficiency Standards define performance levels. (They are summarized in the course packet.) Research in our area furnishes a reliable indicator of what can be expected. All students who achieve the performance level for a specified standard will receive the corresponding grade for that part of the course. And the *end* of German 103, students who are at the Intermediate-Mid level in both speaking and writing will be at the “A” grade level, although their grades may be affected by their performance in other parts of the course or by penalties for non-attendance.

The course uses a 6-point scoring guide similar to that used in Oregon K-12 schools, with 4 as the level for satisfactory (not just “passing”) performance. In terms of PSU letter grades, the 4 corresponds to a B-. This in turn corresponds, at the end of German 103, to proficiency of ACTFL Intermediate-Low in speaking and writing, provided performance in other areas (projects, etc.) is strong. Your first assignment will show you how scoring guides work. Grade standards and weighting are posted on the **course website**.

**Up to one full point (25%)** of your possible four-point grade is made up of the personal interest projects mentioned earlier. They will also be assessed with scoring guides. Up to 5 projects may be assigned. There are two reasons for the projects: 1) Long-term language proficiency involves relating language skills to the rest of your world. 2) In the class there may be “false beginners” – people who have previously learned some German and who may therefore not really belong in a first-year class.

False beginners, if they are clearly beyond the first-year level, will be encouraged to move to a more advanced course. They may also apply for up to 12 hours of credit by examination, for which they may receive up to an “A.” If they remain in first-year German, **no matter how advanced their language skills, neither they (nor anyone else) will be able to receive a grade higher than “B” unless** they do the regular class assignments and complete the personal interest projects with work of high quality.

If you are a true beginner, you need not worry. The projects will be formulated in such a way that you can do well on them even if you are having difficulty with the language. You will often be able to revise your class assignments and even your tests. Look at them as a way of raising your grade.

**There is no “extra credit,”** in the common sense of the term. Extraneous activities cannot substitute directly for language competence. But there is an **easy way for you to improve your grade:** revise the work you do in the course and resubmit it for re-evaluation. Your instructor will be available to help you. Revisions of assignments, projects, and tests are due one week after your material is returned to you.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Class attendance** may be recorded, either every day or by spot-checking. Instructors will set their own policy about the effect of attendance on grading, with penalties up to one-third of a grade point, the equivalent of a minus on a letter grade. Whatever the policy, if you are a true beginner in German it is highly unlikely that you can do well in the course without attending most class meetings. You are welcome to attend as many additional meetings of other sections as you wish, as long as there is space. Think of our course as the linguistic equivalent of an exercise club. Your “membership” entitles you to as many sessions of class as you want, as long as the “gym” is open.

## PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS (FULL VERSION ON WWW)

During the first three weeks, some time will be devoted to intake surveys, tutorials, and other necessary preparations. During those three weeks we will cover the first two Kontexte (chapters) of *Wie, bitte?* After that, we will cover one Kontext each week.

**For the first three weeks** the basic goals are:

- Novice-low vocabulary and memorized phrases as presented in Kontexte 1 & 2 (alphabet, numbers, greetings, introductions, topics of study, survival geography, simple questions)
- Technology & resource orientation, study skills, first project assignment, and familiarization with individual perspectives and goals.

## STANDING STUDY ASSIGNMENTS FOR ALL KONTEXTE (12 HOURS/KONTEXT)

Say and learn Kontext vocabulary. Structured activities will be discussed in class. Recommended time: 1 hour per Kontext

Practice dialogs, if possible with a friend and out loud. Recommended time: 2 hours per Kontext)

Study Kontext “Structure” sections, beginning after second week of course. Recommended time: 1 hour per Kontext.

Vocabulary development, reading practice, and cultural study with Kontext graphics. Recommended time: 1 hour per Kontext.

Vocabulary development, listening practice and culture study with audio broadcast materials. Recommended time: 1 hour per Kontext.

Writing assignment. Recommended time: 1 hour per context.

Revision of assignments and tests. Recommended time: 1 hour per Kontext (starting after second week of class).

Current project. Recommended time: 2 hours per Kontext.

Rest of recommended study time (2 hours / week) as you see fit. But don’t skip it.

## FIRST ASSIGNMENT (DUE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER YOU GET IT, AND CERTAINLY BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF THE CLASS)

We want to record your contact information and check whether you can keyboard/ write German characters. If you do not have your own internet provider and email service, you should get PSU internet and email access (“Odin”) right away (<[www.account.pdx.edu](http://www.account.pdx.edu)>), or arrange some other email and internet service. After you have read *all* 4 pages of this orientation sheet, go to the course website and, under “schedule / assignments / course documents,” find and read “Assignment #1 Scoring Guide.” Then, using the email address that you want your instructor to use to contact you, send your instructor the following email:

Hallo und Guten Morgen/Tag/Abend!

Mein Name ist [your name]. Das deutsche ABC ist wie das englische, aber mit ä, ö, ü, Ä, Ö, Ü und ß.

The **course website** also has a tutorial about how to get German special characters on your keyboard.

## SECOND ASSIGNMENT (DUE ONE WEEK AFTER THE START OF THE COURSE)

Go to the **course website** and download, read and maybe print out the handout “What to Do and Get at the Start of the Course.” Follow the directions and set up your materials.

Be sure to check the facilities for playing sounds on the computer you expect to do most of your studying on. Make sure that you have a place where you can listen and speak without inconveniencing yourself or others.

Now send your instructor an email that quotes the following message, adjusting it to fit your circumstances:

Lieber Herr \_\_\_\_ / Liebe Frau \_\_\_\_, Ich habe jetzt das Infoblatt ‘What to Do.’ Mein Computer funktioniert (nicht) gut und ich kann alles / nichts hören. Bis [Tag] in der Deutschstunde! [Name]!

Oh—almost forgot! One last thing: now that you appear to have read all of this handout, be sure to end your **FIRST** email message with the phrase, “Auf Wiedersehen!” If you already sent your email without doing this, send a second one that just says “Oh, Entschuldigung (=excuse me). Auf Wiedersehen,” and resolve to read and follow directions carefully from here on. ;=)