



# INTRODUCTORY GERMAN FOR PROFICIENCY (GER 101/2/3)

Winter Quarter 2005

Portland State University

NOTE: Changes and details will be posted on the course website and announced both in class and by email.

## CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT:

Staff, Classroom, & Materials Information  
 Calendar, Materials, Access  
 Course Goal  
 Note to Students New to the Course  
 Major Course Activities  
 Tests and Other Graded Activities  
 Grading and Attendance Policies  
 No-final option (tentative)  
 Preliminary Syllabus and First Assignment

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

Course Director:  
 Prof. William B. Fischer, Ph.D.  
 Department of Foreign Languages  
 Office: 451-D NH  
 Office hours: see website after course begins  
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Teaching Assistants:  
 Pam Beilby, Jackie Gross, Emily Minty, Anne-Christin Trost (see course website for contact information, office locations, and office hours)

## CALENDAR

begins instructor		final exam	
MWF 0900	Trost	T	15 Mar 0800
MWF 1015	Fischer	W	16 Mar 1015
MWF 1130	Gross	Th	17 Mar 1230
MW 1840	Minty	M	14 Mar 1840
TTh 0800	Beilby	Th	17 Mar 0800

**Holiday:** M 17 Jan.

**Course materials** are available as in fall quarter.

Experience suggests the need for more materials orientation early in the course. The **course website** also provides a FAQ page.

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

## COURSE GOAL

German 102 picks up where German 101 left off. The main course goal of German 101 was to approach what is called "Novice-High" proficiency. For that you needed to acquire a basic vocabulary, be able to make very simple sentences, and begin to customize the language to fit your own personal circumstances (for example your family and a major interest).

The main course goal of German 102 is "Intermediate-Low" proficiency. The basic "text type" to aim for is a

simple sentence in a variety of basic environments. With some help, you will also aim to use multiple sentences with some connection ("if," "because," etc.), to express actions in the past, to save work by means of object pronouns, and to provide multiple information (where, when) without having to use separate sentences.

German 103 will aim at "Intermediate-Mid" proficiency. That means the ability to produce, without prompting, multiple sentences, including some in past tense. Another way of putting it is that you will be able to deal in German with the immediate everyday world and also what has led up to it.

(If you are unfamiliar with terms like "Novice-High," see the **course website**: documents: Proficiency Guidelines.)

## NOTE TO STUDENTS NEW TO THE COURSE

The course web site is:

[http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw/courses/firstyr\\_g/html/](http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw/courses/firstyr_g/html/)

There (link: course documents) you will find from fall quarter the main introductory information for the course, which you should download and read immediately.

The course aims at practical proficiency, not "textbook" or "grammar" knowledge. This may or may not correspond to your image of language learning or your previous classroom experience, if any. If you still have questions after you read the course introduction, contact **Dr. Fischer**.

Your instructor will provide, at no cost to you, the course CD-ROM. If you have a fast internet connection you may prefer to use the equivalent materials on the website:

<http://www.cosmolingua.pdx.edu>

(click on *Wie, bitte?*) for some of your studying.

Photocopied materials are available at Clean Copy, across Broadway from Cramer Hall. The cost is about \$30. You can also print many of these materials from the **course website** and possibly save money by doing so.

## MAJOR COURSE ACTIVITIES

Communication in spoken German will remain the chief focus of the classroom. Writing activities outside of class will be expanded, especially in the individual projects. You may also be corresponding with classmates, either on paper or by e-mail.

Listening and reading activities will be given more attention than in the first quarter, since your skills should now be sufficient for you to handle more complex language.

There will be increased attention to individual projects. Project topics including shopping and gift-giving/receiving, a description of your friends, a welcoming kit for a German-speaking visitor, and your favorite music. These projects will lead to a major activity

in spring quarter, where you will present a special-interest topic to the class.

Student feedback has made it clear that many people want very detailed assignments, whether or not they actually like or respect them. We are accommodating that wish. At the start of each Kontext you will send your instructor an appropriate email, during the Kontext you will be doing structured activities with the graphics and broadcast segments; and at the end of the Kontext you will do a self-evaluation with a log of your study activities. There will probably be a short quiz for each Kontext. Each week you will do an activity that involves having fun with something related to German, and/or with learning something about a significant feature of German culture. We are also adding some activities that aim to help you understand better what languages are and how people actually learn them.

Instructors may alter these assignments slightly to fit their sections.

We aim to make these new assignments genuinely productive of real language learning, rather than just silly, picky grammar exercises or disciplinary activities for immature students who need their hands held with picky homework. We hope that self-starting learners will not be insulted or too annoyed by them. We're pretty sure you can find ways to show your ambition and creativity.

## TESTS AND OTHER GRADED ACTIVITIES

Oral tests will become more varied. They may involve systematic advanced preparation, where you, rather than the examiner, take the initiative in communication. There may be partner or small-group speaking demonstrations. We also hope to undertake recorded samples of speaking skills to add to your German skills portfolios.

There may be regular 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 AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

The grading formula, with any modifications, is posted on the course web site. Unless events necessitate a change in assignments, your grade will be calculated as follows: tests—30%; projects—30%; regular short assignments—30%; class participation and incidental assignments—10%.

There is **no extra credit**, in the common sense of the expression. If you want to raise your grade, revise your assignments and tests. Since you can use outside resources on your projects, those are also a good way to influence your grade.

Instructors set the attendance policy for their own sections. Depending on that policy, your grade may be adjusted downward as much as .33 point (on a 4-point system) for poor attendance. That is, a B could become a B-.

## PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

The course will begin with a short review of the last context (chapter) covered in the previous quarter. During the first week, some time will also be devoted to some personal writing, intake surveys, tutorials, and other necessary preparations. After that, we will cover up to one Kontext of *Wie, bitte?* each week. The schedule is listed on the **course website**.

## NO-FINAL OPTION (TENTATIVE)

This quarter we are considering a major change in testing procedures and grading policies. There are two reasons: 1) final-exam stress on students, which can lead to horrendous crises and consequences; 2) the all-too-human tendency of people to slack off during the quarter and then hope to “cram” for the final and then somehow “ace” it. After staff discussion and consultation with students and administration we may institute, either as an option or as a universal policy, a system that eliminates the final exam and determines the final grade according to consistent performance throughout the quarter. If we proceed with that possibility, you will have ample advance notice of it.

## FIRST ASSIGNMENT

We want to record your contact information and make sure we can communicate efficiently with you. If you do not have your own internet provider and e-mail service, you should get PSU internet and e-mail access (“Odin”) right away (<[www.account.pdx.edu](http://www.account.pdx.edu)>), or arrange some other e-mail and internet service.

Now go to the **course website** and at the left of the screen choose the links “Schedule” or “Course Documents” (or also “What’s New,” if you’ve been browsing on the site). Read the information there about “Assignment #1” and then do and send by email to your instructor the assignment that is described under the first week of the course calendar. Note that the assignment varies according to whether you are new to the course or are returning from the previous quarter.

**ANYONE AND EVERYONE:** If you are confused about what is going on in the course and what you should be doing, get in touch immediately with Dr. Fischer (email: [fischerw@pdx.edu](mailto:fischerw@pdx.edu) / tel 503-725-5285).