

# GERM 3200

## Business German

### Course Information

Fall 2020

Tennessee Tech University

Dr. Martin P. Sheehan



Class time: TR 1:30-2:50, OKLY 219 (on campus, face to face)

Office: Oakley Hall 228

Phone: 931-372-6535

Virtual Office Hours: M 10:00-12:00, W 1:30-3:00pm; please email to set up a meeting

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

### Course Description

This advanced course guides students as they learn how to interact with others and present themselves in a German commercial environment. A mixture of monitored, in-class interactions and at-home exercises will help students develop the listening, reading, writing and speaking skills necessary to achieve their communication goals within the German-speaking business world.

**Prerequisites:** Completion of GERM 3020 or an equivalent course.

### Required Materials

Text: *Alltag, Beruf & Co.: Kurs- Und Arbeitsbuch 3* (ISBN 3193015903)

### 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.

### Major Teaching Methods

This course's major teaching methods will include, but are not limited to: discussion and application of textbook readings and activities (in individual, pair, and group constellations), along with classroom presentations and simulations.

## Course Topics

Preparing yourself for a professional life in a German-speaking context (discussing professional qualifications, plans, and education background), navigating the business world (business structures, interacting with coworkers and superiors), discussing work routines (describing responsibilities, communicating with others via email and telephone; making, rescheduling, and canceling appointments)

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, the successful student should be able to:

- **Discuss** basic business concepts and practices in German using business vocabulary  
[Communication: Interpersonal & Presentational (Speak, Write, Listen)]
- **Communicate** more effectively, demonstrating improved aural, oral, reading, and writing skills  
[Communication: Interpersonal (Speak, Write, Listen)]
- **Demonstrate** the cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and sensitivity needed to communicate in culturally appropriate ways in business and other related contexts  
[Cultures: Relating Cultural Practices and Products to Perspectives]  
[Connections: Making Connections and Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives]  
[Comparisons: Language Comparisons and Cultural Comparisons]
- **Explain** the social and cultural contexts in which international transactions take place  
[Communication: Interpersonal & Presentational (Speak, Write, Listen, Read/View)]  
[Cultures: Relating Cultural Practices and Products to Perspectives]  
[Connections: Making Connections and Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives]  
[Comparisons: Language Comparisons and Cultural Comparisons]  
[Lifelong Learning]
- **Discuss** how business practices in the German-speaking world differ from those in the United States  
[Cultures: Relating Cultural Practices and Products to Perspectives]  
[Connections: Making Connections and Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives]  
[Comparisons: Language Comparisons and Cultural Comparisons]

By enrolling in this course, you will also participate in Tech's EDGE Creative Inquiry (CI) Curriculum Grant Program. EDGE courses are designed to improve students' critical thinking/real-world problem solving using active learning strategies. For that reason, in addition to the goals outlined above, successful learners should also demonstrate the ability to:

- **Use** digital information search tools effectively (EDGE SLO 1)
- **Explore** a creative inquiry question or problem that is both rich and effective. (EDGE SLO 3)
  - Choose an appropriate discovery process to address the problem. (3.1)
  - Collect information relevant to the problem. (3.2)
  - Assess collected information in a discipline-appropriate manner. (3.3)
- **Create** an original scholarly project applying critical thinking skills (EDGE SLO 4.1,)
- **Communicate** their findings in a discipline appropriate manner (EDGE SLO 5)

	Grading
20%	Engagement (quality and quantity)
15%	Homework
25%	Tests (3 tests covering two Lektionen each)
25%	Inquiry Activities Wirtschaftsreferate/ Presentations (3)
15%	Final Research Poster & Learning Exhibition
100%	Total

This course was re-designed with the support of the TTU EDGE Curriculum Grant Program, to integrate creative inquiry ideas and activities into course assignments, as part of Tech's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) program, EDGE: Enhanced Discovery through Guided Exploration. For more information about the QEP and the undergraduate research initiative, please visit

<https://www.tntech.edu/oci-qep/edgecurriculum-grant.php>

### ADA Statement

Students 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 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.

### Explanations


#### Engagement (20% 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 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.

 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.

#### Homework (15%)

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
- ÜB (Übungsbuch) exercises target specific vocabulary, communication structures, and/or discourse markers. Answer keys to the Übungen sections will be given for each Lektion. You are required to evaluate and correct these assignments before you come to class.

I will check both kinds of homework assignments during our warm-up phase. Virtual students will be expected to post photographs of completed assignments on our course's iLearn page. Corrections must be very clear (use red ink).

#### Tests (25%)

These 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 two Lektionen. Each test will be completed online and should take 30 minutes or less.

### [Inquiry Activities \(25%\)](#)

As mentioned before, this is an EDGE course, and all EDGE courses at Tech are "Inquiry-guided learning" courses, which means that everything that we do this semester is aimed at promoting your learning through "guided and, increasingly, independent investigation of complex questions and problems, often for which there is no single answer" (as defined by NC State University in September of 2000). The central questions of this course—**“what global challenges are impacting the German economy right now? How are the country’s various business sectors adapting to meet these challenges?”**—are indeed complex and offer no single answer.

Over the course of the semester, you will develop your own inquiry question that explores how the global challenge of COVID-19, German business, and your own academic interests intersect. For example, an Engineering major might explore how the manufacturing supply chains are adapting, a Music major might investigate how local symphonies are performing, a History major might explore how Germany’s economy reacted to the Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918, and an International Business and Culture major might seek out information on how formerly essential social rituals in the German business world (like client dinners) are now changed forever. Worksheets that I have adapted and developed will support you and your inquiry.

### [Final Research Poster + Learning Exhibition \(15%\)](#)

Over the course of the semester, you will think critically and conduct research that answers your individual question. You will also share and discuss your research (in a research poster format) at a public research exhibition that will be open to the Tech community. Ideally, the poster will synthesize the analysis completed for the presentations.

While this might sound overwhelming, keep the following in mind:

- we will build the necessary skill set over the next 15 weeks;
- we will devote at least the final two weeks of our course to proposing, critiquing, and finalizing these projects;
- these posters will extend the work and inquiry skills that inquiry activities will teach you.

### [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 written homework 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 iLearn in the corresponding “content” section; class discussions about QEP topics will be recorded and distributed.
- Engagement grades will come from written assignments (such as homework assignments) and Flipgrid discussions that will be assigned and completed weekly.
- Students 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 substantial changes will be announced in class, via email, and on iLearn.