



GR 451 GERMAN LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT: COMPETENT ABROAD I

IES Abroad Vienna

DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended for students who have achieved an advanced level of fluency in German and are ready to function independently in demanding academic and professional settings. It supports students in consolidating their mastery of the language and in applying it confidently and appropriately across a wide range of complex communicative tasks.

Through a communicative, task-based approach, the course guides students in building competence across the five skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural communication. Special emphasis is placed on refining rhetorical strategies, idiomatic usage, and cultural fluency, enabling students to engage in nuanced interpretation and expression in diverse contexts.

By the end of the course, students will be able to comprehend and produce sophisticated spoken and written German with a high degree of accuracy and subtlety. They will demonstrate the ability to adapt their language flexibly to academic, professional, and cultural settings and to participate fully and confidently in the life of their host community.

This course aligns with the C2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and supports students in achieving the outcomes described at the Competent Abroad level of the IES Abroad Language MAP equipping them for lifelong use of German in global contexts.

CREDITS: 4 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 60 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: German

INSTRUCTOR:

PREREQUISITES:

Students entering this course have completed the Emerging Competent Abroad level of the IES Abroad MAP and have achieved CEFR C1 proficiency. They are typically expected to have completed at least seven or eight semesters of college-level German or the equivalent. These students can comprehend virtually all spoken and written German with ease, including idiomatic, academic, and specialized texts. They are able to express themselves spontaneously, fluently, and precisely, even in highly complex situations, and can differentiate finer shades of meaning in both academic and professional contexts. They are prepared to operate with full linguistic and cultural independence, adapting their language use flexibly across diverse registers and communicative tasks.

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ADDITIONAL COST: € 30

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

This course uses a communicative, student-centered approach that emphasizes active engagement with the language and culture. Learning is facilitated through a variety of interactive and immersive methods, including:

- Integrated skill-building exercises in reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- Oral and written assignments, including short in-class presentations and creative writing tasks
- Collaborative classroom activities, such as role plays, dialogues, interviews, and games
- Course-related excursions that connect language learning to authentic cultural experiences, including visits to a Viennese coffee house, a local food market, or a guided museum tour

This blended approach allows students to apply language in real-world contexts, deepen their intercultural understanding, and develop communicative competence in a meaningful and enjoyable way.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

10 % Active Participation in Class

20 % Skill-Focused and Culturally Reflective Learning

10 % Homework

25 % Regular Quizzes & Tests

10 % Oral Exams (3 total)

25 % Written Exams (3 total)

Active Participation in Class

Participation is more than mere attendance; it means coming to class well-prepared, engaging actively in discussions, and supporting one another as collaborative members of our learning community. Students should listen attentively, ask and answer thoughtful questions, and offer constructive feedback to peers. They are encouraged to take initiative in pair and group work - sharing ideas, volunteering for tasks, and taking detailed notes. At the same time, each student is responsible for monitoring their own understanding and seeking additional assistance or tutoring whenever challenges arise. Throughout all activities, learners should strive to use German as much as possible, fostering both their own progress and a positive, encouraging classroom environment.

Skill-Focused and Culturally Reflective Learning

Students will engage in tasks designed to develop the IES MAP's five skill areas - Intercultural Communication, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Creative assignments, such as journaling, field-based projects, analysis of authentic materials, and peer collaborations, are graded under this category; however, ongoing language learning progress also plays a central role. Assessment considers both the quality of each submission and the consistency with which new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural insights are integrated across all work, thereby reflecting overall growth as language learners.

Homework:

After each class, students will complete assigned exercises in the "Übungsbuch" (workbook), along with supplementary worksheets or digital practice on Moodle. Homework reinforces grammar and vocabulary introduced in class. Students are expected to correct their work independently; only areas of difficulty or misunderstanding will be reviewed in class.

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Quizzes & Tests

To promote steady progress, students will take regular written quizzes and one or more tests to assess their grasp of grammar and vocabulary. These quizzes will be administered daily or weekly, focusing on vocabulary, grammar, and structures recently introduced in class. The goal is to encourage students to study new content regularly and in manageable portions.

Oral Exams

Students' speaking skills will be assessed through three oral exams during the semester: one after the Intensive Period, and two at the end of each main semester phase. Each exam involves a structured, real-life task such as a paired dialogue, guided role-play, or short personal presentation.

Assessment will follow the ÖSD exam criteria: 1. Task Fulfillment and Communicative Effectiveness, 2. Vocabulary and Expression, 3. Intonation, Pronunciation, Fluency, and Intelligibility 4. Grammatical Accuracy.

Written Exams

Three comprehensive written exams will take place during the course: at the end of the Intensive Period, mid-semester, and at the end of the semester. Exams assess listening and reading comprehension, writing ability, and the ability to apply key grammar and vocabulary.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will meet the outcomes of the Competent Abroad level and some of the outcomes of the CEFR C2.

Intercultural Communication

- Demonstrate nuanced, critical awareness of cultural issues and perspectives at a sophisticated analytical level
- Compare, evaluate, and synthesize cultural frameworks, adapting communication flexibly to diverse intercultural contexts

Listening

- Understand virtually all spoken language, including fast, idiomatic, dialectal, or highly specialized discourse
- Identify subtle cues, implied meaning, shifts in tone, and rhetorical strategies in demanding communicative situations

Speaking

- Express themselves spontaneously, fluently, and persuasively in any academic, professional, or cultural context
- Adapt register, style, and tone with precision, using rhetorical and pragmatic strategies effectively

Reading

- Comprehend virtually all forms of written German, including highly complex, abstract, and stylistically nuanced texts
- Analyze structure, argumentation, style, and implicit meaning with critical and interpretive depth



Writing

- Produce sophisticated, well-structured, and rhetorically effective texts tailored to diverse audiences and purposes
- Display mastery of linguistic accuracy, stylistic range, and the ability to convey complex ideas with subtlety and clarity

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

IES Abroad Vienna requires attendance at all class sessions. Attendance will be taken every class. Students must attend at least 60% of their class sessions to qualify for a passing grade, regardless of whether their absences have been excused or not. Attendance is required in-person unless otherwise noted in the syllabus. Excused absences due to the reasons outlined in the IES Abroad Vienna Attendance Policy can only be approved by the academic department. Unexcused absences may carry a penalty to the final grade and only excused absences entitle students to make up assignments, tests, quizzes, and exams. Students are highly encouraged to communicate absences as soon as possible to their professors. Please refer to the IES Abroad Vienna Attendance Policy for a more precise overview of all attendance policies at IES Abroad Vienna and of grade penalties.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

At IES Abroad Vienna, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty undermines the principles of trust and fairness essential to a thriving learning community. As such, plagiarism and cheating are considered serious violations of our code of conduct, and students found engaging in such activities will face swift and severe consequences, ranging from a failing grade on an assignment, to an academic review and possible expulsion from the program.

USE OF AI:

The instructor will clarify if and how AI tools may be used, which may vary by assignment. In all cases, use of AI must be clearly acknowledged, and students remain fully responsible for the content they submit under their name.

CONTENT:

Week	Topics & Vocabulary	Content	Assignments and Readings
INTENSIVE			
Week 1 & 2	Österreich, Bundesländer Hauptstädte Frühstück Das bin ich	Functional: - Talking about personal identity - Useful class language and phrases - Breakfast specialties - Österreich - Wien Grammatical: - review Interrogatives - word order complex sentences - conjunctions - adjective endings Culture: - historic component - Austria: provinces and neighboring countries/Vienna: districts - Roman roots H. Weigel: Das Land ohne Hymne - current news media reports/free newspapers - Specific foods and drinks: breakfast - Heuriger, Most, Sturm - Provinces of Austria, characteristics	Interviewing class mates in order to get to know each other work sheet: Das bin ich asking about motivation for studying in Austria work sheets: grammar exercises reading comprehension: Das Land ohne Hymne Test: Grammatik, Vokabular (Das bin ich) und Österreich- bzw. wienbezogene Fakten
Week 3	Malerei Gemälde Schiele/Klimt geometr. Formen Das weiße Band	Functional: - painting and style 1900 - Schiele, Klimt - describing paintings - Kap 9 <i>Die schöne Welt der Künste</i> - Mod 1 <i>Kreativ</i> Grammatical: - adjective endings - besondere Adjektiv Endungen - Partizip als Adjektiv - Adjektiv als Nomen - Verben mit Dativ - Präpositionaladverb da- + Nominalform Culture: - Museum Leopold: G.Klimt - E.Schiele - traditional coffeehouses in Vienna	presentation: Austrian celebrities/ Austrian-world - wide known - companies course-related trips: Leopold Museum Klimt and Schiele/coffeehouse essay: favourite painting Kap.9 Mod1 Verben + Präpositionen Kap.9 Mod 1 Wortspiele work sheets: grammar exercises Test: Grammatik, Vokabular

		• current news media reports • Austropop • Film: Das weiße Band	Oral Exam: presentation Nonsens Themen Written Final Exam: Grammatik, Vokabular, Lesetext, Kurzaufsatz, Langaufsatz
SEMESTER PART 1/2			
Week 1	Gedichte, Balladen Lyrik	Functional: • creativity, prerequisites for artists • Kap. 9 Mod 1 • Lyrik: E. Fried "Was es ist" • Ernst Jandl "lechts und links" Grammatical: • Verben mit Dativ • Nominalisierung und Verbalisierung von • Präpositionalergänzungen Culture: • Austrian/German artists • E. Fried <i>Fügungen/Was es ist</i> • Goethe <i>Meeresstille</i> • E. Mörike <i>Septembermorgen/Frühling</i> • Ballade: Th. Fontane <i>Ribbeck</i>	Elfchen Freie Verse Kap. 9 Modul 1 Kreativ <i>Ribbeck</i> : questions on text Fontane Bio essay: Lieblingsgedicht Lesetext : Klimt "Apfelbaum II" Restitution
Week 2	Kap 9	Functional: • Reimformen • Versmaß Grammatical: • Konnektoren Culture: • Experimentelle Gedichte, visuelle Gedichte: • E. Gomerger, E. Jandl, H. Bienek • J. Ringelnatz • Ballade: <i>Brücke am Tay/J. Maynard/Ribbeck</i>	GR451 <i>Tay, Maynard, Ribbeck</i> : questions on text, <i>interpretation</i> , (presentation: Struwwelpeter/Max und Moritz) work sheets: Konnektoren GR 451: Schnitzler Fräulein Else: Fragen zum Text essay: comparison of 2 Fontane poems

Week 3	Kap 7 Mod 0/1	Functional: - Talking about crime/criminals - Kap. 7 Mod 1 <i>Dumm gelaufen</i>; Recht so! - Mod 3 <i>Alltag im Knast</i> Grammatical: - n-Deklination - review Passiv (unpersönliches Passiv) - Passiv mit Modalverben Culture: - GR451 Schnitzler: Fräulein Else - Die Fälscher - der österreichische Film	vocab Kap 7. Mod 1 grammar exercises Kap7 work sheets:grammar current newspaper article: crime (Struwwelpeter Präsentationen) (Film: Die Fälscher)
Week 4	Kriminell Tod/tot/Toter	Functional: - talking about crime/criminals - Kap. 7 Mod 3 <i>Da lacht Justitia</i> - Mod 4 <i>Kriminell</i> Grammatical: - unpersönliches Passiv - Passiv mit Modalverb - GR451 Passiv mit Modalverb im Nebensatz (mit ungewöhnlicher Wortstellung) Culture: - Tausgleich=Diversion	grammar exercises work sheets:grammar current newspaper article: crime listening and reading comprehension: Kap7 Friedrich Dürrenmatt: der Richter und sein Henker
Week 5	Kap 7 Mod 1	Functional: - Kriminell Kap7 Mod3 Grammatical: - Passiv alle Zeiten - maskuline n-Deklination - modales Partizip Culture: - Verbrechen in den Medien	vocabulary: Verbrechen Kapitel 7 Mod 4 Arbeitsbuch, Buchkritik ergänzen; read+ summarize text <i>Dürrenmatt</i> presentation/discussion Prüfung:Hörübung schriftl. Mittsemesterprüfung
SEMESTER PART 2/2			
Week 6	Kap 10 Partizipialgruppen	Functional: - Talking about "Verbrechen" Jugendstrafen - Deutsch in nationalen Varietäten - Duden Podcast Dialekt Grammatical: - Modalverben subjektiv gebraucht Kap8 - un-/trennbare Verben Culture (Frühling in Wien: Bärlauch)	vocab Duden Podcast listening comprehension Duden "Dialekt" Grad der Sicherheit: Modalwörter Kap 8 Mod 3 •Vorschläge machen/annehmen/ablehnen Kap7 Mod 4

[illegible]

Week 9	erinnern /vergessen Vorschlag machen Partizipialgruppen	Functional: - Memory/remembering, Kap. 10 <i>Erinnerungen</i>, Mod 1+3 Prospagnosie Grammatical: - Partizipialgruppen - Modalitätsverben - Konjunktiv 2, Verwendung Culture: - Erinnerungen Kap10 /0	vocab Kap 10 Mod 1 grammar exercises LB Mod 1+3 read texts Mod 1 listening Mod 2+3 essay: Forumseintrag Verständnis zeigen/etwas erklären/auf etwas Bezug nehmen newspaper article: (Ich laufe für mein Gehirn) (Der geschmack von Apfelkernen Kap10 Mod4)
Week 10	Kap 8 Bichsel: Geografie und Politik	Functional: - Konjunktiv I - quoting Grammatical: - Konjunktiv I - Konjunktiv I Präsens+Perfekt Culture: - geografische Un-Kenntnis - Moral - höfliche Bitten	Mündliche Prüfung Prüfung 6 Kreisler: Taubenvergiften im Park work sheets: Konj II Peter Bichsel: Geografie und Politik
Week 11			Final Exam

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

During the semester, there will be two or three excursions to explore different aspects of Vienna. Students will be placed in authentic situations such as ordering pastries at a local bakery, choosing ice cream at a street stand, ordering Sachertorte and coffee at a traditional Viennese coffee house, or selecting produce and conversing with vendors at the Naschmarkt. Alternatively, they may join a German-language guided museum tour or attend a German-language performance, complementing class material and providing further insight into Vienna's rich artistic and cultural heritage.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- P. Bichsel: Geografie und Politik
- B. Brecht: Wenn die Haifische Menschen wären
- A. Schnitzler: Fräulein Else
- F. Dürrenmatt: Der Richter und sein Henker



- Additional handouts and materials provided by the instructor

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