

## GERM 3020 Oral Communication in German



### Course Information

Spring 2020  
Tennessee Tech University  
Dept of Foreign Languages  
Dr. Martin P. Sheehan  
Class time: TR 1:30-2:50 pm, OKLY 219  
Office: Oakley 227 Phone: 931- 372-6535  
Office Hours: M 10-12, W 1:30-3 and by appointment  
Email: msheehan@tntech.edu  
(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

Small talk in German-speaking countries, negotiating employment documents, debating the dis/advantages of working abroad; exploring Berlin, its attractions, and its history; 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

*DaF kompakt B1 Kurs- und Übungsbuch*, ISBN: 978-3126761888

### Attendance Policy

**Attendance** at all class sessions is **integral** to the course and therefore **mandatory**. The **maximum** number of absences allowed in this course is **two (2)**. If you are absent, you earn a zero for the day. Any absences beyond two will lower your final grade by 10 points. You must arrive **punctually**. If you arrive after Dr. Sheehan **closes** the classroom door **when class begins**, you will be marked late. **Being late three times will equal one 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 Scale

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

Grading			
Interpersonal Mode		Interpretive Mode/Cultural Competency/ Presentational Mode	
In-class participation (1 <sup>st</sup> half)	15%	Mini Projects (3)	25%
In-class participation (2 <sup>nd</sup> half)	15%	Students as Producers Project	
		Die Politik Podcast	10%
Application Assessment		Final Exam	
Homework	10%	In-class Test	10%
Midterm	15%		100%

### Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, successful learners should be able to function at a B1.2 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

#### 1. In-Class participation: (30% combined)

You **must** come to class prepared to **engage and participate in our class activities**. Active participation means **speaking and collaborating** in pair and group exercises, **volunteering** thoughtful answers, and **completing** both in-class writing assignments and preparatory assignments at home.

In our classroom, we will develop our communicative skills through pair/small group work and conversations. 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.

Participation will be in **German** when you speak with other students and with the professor. If anyone in class (including Herr Sheehan) feels compelled to ask or say something in English, then he or she must ask **"Darf ich etwas auf Englisch fragen/sagen?"** and wait for permission. Any discussions in English will negatively impact your daily participation grade. Offenders will be warned indirectly and/or directly if I hear English in our classroom.

**Your classroom participation** counts 30% toward your final grade in this course. If you are absent, that counts as a zero for the day.

☠: **CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING CLASS TIME. If you are seen off task on your phone, you will receive a zero for the day.**

## 2. Homework: (10%)

Textbook/workbook exercises will be assigned for each class meeting. **You will always have homework exercises 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. I accept **NO LATE WORK**. 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.

Here's what I expect from you: please review our Schedule of Classes document at home. You will see both KB (Kursbuch) and ÜB (Übungsbuch) assignments for each meeting. Before we meet, please write out (or write in) answers to the ÜB assignments and read over the KB assignments for that meeting; no need to write them out unless I tell you to. This will allow us to use our time together as efficiently as possible. Also, please be certain to **complete** all the assigned homework in the workbook **before you check your answers with the answer key, if possible.** You will then come to class with your homework completed, ready to **apply** the new structures during our interactive exercises. You are **not** expected to demonstrate mastery of each new structure, but you must **be able to use new structures with some degree of success.**

## 3. Students as Producers Project--Podcast: (10%)—(adapted from Derek Bruff, Vanderbilt University)

One of our learning goals is to **deepen our understanding of German's communicative and cultural context.** To that end, we will **investigate current environmental, political, and/or social challenges facing the German culture and how the German political system is addressing these challenges.** Because it is important for you to **analyze and construct knowledge** on your own, you will be given the choice of topic. These podcasts will later be shared with the entire Tech community and the world via the Internet.

## 4. Mini Projects: (25%)—

**Three times this semester** you will prepare a (short!) project that focuses specifically on the communication skills that we have been developing. When we begin specific chapters, we will **familiarize** ourselves with what the miniproject requires and we will **focus** on building and refining the skills necessary to complete the miniproject. **You will introduce a German, Austrian, or Swiss corporation to your classmates, report on current events in a German-speaking country, and debate the pros and cons of working abroad.** 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.

## 5. Midterm: (15%)—

You will complete a midterm exam halfway through the semester. This test will assess the progress of your listening, reading, and writing skills as well as your communicative proficiency. Classroom exercises, quizzes, and our workbook should prepare you adequately.

## 6. Final Exam: (10%)—

The final exam will have a similar format to the midterm. While much of the test will focus on themes and materials from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the semester, this exam will also revisit communication goals from the 1<sup>st</sup> half.

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