

# GERM 3020

## Oral Communication in German



### Course Information

Spring 2021

Tennessee Tech University

Dept of Foreign Languages

Dr. Martin P. Sheehan

Class time: TR 1:30-2:50 pm, OKLY 219

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Office Hours: M 10-12, W 1:30-3 and by appointment

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(checked regularly at 10am & 4pm. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response, 48 hours on weekends and holidays)

### Course Outline

This advanced grammar and conversation course guides students as they further develop their command of spoken language structures. A mixture of monitored, in-class interactions and at-home exercises will help students develop the listening and speaking skills necessary to interpret the language better, interact in the language effectively, present their ideas clearly, and increase their cultural awareness. Although the course is designed to foster speaking proficiency, it will also feature additional practice in reading and writing, while exploring cultural topics. The class will be conducted in German. (3 Credit Hours)

**Prerequisites:** Students at this level **are required** to be familiar with basic German vocabulary and grammar structures. Students majoring in German also need to have earned at least a C in GERM 3010 or an equivalent course.

### Course topics

Discussing how science and technology affect our lives, exploring *Wende*-era Berlin and its history; exploring identity in different contexts, applying for a job, and communicating in a professional environment; discussing topics with use of visual aides, such as photographs and bar graphs.

### Major Teaching Methods

A mixture of textbook exercises, in-class activities (individual, pair, and group work), homework assignments, projects (individual and group), and worksheets.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

[Netzwerk B1 Kursbuch ISBN: 978-3-12-605003-6](#)

[Netzwerk B1 Arbeitsbuch ISBN: 978-3-12-605004-3](#)

(Digital versions of each are allowed)

A dedicated notebook and folder for this course.

A pen or pencil

## COVID – 19

1. Students must take personal responsibility in following the recommended CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Students are expected to follow all COVID-19 directives published by Tennessee Tech including, but not limited to, notices on Tennessee Tech’s webpage, building and facilities signage, and similar publications. The university’s Return to Campus Student Handbook can be found [here](#).
2. According to Tennessee Tech University’s protocols, face coverings must be worn (covering the mouth and nose) by students in the classroom at all times.
3. Students must abide by predetermined social distancing guidelines and seating arrangements. Movement during class sessions should be limited as to not endanger other students or faculty. Students should be conscious and respectful of others and their health concerns.
4. Students who refuse to comply with university protocols on these matters will be reported to the Tennessee Tech Dean of Students.
5. Students should direct all requests for excused class absences related to COVID-19, regardless of where the COVID-19 testing is performed, to Tennessee Tech’s Health Services. The Office of Student Affairs will provide notifications to faculty members of student absences and the expected length of the absence.

### ADA Statement

Disability Accommodation: Students with a disability requiring accommodations should contact the Accessible Education Center (AEC). An Accommodation Request (AR) should be completed as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first week of the course. The AEC is located in the Roaden University Center, Room 112; phone 931-372-6119. For details, view the Tennessee Tech’s Policy 340 – [Services for Students with Disabilities at Policy Central](#).

### University Plagiarism Policy

Maintaining high standards of academic integrity in every class at Tennessee Tech is critical to the reputation of Tennessee Tech, its students, alumni, and the employers of Tennessee Tech graduates. The Student Academic Misconduct Policy describes the definitions of academic misconduct and policies and procedures for addressing Academic Misconduct at Tennessee Tech. For details, view the Tennessee Tech’s Policy 217 – Student Academic Misconduct at [Policy Central](#). Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated, nor will any other behavior that undermines academic integrity.

Grading	
<b>Interpersonal Mode</b>	
30%	Engagement (quality and quantity)
<b>Application Assessment</b>	
10%	Homework
30%	Tests
<b>Interpretive Mode/Cultural Competency/ Presentational Mode</b>	
30%	Projects
100%	Total

### Grading Scale

100-90= A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-60=D; 59-0=F

### Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, successful learners should be able to function at a B1.1 level of proficiency (Common European Framework of Reference). Learners at the B1 level (the “intermediate” or “threshold” level) should be able to:

- demonstrate increased cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.;
- understand the main points of many radio or TV programs on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear;
- connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions;
- briefly justify and explain opinions and plans.

## Student Learning Objectives

- Participate actively in conversations in most informal and some formal settings on topics of personal and public interest  
**Communication: Interpersonal & Interpretative (Speak, Listen)**
- Narrate and describe in major verb tenses with some control of aspect  
**Communication: Interpersonal & Presentational (Speak)**
- Assert opinions on topics of current relevance in modern society  
**Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretative & Presentational (Speak)**
- Cultures: Relating Cultural Practice and Products to Perspectives (Investigate, Explain, Reflect)  
**Connections: Making Connections & Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives (Critical Thinking, Solve Problems, Access Evaluate Diverse Perspectives)**
- Deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative and coping devices  
**Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretative & Presentational (Speak, Listen, Use Media)**
- Sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length  
**Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretative & Presentational (Speak, Listen)**
- Demonstrate confidence in initiating and sustaining conversations in German, regardless of the interlocutor's identity  
**Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretative & Presentational (Speak)**  
**Comparisons: Language Comparisons & Cultural Comparisons (Investigate, Explain, Reflect)**  
**Communities: School and Global Communities & Lifelong Learning (Use the Language within and beyond the Classroom)**

### What is expected of you

#### Engagement (30% combined)

Due to the on-going pandemic, grades will not be given for traditional attendance. Instead, you must engage meaningfully in our class, regardless of how you engage (in person or online.) Meaningful engagement means speaking, writing, and collaborating in pair and group exercises, volunteering thoughtful answers, and completing all in-class and at-home assignments. The ultimate criterion in determining your grade will be the extent to which you help create, support, and contribute to our classroom's positive learning environment, both virtually and in person.

When possible, we will develop our communicative skills through pair/small group work and conversations while observing social distancing requirements. Classroom discussions stress communication over grammatical accuracy, because language is much more than a system to be learned.

Learning any foreign language can be frustrating at first—as a non-native speaker, I know this first-hand. Nevertheless, like any skill, the more you practice, the better you become. Therefore, avoid translating into English and translating your ideas directly from English to German. Try your best to work only in the foreign language. Enjoy the limitation and accept that you will make mistakes—it's part of the learning process. And because we should expect to make mistakes as we learn together this semester, we all must keep positive attitudes and our classroom must be a positive learning environment. This positive learning environment requires you to stay on-task. If during partner work your group finishes early, you are expected to complete the exercise again (switching roles if possible) until the allotted time has elapsed.

If anyone in class (including Herr Sheehan) feels compelled to ask or say something in English, then they must first ask "Darf ich etwas auf Englisch fragen/sagen?" and wait for permission. Any discussions in English will negatively impact your engagement grade.

#### Homework (10%)

Textbook/workbook exercises will be assigned for each class meeting. You will always have something to prepare for our next session. This daily preparation is important when learning the language, but more importantly, it forms the basis for informed class participation and understanding. As is the norm in higher education, you can expect to spend about **two hours** outside of class on homework. Homework will be checked during our warm-up phase. You will have multiple types of homework assignments in this course:

- KB (Kursbuch) exercises will require you to work independently as you interpret texts (visual, written, aural) and/or test out new structures or vocabulary. A number of KB exercises will prompt you to reflect on your personal values, history, and/or intentions, which you must prepare before class—written out or in bullet point format
- AB (Arbeitsbuch) exercises target specific vocabulary, communication structures, and/or discourse markers. Answer keys to these sections will be given for each chapter. You are required to evaluate and correct these assignments before you come to class. Corrections must be very clear (use red ink).

Although I will check both kinds of homework assignments during our warm-up phase, you will be required to turn in your corrected AB homework on the last day of each chapter.

### Tests (30%)

This course will evaluate your progress towards our learning goals via tests and projects designed to help you showcase what you are learning. The tests will assess to what extent students have been learning effectively in and out of our classroom. Our tests will be inspired by textbook, workbook, and classroom assignments, and each test will cover the material of a single chapter. Each test will be completed online and should take 30 minutes or less.

### Projects (30%)

At the end of each chapter, you will prepare a (short!) project that focuses specifically on topics and the communication skills that we have been developing. When we begin each chapter, we will familiarize ourselves with what the project requires and we will focus on building and refining the skills necessary to complete the project. For example, you discuss a German/Austrian/Swiss news item of your choice with fellow students, you create an audio advertisement for a product/service, you will create a video resume, and you will review a media text of your choosing in German. These short projects will require you to be creative while achieving specified communication goals. The rubrics that you and I will use to evaluate these assignments will be announced later in the semester. In the projects, you are expected to exhibit your current level of language proficiency, cultural awareness, and content mastery--most importantly, you can showcase your creativity and share your current interests.

### Expectations for completing assignments and receiving course instruction if physical attendance is not possible.

In the case that physical attendance is not possible at any point this semester (due to quarantining, illness, or a necessary pivot to all online instruction across the university), the following is expected:

- All workbook assignments must be completed, checked against the answer keys provided, and uploaded to the corresponding "Assignment" on our iLearn page.
- When possible, audio/visual captures of on campus instruction will be posted on Microsoft Teams page in the corresponding "recordings" section.
- Engagement grades will come from written assignments (such as homework assignments) and Flipgrid discussions that will be assigned and completed weekly.
- Students who miss presentation days due to excused absences will be responsible for recording and uploading projects and presentations within a discussion forum on iLearn or Flipgrid, so that peer feedback can be provided.
- In the event that all university courses move to online environments, instruction will take place via video conferencing tools (Zoom, Microsoft Teams) whenever possible and appropriate.

*This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and via email.*