

THE ONLINE CHALLENGE: HOW TO DESIGN, BUILD, AND IMPLEMENT
STUDENT-CENTERED ONLINE INTRODUCTORY GERMAN LANGUAGE COURSES
AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

By

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Abstract

Online teaching has become a regular delivery method at higher education institutions, and with education shifting from traditional classrooms to online, instructors are encouraged to teach their courses online.

In 2015, and with the assistance of eCampus at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I started developing professional online courses from previous face-to-face courses. I not only transposed/translated my teaching approach to an online format; I built a professional online course with an architecture that is my own design.

To better understand the transition from teaching in the classroom to online, I wanted to hear from students who had taken both types of courses. This led to the included project, “The Online Challenge,” which describes and explains the process of translating and transposing face-to-face courses and their teaching approaches into professionally designed online courses. It gives insight into the differences between teaching a foreign language course face-to-face and online, as well as the students’ opinions about those differences.

Now, eight years later, the German department at the University of Alaska Fairbanks is offering eight different 100- and 200-level online college courses in the German language. Student numbers have tripled, eCampus uses the architecture of my course for the development of other courses at the university, and my design has been recognized and chosen to be presented at a national conference by the American Online Consortium, the premier organization for online learning. Hopefully, other colleagues making the switch to online learning find inspiration from this paper for their field and student body.

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Chapter 1 The Online Challenge

In 2015, I was provided the opportunity to develop a professionally designed online German course from courses I had previously taught in person. Everything I knew about teaching German in the classroom had to be translated into an online course. First, it had to be designed and built, and then, after a few months, implemented.

I have been teaching German language and art to different age groups all my life. My childhood and early adult years in Germany, a college education in art and the social sciences, and many years of bilingual Alaskan life—some as a long-distance student—all reinforced my resolve to establish online courses in my mother language, German. My interest and professional experience in visual design as well as my innate interest in people were also very valuable. I signed up to learn the trade. With the guidance and assistance of UAF's eCampus instructional designers, I went on an electronic journey. One of the first major things I learned was that professionally designed courses consist not only “of media and hardware as well as the systematic application of technologies such as the processes of instructional design” (Nichols & Allen-Brown, 1996, p. 34), but also of linguistic and social principles that enable communication and collaboration with others (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). I learned about Instructional Design Theory and how to systematically develop the curricula and online pedagogy for professional online courses. They needed to be developed from linguistic, curricular, and pedagogy-related principles. In addition, curricula needed to relate vocabulary, grammar, and texts to the learner's experience, including their daily life, family, environments, education, culture, politics, and history (see *Neue Horizonte*, Introductory German textbook). Learning objectives, assessments and measurements, instructional materials, learning activities, learner interaction, and academic

content were created and built into the course. Reflective pedagogy, as well as mastered experience from face-to-face teaching, was translated into a professional online format. While preserving the core of my established instruction, I had to convert well-established face-to-face approaches to an online environment, taking advantage of new online programs and platforms.

The course was offered after one semester of development time as an online German language course at the college freshman level through UAF eCampus, and I consequently found myself in the situation of teaching face-to-face and online courses simultaneously. This experience called for attention. I started recognizing differences and similarities between the courses. It shifted my focus to a more detailed, systematic understanding of language learning, interrelations, and communication, and I wanted to critically reflect on these issues. Being a reflective teacher, I found it was important to hear the students' feedback, so I thought it would be worth measuring the students' experience in a small research study to find out if teaching and learning a foreign language face-to-face and online could be equal. Understanding the learners' perspective in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing became an important task, and only a multifaceted view would help me get a fuller picture. Learners became my collaborators. I assumed that as interested participants they were best suited to share their interpretations about face-to-face and online teaching. This led to the included project.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Face-to-Face and Online Courses

Face-to-face and online teaching and learning approaches are both shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values (Ranganathan et al., 2007). Family, relationships, local and national governments, religious traditions, income, race, and equality are all factors that influence a learner of a foreign language. A second-language learner who, for example, is married to a native speaker will be influenced by that relationship because they will bring a culture of native speech to the table. Depending on the income of a family, the motivation to elaborate on words and speech is different. If a family lives in a democracy where free speech is allowed, their use of language is more open than in countries where one has to be afraid of being censored for what is said. These factors affect who a student is, what learning potential they bring with them, and when and how they learn best. This interplay of language factors has consequences for the learning styles and environments of face-to-face and online learning. In-class learning brings the student, instructor, and three-dimensional learning environment together, and might suit a student who believes one cannot learn without a physically present teacher, or who is inclined to believe that online courses are not equal to face-to-face courses. Online learning, in contrast, bridges the distance between student, instructor, and learning organization in a two-dimensional space, where students learn on their own in the physical absence of the instructor. While classroom teaching depends on instantaneous use and adoption of predetermined materials as well as on group dynamics, the key to the technologies chosen in an online course lies in how they allow or do not allow the other elements of the course to behave in a systems environment (Shearer, 2013), where all parts are interrelated to

each other by principle. It is especially important to foreign language teaching to find adequate platforms to enable students to learn to speak in this environment. A personal learning environment (PLE) becomes increasingly important as a growing and diverse student population learns online. This population includes nontraditional students, who are 25 or older, and who may be working, have family, and have existing financial, family, and social commitments. It also includes first-generation college students, who may live off campus, and Indigenous students, especially Alaska Native students who otherwise have to travel long distances to reach the nearest higher education facility and who may need help with culturally appropriate communication, relationships, and community to create relevant connections (Topkok, 2018).

Understanding face-to-face and online learning as two different yet equal entities in their potential for learning and learning outcomes, the biggest difference between synchronous and asynchronous learning is the “live” situation. Traditional college classes take place in person and happen in a classroom. Students interact with the instructor and fellow students, and in general spend their class time in a three-dimensional, synchronous setting. In comparison, in an online class, the PLE is the virtual classroom, and the interactions between teacher and students and students and students take place virtually within online applications in an asynchronous setting. As such, modern online language courses can be based on curricula that are collaborative, engaging, and reflective, and that have high standards for course design, theoretical frameworks, and systematic application (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). These courses focus on implementation and outcomes, as well as response evaluation (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). In the case of languages, the implementation can include a number of speaking platforms (e.g., Flip, Kaltura) where learning how to speak becomes easy, which allows students to practice speaking the language.

Although the teaching curriculum in a traditional classroom is mostly predetermined by the textbook, it is open to changes depending on situations that occur during class time. The communication between teacher and students is spontaneous and connected to the live interaction. In the asynchronous class, it cannot be changed as easily because of the nature of the course. It is preplanned and does not allow for spontaneous changes. The online curriculum comes with a calendar set at the beginning of the semester. It has objectives, goals, assignments, and assessments that are interrelated. However, in my experience, certain activity-based, collaborative assignments (e.g., Learning Glass videos, music assignments, and Flip) can be more helpful than face-to-face assignments, as they are repeatable and require online learners to dive into self-learning, and to be self-disciplined, courageous, and creative (Connick, 1999). Dillon and Greene (2003) state that online students typically learn in more independent environments, which requires a self-disciplined, independent learner. Understanding this profile and the needs of the learners is critical to developing an effective curriculum and activities that can be delivered online (Connick, 1999).

Face-to-face and online language classes are both governed by linguistic principles. In my online course development, I attempted to translate the four areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to the asynchronous environment. Last but not least, traditional classes take place in a group context with other students, while online classes require the individual student with their individual learning device, the computer. Group contexts and collaborative learning strategies can be part of modern online course design and are added at the teacher's discretion; however, because of its asynchronous nature, students who are distance learners typically have other responsibilities in their lives that go beyond taking online classes. This must be considered,

and online programs should provide a valuable learning experience to students who might not otherwise have access to synchronous learning (Connick, 1999).

The ability to use a language in various social settings where communication takes place is called sociolinguistic competence (Muhamadjonovna, 2020). In regard to online technologies, sociolinguistic competence appears in the use of electronic books and videos with innovative interactive learning and authentic materials that reflect the culture of the target language. These important features of computer technologies create more variation in the classroom, and can be achieved, for example, with computer presentations (see section 3.1.6, Learning Glass and Flip), or through emails, online calls, Zoom, or chat rooms. Innovative information technologies and internet resources are a way to implement student-centered learning and promote the development of sociolinguistic competence (Guthrie, 2015). Computer technologies also provide innovative interactive learning tools for students because they give students the ability to visualize learning. Used in an online course, they can help with the process of explaining certain concepts, as they are based on design principles (see section 2.2). They can store and process significant amounts of educational information, contribute to the dynamics of the learning process, and turn the lesson into a colorful interactive activity (Sarimsakova, 2023).

When turning a lesson into “a happening,” interaction through listening and responding to other people’s speech (and nonverbal communication) becomes a natural learning component. Although online learning seems to not be very interactive because one learns in their own personal environment, modern technologies (Flip) can compensate for the absence of real people with many visual and oral tools so interaction can happen. Not having to be in a group when learning also has the advantage of experiencing fewer anxieties. In regard to online teaching and learning, the differently structured interactions between peers, unlike in the classroom, include

more writing and reading, which are left-brained activities that require analytical thinking, and are therefore less stressful; writing and reading are logical, controlled, and predictable, and they do not involve emotions, so they are, psychologically speaking, “safer.” Speaking, on the other hand, is a process that requires creation, so it involves emotions, which are not so easily controllable. The needs of online learners are only partly possible to categorize because of their different ages, geographical circumstances, and education levels, so the curriculum and pedagogy are being received and interpreted on an individual level. In regard to a classroom context for online students, group interaction can take place via Zoom or the chat room. But because language is embedded in a context of the situation, a true analysis and understanding of language communication is only possible if one goes beyond the linguistic contexts in which they occur (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). One can learn to speak by putting themselves out with others or not, but as soon as one is around other people, more than language comes into play because we are human beings with more than the biological sense of voice.

While it is safe to say that online learning is here to stay, Lorenzo and Moore (2002) also report that nearly one third of academic officers believe that their faculty do not think online classes are equal to face-to-face classes. Although some faculty still do not think the learning outcomes of online courses are equal to face-to-face courses, the fact that more than two thirds think they are suggests a paradigm shift of the teaching and learning processes.

2.2 Online Design

As online teaching has become a regular course delivery method at higher education institutions, it is important to note that because technology is prone to change and improvements, which are in favor of the learner, online designers and instructors are able to build excellent

courses. One researcher, Erin Duffin, asked students their opinions about the quality of online education compared to classroom education in the United States in 2020. In the survey, 41% of graduate students reported that they found their online college-level education to be better than their experiences in college-level classroom learning (Duffin, 2021). Online designers and teachers have to open themselves to new learning.

Computer technologies used to learn and teach foreign languages online create more variation in the classroom that leads to increased motivation and better conditions for learning authentic and up-to-date materials in the target language (Muhamadjonovna, 2020). Simonson et al. (2011) observed that the online learning environment has not reached its full potential and needs to incorporate activity-based learning, as opposed to learning governed by content (Jonassen, 2013). According to Orellana et al. (2009), a perfect online course can be delivered following different instructional methods and models for design and for instruction, and by implementing different teaching or instructional strategies. Such methods, models, and strategies are framed within quality educational guidelines and must be aimed towards attaining the online course's learning goals, one of them being the promotion of reflective thinking. This is accomplished by applying the theory of instructional design and reflective pedagogy.

Applying the abovementioned principles of instructional design and reflective pedagogy—which require learning objectives, goals, modules, assignments, and assessments—to the four linguistic elements of language learning (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the online courses were designed and developed. Following are a variety of components in the online course that show the interconnection between the learning objectives, goals, assignments, and assessments. A closer look at these components in a foreign language course is given in

Chapter 3. The four major components of this particular foreign language course for the project are as follows:

- **Listening/Viewing:** Learning Glass, music assignments, audio text reading, Flip and other videos.
- **Speaking:** Flip, audio texts, and Zoom for speech practice.
- **Reading:** Textbook, audio texts, and assignments.
- **Writing:** Homework assignments, quizzes, freewriting, and music interpretation.

Building an online course that is engaging and academically rigorous means understanding and applying the principles of professional online design, intellectual skill, cognitive strategies, verbal information, motor skills, attitudes, and outcomes. This includes working with professional online designers who assist an instructor with the technical part of the production. It cannot be overemphasized how important this collaborative relationship is. By putting together two different knowledge bases, one can experience true production that leads to the feeling of “owning a course,” something that one can defend as one’s personal and professional creation and responsibility.

One more important detail and advantage of online environments is that they enable students to collaborate with instructors and other students on an individualized basis, which results in personal connections and requires much more coaching and facilitating than instructing (Dabbagh et al., 2018). This is important to note and verify because online courses are more individualized than face-to-face classes.

2.3 Pedagogy of Online Teaching

Online courses have no classroom, so the questions “Where is the teacher?” and “Who is the teacher?” are valid. The teacher is not visible or only appears in videos, but their intentions

and methods of teaching are visible. The teacher's mindset and their culture are what make a course student-centered or not. A student-centered learning approach aims to promote learning in communication with teachers and other learners. This means taking students seriously as active participants in their own learning, and fostering skills like problem solving and critical and reflective thinking. Teaching online brings new opportunities to shift from "structured inquiry models toward more open inquiry models" in which students and instructors co-create the learning process (Guthrie, 2015). An open inquiry model is also learner-centered and allows students to detect and determine their own errors. It puts students closer to the role of the speaker they are learning to become.

Because there is no classroom, the learner has greater autonomy regarding what they learn. The role of the teacher becomes much more one of coach and facilitator. This is parallel to the changing view of language teachers from the "sage on the stage" to "the guide on the side" (Stern, 2016). Although communicative and reflexive teaching are strategies also used in face-to-face teaching, the personal learning environment (PLE) is in contrast to learning in the classroom. Students have to take ownership of their own learning; therefore, the decision-making, which requires being actively involved, becomes a necessary part of learning online. Collaborating and focusing on the experiences that would best generate learning from the learner's point of view, rather than just publishing and assessing the information one thinks they need to know, are the keys to co-creating their learning experience. Each participant in a course can and should be a teacher as well as a learner. Asking questions to construct one's own knowledge helps students learn in a better way than when governed by content; it also makes the process of learning authentic. When discussing a writing assignment, for example, a student's previous personal experiences traveling in East Germany raised her interest in digging into the

history of that country and figuring out how to include it in her writing. Acknowledging personal connections with and in the language, including comprehensible web resources, or giving students open-ended assignments encourages the practice of finding knowledge outside the module for student and teacher alike (see “Learning Glass Videos,” section 3.1.6.3). These types of assignments show the equality between teacher and student. The more quality time a student spends engaging with the content in and outside the classroom, the more they learn from it. Interaction and empathy are two more essential ingredients of effective teaching. Interaction is not just discussion; it requires social presence and affective issues like the expression of emotions. Empathy requires the teacher to see things through the students’ eyes without judgment, and grows a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion, and caring (Pacansky-Brock, 2020). Like Plato said in ancient times, “The highest form of knowledge is empathy, for it requires us to suspend our egos and live in another world.”

Good interactional teaching practices in general have to foster cohesiveness and inclusion. Learner-centered teaching, “which aims at making language learners grammatically accurate and communicatively fluent,” is based on finding the needs of an individual learner or a group, pulls students in, and gets them interested (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 26). By responding to the students’ interests, teachers make students feel like they belong in the class. Those practices encourage and teach students how to work together, as well as promote self-learning rather than encouraging students to be passive receivers of information. The reliance is on active learning.

Looking at an online course, one could assume that the contact with the teacher is limited because of the missing classroom. This is a common misconception that also assumes that distance-based learning has less impact on a student. It only looks like it. Although an online

teacher is not physically present, if the teacher is a person who nevertheless strives for presence, then they initiate communication, interaction, collaboration, and engagement, and facilitate the online group context. In an online course, the group pressure is missing, and it may be easier for a student to learn on their own.

One of the tasks of a reflective teacher is to provide inclusive teaching practices that embrace diversity (UAF eCampus, 2018). An Asian-born-and-raised high school student with no experience in a European language and culture will produce different types of writing than an American-born German high school teacher who is fine-tuning their German knowledge. The texts chosen for language learning therefore have to acknowledge other nationalities and ethnic groups and include different views. This is easier to do in a language class, where the foreign language acts as a lens of different ethnic groups, than in a math class, where ethnicity has to be purposefully included.

The implementation of a course and its measures requires preparing the technology of the online course ahead of time, which includes the visual design of the course and its structure. The principles of universal design, which form a framework that can guide the development of inclusive learning environments, are an important part of the instructional design process, providing a structure to proactively design flexible pathways and offer options that can support all learners. This involves meaningfully integrating digital delivery formats, digital tools, and instructional strategies when designing inclusive online learning experiences. Universal design, which stems from architecture and engineering, is translated for education and applied to the preparation of curricula, materials, and environments so that they may be used appropriately and with ease, by a wide variety of people (Bowe, 2000). Principles of universal design include “equitable use, flexibility to accommodate individual preferences and abilities” (Burgstahler,

2009). Curricular material needs to be easily understood, regardless of a student's experience and language skills.

Curricular implementation means to prepare creative ways to conceptually and inclusively teach the language (for example, in cultural or historical contexts), and to give students information as comprehensible input. Answering their questions, interacting with them to get to know them, to pull everything out of them (Cunningham, 2017), to find out how to assist them in becoming successful, and putting them in charge of their own learning are the most important pedagogical principles to use as an online teacher ("10 Rules for Students and Teachers from John Cage," as cited in Cunningham, 2017). One has to be especially patient because of the physical absence of students; taking in the language, whether it is listening or reading, comes before producing the language, speaking or writing, so it is one's role to encourage, acknowledge, and reinforce students' contributions in all situations online. The above learner-centered principles teach grammatical structures as well as communicative functions with meaningful activities.

One last but not least detail: a teacher who engages in reflective teaching will reflect on their own teaching practice, thinking about why they do it and its effectiveness. Reflective pedagogy means the teacher examines their own underlying beliefs, and "looks for evidence of effective teaching" (Brookfield, 2017, p. 12). A reflective teacher will also use student feedback to make revisions to improve students' learning. Asking different students every semester for feedback is a way to situate my students' feedback in reality.

Chapter 3 Developing an Effective Online Course

In order to develop an effective online course, I connected with eCampus at UAF and signed up to attend weekly meetings with designers. In numerous 2-hour sessions, a variety of workshops, and a 600-level online design class I took as part of my graduate studies, I learned and am still learning the online teaching trade. The amount of time that has gone into this project is immense and seems to be never-ending. The following sections describe this work and the process of developing the German online courses. Course links to the Sandbox course [GER 102 for Thesis](#) are provided throughout the sections.

3.1 Course Design and Structure

Creating online courses for UAF meant using the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS), which has changed to Canvas. The instructional designer can interoperate with third-party tools—for example, videos and music. The goal of the LMS is to meaningfully improve the learner experience at UAF. As online student numbers are rising, and quality educational LMSs are needed, Canvas courses become the structural element of learning. They allow users to move around with a few clicks, have multiple pathways of accessing content, and have indexes sorted for pages, assignments, files, quizzes, etc. I partnered with an instructional designer to design the courses, creating hundreds of assignments and weekly quiz pages to make language learning not only proficient but also easy and fun. As you can see, with the different categories it is especially important that the content is easy to view and comes across as visually stimulating. When opening the evening news on PBS, one will not see spelling errors or low-pixel photos and videos. The same goes for a professional online course: it needs to be well

thought out, flawlessly implemented, and constantly analyzed and evaluated. The transfer of the courses from Blackboard to Canvas brought new challenges and learning, technically and with the curriculum, and meant further education and development of professional online skills that are necessary to stay modern, and to be compatible on a national and international level/scale.

The structure of the course design via the modules is what online students can view as the overview of the course. In my face-to-face teaching, the structure of the course is determined by the textbook and the syllabus. Although the online course has a syllabus and a textbook as well, and instructors can design their own courses without a textbook, as an online teacher one has more electronic choices outside of given materials to design their own course, and use the content of a textbook completely, partially, or not at all. Importance is given to the interlocking of the learning content with the learning strategies and pedagogy, and to showing it in the visual presentation. Visual course design leads the student through the course with clear, informative, comprehensible text and photos, links, etc. The teacher's/designer's "footprint" shows on the front page when opening a course. A reflective approach of online teaching shows when a course's design is easy to read and interesting and involves minimal clicks, because it focuses on the learner's perspective.

The visual implementation is also important because learning new information online is not as three-dimensional as in the classroom. Incorporating plenty of visuals helps, therefore, to present the information effectively. Reducing a module in a course to only text or only video is not very conducive; instead, one should have a variety of content of different visuals, e.g., videos, screenshots, charts and graphs, stock photos, timelines, animations, icons, and illustrations. Color coding and visual guides will help clarify topics visually. Assuring fast internet speed and giving attention to voice, pronunciation, enunciation, and clarity on videos are

technical requirements that an online language class needs because audio recordings might not be as clear as they would be in person. Access to the course has to be proactive, inclusive, and usable by all learners. Inclusive means, for example, to invite students to collaborate when producing audio readings. Formatting, which is visually important, should make use of bullet points and small chunks of content describing links instead of simply saying “click here.” Other attributes need to be considered, such as offering simple, consistent navigation, modeling good etiquette when addressing students and issues, captioning videos, photos, and audio clips, and rethinking descriptions and instructions according to the newest standard, e.g., after student assessments of instruction.

The target audience in the German online courses are students interested in higher education classes on an elementary and intermediate level. The students have different ages, different careers, and different aspirations. Some of them are advanced high school students taking college courses because their high school does not offer the language; others are seniors with no desire to get a grade; some of them want to become German teachers. The courses are between 6 and 14 weeks long, with as many modules as weeks in the course, and a student completes one module per week. Each module has all the learning elements, assignments, and self-assessment built in (see section 3.1.6). The four elements—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are color coded to identify them easily. To measure proficiency, a midterm and final exam are administered in oral and written form.

3.1.1 Course Description

The course description is the first thing a student sees when opening the course, and is a brief description that leads the participant through the course. The course description and

syllabus for German 102 can be found here: <https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/assignments/syllabus>. This is a 14-week, asynchronous introductory course in German language and culture, divided into 6 chapters. Essential parts will be vocabulary and grammar, as well as learning how to speak and tell your story. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four basic skills of language learning. They will occur throughout the course in given materials, in your own work, in partner work, and in discussion boards. You will learn to talk and write about yourself, your interests, your family, and your life in college and/or elsewhere in German. As this is an asynchronous course, our communication is completely online and is part of the assignments. Teacher-student and student-student communication is expected via 1) Flipgrid, 2) music assignments, 3) emails/campus immersions, and 4) Zoom sessions. Through your study of German, you will begin to become aware of your own language, and you will be able to achieve an international intellectual identity as you discover new dimensions of imagination in speech.

3.1.2 Learning Objectives and Outcomes

As mentioned in Chapter 2, learning objectives in an online course are directly related to outcomes. The following examples are learning objectives for German 201:

- Intermediate communicative competence and performance in German.
- Intermediate language production through communication with others.
- Intermediate level of proficiency in reading and writing.
- Understanding and application of grammar principles on a German language level II.
- Intermediate knowledge about German literature, film, and music.
- Level II knowledge of German culture, history, and aspects of geography

and political systems.

- Appreciation of cultural diversity as evidenced in the difference between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.

By the end of this course, students should display the following learning outcomes:

- Communicate thoughts on topics of general interest, both orally and in writing.
- Read modern German short stories and prose found in newspapers, letters, and magazines for basic understanding.
- Understand the main ideas of selected German videos, films, or audio clips.
- Identify some important recent historical events and figures.
- Use standard, acceptable language in everyday situations.

3.1.3 Course Goals

- Demonstrate your own language production.
- Identify and interpret the main points in German when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on topics associated with everyday life, politics, history, literature, film, and music.
- Show intermediate proficiency in reading and writing of text materials.
- Memorize, explain/illustrate, and apply intermediate grammar rules.
- Demonstrate intermediate knowledge of significant cultural and historical events.
- Show intermediate knowledge and interpretation of German speaking in literature and film. Utilize and make use of the foreign language through research of select topics.
- Establish social presence by interacting with cohorts to experiment and take part

in language production.

- Appreciate the cultural diversity as evidenced in the difference between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.

3.1.4 Interdependence Between Objectives, Goals, and Learning Outcomes

The enclosed table shows the interconnection and interdependence in the intermediate German language course, and displays the founding design elements, objectives, course goals, and learning outcomes of the instructional system design that I learned from eCampus workshops and classes.

Table 1

Interdependence Between Objectives, Goals, and Learning Outcomes

Objectives	Course Goals	Learning Outcomes
Intermediate communicative competence and performance in German.	Demonstrate your own language production. Identify and interpret the main points in German when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on topics associated with everyday life, politics, history, literature, film, and music.	By the end of this course, students in this course should be able to: 1. Communicate thoughts on topics of general interest, both orally and in writing. 2. Read modern German short stories and prose found in newspapers, letters, and magazines for basic understanding.
Intermediate language production through communication with others.	Show intermediate proficiency in reading and writing of text materials. Memorize, explain/illustrate, and apply intermediate grammar rules. Demonstrate intermediate knowledge of significant	3. Understand the main ideas of selected German videos, films, or audio clips. 4. Identify some important recent historical events and figures. 5. Use standard, acceptable

	<p>cultural and historical events. Show intermediate knowledge and interpretation of German-speaking literature and film. Utilize and make use of the foreign language through research of select topics. Establish social presence by interacting with cohorts to experiment and take part in language production. Appreciate the cultural diversity as evidenced in the difference between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.</p>	<p>language in everyday situations.</p>
<p>Intermediate level of proficiency in reading and writing.</p>	<p>Show intermediate proficiency in reading and writing of text materials. Memorize, explain/illustrate, and apply intermediate grammar rules. Utilize and make use of the foreign language through research of select topics.</p>	<p>Communicate thoughts on topics of general interest, both orally and in writing. Read modern German short stories and prose found in newspapers, letters, and magazines for basic understanding. Understand the main ideas of selected German videos, films, or audio clips. Identify some important recent historical events and figures.</p>
<p>Understanding and application of grammar principles on a German language level II.</p>	<p>Show intermediate proficiency in reading and writing of text materials. Memorize, explain/illustrate, and apply intermediate grammar rules.</p>	<p>Communicate thoughts on topics of general interest, both orally and in writing. Read modern German short stories and prose found in newspapers, letters, and</p>

Intermediate knowledge about German literature, film, and music.

Demonstrate your own language production.
Identify and interpret the main points in German when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on topics associated with everyday life, politics, history, literature, film, and music.
Establish social presence by interacting with cohort to experiment and take part in language production.

Demonstrate your own language production.
Identify and interpret the main points in German when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on topics associated with everyday life, politics, history, literature, film, and music.
Show intermediate proficiency in reading and writing of text materials.
Memorize, explain/illustrate, and apply intermediate grammar rules.
Demonstrate intermediate knowledge of significant cultural and historical events.
Show intermediate knowledge and interpretation of German-speaking literature and film.

magazines for basic understanding.
Understand the main ideas of selected German videos, films, or audio clips.
Identify some important recent historical events and figures.

Understand the main ideas of selected German videos, films, or audio clips.

Utilize and make use of the foreign language through research of select topics.
Establish social presence by interacting with cohort to experiment and take part in language production.
Appreciate the cultural diversity as evidenced in the difference between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.

Level II knowledge of German culture, history, and aspects of geography and political systems.

Identify and interpret the main points in German when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on topics associated with everyday life, politics, history, literature, film, and music.

Identify some important recent historical events and figures.

Appreciation of cultural diversity as evidenced in the difference between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.

Demonstrate intermediate knowledge of significant cultural and historical events.

Communicate thoughts on topics of general interest, both orally and in writing.

Establish social presence by interacting with cohort to experiment and take part in language production.

3.1.5 Online Curriculum and Syllabus

The meaningful academic content in lessons is the curriculum. It provides an overview of the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn and the university's requirements for finishing classes and graduating from a university. Given the radical ways the world has changed through electronic learning and the COVID-19 epidemic, traditional curricula that use one delivery model for an entire class where students advance at the educator's pace are becoming less common. Teacher Centered Learning is changing to Student Centered Learning, with the personal learning environment (PLE) outside of a physical classroom providing the environment. This requires a curriculum that meets individual needs and allows for learning at the student's own pace, without disregarding the pace of the instructor. Students should be able to pick topics of their own choice, use one or more methods of how to approach an assignment, and move freely through the content area organized in weekly modules. It allows students to build their knowledge progressively and to become active participants in the learning process. More and more, we are seeing that individualized learning outperforms traditional classroom settings when it comes to learner engagement. Traditional syllabi focus on policies and requirements and create the "contract" between the instructor and student. These content-centered syllabi can translate as mandates, dictating what a student must do to achieve a specific grade. They are also a pre-sequenced and pre-planned inventory of linguistic specifications handed down from teachers to learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 46). In contrast, a learner-centered syllabus removes the emphasis on requirements to pass and instead provides information on how and what students will learn in the course. Existing syllabi can be revised to shift the focus from rules and policies to what students will learn, how they will learn it, why it is important, and how it will help facilitate positive interactions between students and the instructor. The learner-centered syllabus

welcomes students and invites them to actively participate in their learning (Wheeler et al., 2019). Resources posted on iTeachU encourage faculty to create more inclusive, welcoming, and learner-focused syllabi. According to UAF eCampus (2018), a learner-centered syllabus increases positive student perception of the course and instructor, and generally leads to better learning outcomes.

The curriculum and syllabus for face-to-face learning and online learning are identical and prescribed/dictated by university policies and laws. However, the digital curriculum delivers all assignments and curricular materials via an online learning management system (LMS) through applications like Blackboard or Canvas. Face-to-face and online learning courses are equal in their learning content, standards, and outcomes. The curricular quality is achieved through aligning course objectives, weekly goals, assignments, and assessments.

[GER 102 for Thesis](#)

3.1.6 Modules

Modules are the weekly overview in an online course of what is coming up for a student. The German courses show the learning content starting with a bilingual weekly welcome letter to greet students and introduce the content. When an instructor provides a “Start here,” they are able to connect to the students, and students are likewise able to connect with the instructor and the course immediately. UAF eCampus encourages instructors to “infuse their writing with warmth,” which means to use friendly and accessible language that will give students a positive outlook on the class. Welcome announcements replace the daily “Welcome to class” in the classroom. They are followed by learning materials—for example, audio vocabulary pages spoken by the teacher and repeated by a collaborating student, embedded textbook reading, and

homework exercises designed with a multitude of different types of questions (multiple choice answers, multiple answers, true/false, drop-down, essay questions, and/or freewriting). Learning Glass and other videos replace the instructions at the blackboard in the classroom, a music assignment connects listening, comprehension, and writing, and the Flipgrid speaking is the weekly graded speaking assignment. This is all listed in the overview on one page, by which the module functions. Because the visual design of an online class is the most important part to draw students in, the four language principles—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are color coded, and I use templates so that I can change the content for different modules while maintaining visual consistency. When opening the computer, it is simple and takes only a few clicks to get to the course and find one’s way around. Font size, font type, color coding, and other visual design elements are very important. Our eyes have been spoiled with excellent visual materials from TV, computers, and cell phones that hit us in public and private spaces on a daily basis, and it is therefore a challenge to design a visually excellent course while also having outstanding content. One’s creativity in design in unison with the structure, content, and teaching approach is what makes a good online course. Included please find a welcome announcement for German 102: <https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/announcements>.

3.1.6.1 Weekly Assignments

While assignments in a traditional class are given at the end of the lesson and directly connected to the teaching of the day, online assignments are pre-planned and are part of every weekly module. Because the online student cannot connect with their peers and instructor in person, assignments are different from traditional classes. According to Fuster (2017), there are several types of virtual assignments in an online class. As an instructor, one can provide textbook

pages to read, video lectures with written homework, speaking assignments, discussion boards, blogs and journal writing, quizzes, and spoken and written exams. Sometimes these quizzes and tests are multiple choice, other times they are freewriting and/or textual analyses. In my language classes, I also use music assignments from which text learning, linguistic assignments, and analysis stem. The goal is for students to work through the learning materials on their own, through self-learning and exploration. All information about assignments is communicated beforehand, so a student knows what to expect. Easy navigating and clear, easy-to-follow instructions for assignments are two key elements in guiding learners through a course. In my language classes, four different categories of language learning—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are assigned and assessed. They are color coded for visual recognition and occur regularly in every module. <https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903>

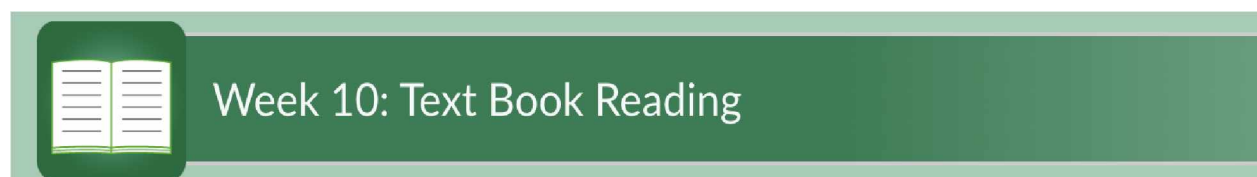
Listening - Music assignments, Learning Glass for grammar instruction, and other videos.



Speaking - Flip and Zoom for meaningful synchronous experiences and speech practice, as well as the production of language.



Reading - Textbook and audio texts for comprehension and pronunciation/phonetics.



Writing - Homework, quizzes, freewriting, and music interpretation for comprehension and analysis.



Homework 1.7: Datives and Two-way Prepositions

3.1.6.2 Textbook

In order to start the process of transposing the face-to-face course into the online course, I used the textbook from the face-to-face course and divided the chapters into 14 weeks. The 2-week divide per chapter gave me the content for every module. I then revisited the textbook and created online pages and assignments from the content. The structure of the modules came from the structure of the textbook pages, and the structures of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For example, when the textbook provided a reading assignment, I changed it into an audio reading that I recorded in the eCampus studios. When it called for communication and interaction, I used the Flip platform. When it called for listening, I added a music assignment. For those exercises assigned as homework, the instructional designer and I created question banks for homework pages with different sets of questions. For explanation of grammar issues, I used and still use the eCampus design studio and its featured “clear board” technology. Every module has the same structure: introduction and learning objectives, with photos and a visual background of the subject matter for the week, textbook reading, Learning Glass videos, homework assignments, a weekly quiz, a music assignment, Flip, and self-assessment.

In regard to the textbook, a student has the choice of buying the printed edition or not. In all of the German courses, the textbook pages are embedded in the weekly module, so a student

can save a lot of money by not having to buy the textbook. Important to note as well is that some of the textbook exercises are transposed and reworked as graded assignments.


<https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903>

3.1.6.3 Learning Glass Videos - Listening

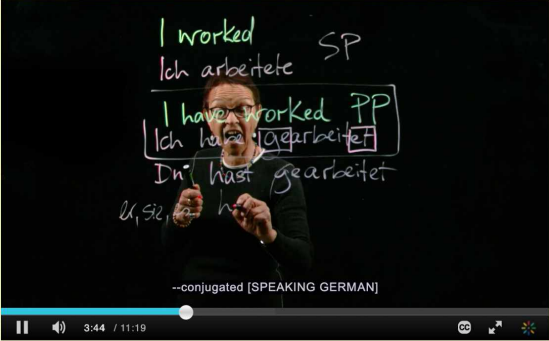
In a face-to-face class, the specific grammar principle is explained on the blackboard in the classroom. [Learning Glass videos](#) are created to simulate those live lectures and provide instructions on grammar principles previously explained in the classroom. Because grammar issues come with details, the advantage of the online video is that a student can replay it as many times as they wish. These professional studio videos are a major tool for capturing and enhancing instructor and student engagement in regard to language teaching. Students can watch a real person communicating to them in a direct and natural way.

Learning Glass videos are produced in the eCampus Media Production studio, a modern recording studio with high-tech video technology. Instructors draw from behind the lightboard and draw or write on it like they would on a traditional blackboard. The process collapses the perspective of the viewer and the presenter into a shared perspective. It is important that the instructor wear dark clothes, and not wear clothes with writing on them, as the lightboard is reflective.

Listening Week 1 - Learning Glass 1.1

 Learning Glass Week 1.1 - German Past Tense

In the attached video from the "Learning Glass" series, you can follow along with the grammar section in your book. In this video, you can get an overview of the principles of the German Past Tense. The Learning Glass replaces the blackboard in the classroom, with the big difference that you can watch it as many times as you like.



3.1.6.4 Flip Video Assignment - Speaking

When teaching online, the live interaction of the classroom is missing. As most speaking is learned by interacting with others, online courses offer programs to compensate for live speaking. At its most basic, Flip is an interactional video tool that allows teachers to post "Topics" that are essentially videos with some accompanying text. It is a default video recording tool, a video platform that is then shared with students, who can be prompted to respond. The response can be made using the software's camera to create videos that are then posted to the original topic. The Flip platform is the speaking tool in my language class that engages students. While many students may otherwise struggle with staying engaged in their online course, Flip prevents students from becoming disengaged. Every week students find a new video assignment in their weekly module. Flip situates students linguistically, socially, and culturally as they listen to me model asking and then answering a question; then they record themselves answering the same question on a new Flip video that they send to a fellow student. The fellow student then answers the questions, creates a new question by modeling what they heard, and consequently

repeats and practices speech. This gives students the opportunity to produce language by listening and repeating as well as freely choosing interactions and collaborations with fellow students and the teacher. The advantage of this type of assignment is that it not only provides the speaking component for online language courses, but also gives value to the visual part of learning because the teacher and student can see each other speaking. Flip not only replaces the live interaction in the classroom, it also gives detail of the learning environments a student records from, and therefore includes social and cultural relevance for understanding and empathy. Flip is an excellent tool for an individualized connection between student and student, and student and teacher, and it also provides opportunities for group context learning. The feedback for the Flip assignment can be as spontaneous as in the classroom, depending on the response time. It enables listening and speaking exercises (input–output) for students to practice their language production and requires a student to learn and/or use video technology. Example: https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/assignments/171276?module_item_id=543148.

3.1.6.5 Audio Texts - Listening/Reading

Audio recordings are another method of engaging students in language learning. They take place in the Media Studio West that provides a sound isolation booth for professional-quality sound recording. Advancing from 100- to 200-level learning requires that students read and comprehend more texts and listen to the audio recordings I provide; students then demonstrate their comprehension of these readings through written assignments and linguistic exercises. Because speaking in a foreign language involves many levels of interpersonal effort—for example, one’s determination to master syntax in the first language—pronunciation reveals the individual style and creation of language. Although rules like stress, melody, and intonation

are different in different languages, it is difficult to measure them, because they are owned by the speaker. Connecting listening and speaking enhances language comprehension and production simultaneously. Listening to somebody else's voice, intonation, and word flow passively while reading along assists in learning. As this is a time-intensive and individualized activity, the online platform offers an excellent learning environment. As a side benefit, it offers students I collaborate with the chance to learn how to produce the audio readings in the recording studio. Included please find the audio recordings from the German 201 online class:

http://www.canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/pages/listening-week-3-unterwegs-mit-fahrrad-auto-und-bahn?module_item_id=543181.

3.1.6.6 Music Assignment - Listening/Writing

In my heart I am a musician, and in my teenage years when I learned English, music and music texts were a favorite way for me to learn a foreign language (English). Music assignments are a linguistic and cultural practice, and appeal to a student's creativity and are low-anxiety learning activities. They are an excellent method for getting to know how a student thinks and interprets texts. Picking up vocabulary words from the text, sorting them into linguistic categories, researching the history of the word, and then applying the new vocabulary in a paragraph to interpret the song deepens comprehension and understanding in a creative and fun way. The different music genres also bring and teach cultural awareness. Included here is an example of a music assignment appearing in the weekly module:

Dear students,

Each week, after listening to my music choice of the week, I would like you to write out 10–20 different vocabulary words that you understand/like from the text. After writing them down, do a little language research on the meaning of some of the vocabulary words, because some of them have more than one meaning.

The second part of the assignment is to write a paragraph (3–5 sentences) of what you understand from the text, and what it means to you. This assignment should reveal your ability to think in German. Use English vocabulary to fill in words you don't know in German. "Es geht doch nichts über ein gemeinsam gesungenes Lied!"

https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/discussion_topics/96246?module_item_id=543169

3.1.7 Assessment

Assessment measures a student's mastery of the objectives, goals, and assignments. Rubrics and points guide student assessment and determine students' grades. Assessment has to show that the measuring of the assignments is equal and fair. For example, listening, speaking, reading, and writing assignments in the course count for 20% each (see Appendix D). Weekly quizzes, the midterm exam, and the final written and verbal exam are formal assessments and give evidence of the learning progress a student makes. Assessments are also ways to measure a teacher's performance, through midsemester feedback or end-of-term student evaluations. These assessments ask "students to reflect on their learning experience by identifying the extent to which they agree or disagree (UAF summary report) with the course curriculum, design and teacher's instructions."

Chapter 4 Evaluating Course Design and Effectiveness

After the first implementation of the online course, a short evaluation was done to learn about course effectiveness, future course design, and to better understand the students' learning preferences in an online environment.

4.1 Methodology

I used an explanatory, sequential mixed methods approach with triangulation (Creswell, 2014) to evaluate project effectiveness. The sequential part of the research refers to a survey followed by interviews, with the goal to build upon the previous results. For example, the research involved collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data that was to interpret course effectiveness. For the quantitative part, I collected written data in the form of a questionnaire with 21 questions that were consistent with the educational level of the respondents. One example from the qualitative part of the research asked the participants to give their opinion of how they perceive, for example, the difference in writing experiences online versus face-to-face. One of the principles of mixed methods is its assumption that the research and the statistics produced provide a way to change existing thinking. Through my research, I would like to change the existing thinking that online teaching and learning are less effective than face-to-face teaching and learning. Mixed methods approaches describe parts of the phenomena that cannot be quantified, including the opinions of the students, the interviews, and the multiple interpretations of the interview questions (Creswell, 2014). Measuring students' opinions on both courses gives evidence to the validity of both courses. The validity of the research comes from "the research community and from the subjects studied" and starts with

relational validity (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 103). Relational validity starts when students trust the learning environment, and it shows in the meaningful conversational learning opportunities that “act upon the narrative of the story” that the language learner reveals in speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Glasow, 2005, p. 13).

4.1.1 Participants and Instrumentation

The major data sources for the research were the student questionnaire, the semi-structured student interviews, and the official professional educator evaluation framework and rubric used by eCampus to evaluate course design (PPS). The questionnaire was created in SurveyMonkey and distributed through electronic mail (see Appendix B). As Salant and Dillman (1994) explain, “Written surveys allow the respondent the greatest latitude in pace and sequence of response” (p. 18).

Participants were six freshman-level students that had finished the elementary-level 101 face-to-face course and the 102 online course. The student selection criteria specified that students who took both courses were included in the sample. All six students agreed to participate. The sample size was small since only those students who had taken both the online and face-to-face courses could be included. When asked about the reason for German study, 83% of the respondents were interested in the language, culture, and history, compared to 16.7% who took it because it was a core requirement. Eighty-four percent of the participants were 18–24 years old, there was no participant over 35 years of age, and their academic standing included first-year, sophomore, and senior students, with 50% identifying as female, 33% identifying as male, and 17% identifying as belonging to another gender category. All participants had taken between one and six online classes before.

4.1.2 Survey and Interviews

Survey questions were pilot tested by three faculty members and found to be feasible to answer, and civil and ethical (McIntyre, 1999, p. 77). Three open-ended questions provided qualitative data from the questionnaire, and Likert scale questions required the respondents to choose from a given set of responses (McIntyre, 1999, p. 75). Based on survey results, three semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C) were conducted to clarify open-ended questions, add to the knowledge, and triangulate data. The open-ended interview questions in the qualitative data section allowed respondents to answer in their own words, allowing for the “voice of the participants” to be heard and to give interpretations of class observations (Creswell, 2014, p. 33). The interviews were conducted using Zoom. Participants were asked their opinions about preferred learning style in college and made comparisons between face-to-face and online methods. The interviews supported the detailed evaluation of the different learning areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and were designed “to explore new ideas and insights” (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p. 79). In summary, the questionnaire and the follow-up interview give epistemological clues in the way materials for reading, writing, and speaking were chosen—for example, music genres with common or critical texts to encourage or discourage critical thinking.

When asked to compare online and face-to-face learning in regard to the interaction with the teacher in a foreign language class and how valuable the interaction with the teacher is, 88% of the participants found it extremely or very valuable. Only 16% found it not very valuable. For 50% of the participants, a preferred delivery method is unspecified, while the hybrid/mixed format was chosen by one third (33%) of the participants, and the online asynchronous format was not chosen at all.

Data suggests that (1) of the three methods—face-to-face, asynchronous (online only), and hybrid—participants like the hybrid platform of learning the best and prefer face-to-face over online learning in introductory foreign language classes, and (2) in the speaking section of the four fields of language learning, 50% of participants preferred face-to-face over online learning, whereas in the reading section, 83% of participants preferred online over face-to-face learning. The writing section scored equally between online and face-to-face, while the listening section rated twice as high in face-to-face learning (33%).

4.1.3 Data Evaluation and Analysis

Table 2

Ratings of Design and Learning Experience for Each Course Type

Language Learning Field	Course Type	
	ONLINE	FACE-TO-FACE
SPEAKING	Very good 16.67%	Very good 50%
	Good 33.33%	Good 50%
	Satisfactory 33.33%	Satisfactory 0%
	Poor 16.67%	Poor 0%
READING	Very good 83%	Very good 50%
	Good 16.6%	Good 50%
	Satisfactory 0%	Satisfactory 0%
	Poor 0%	Poor 0%

WRITING	Very good 33%	Very good 33%
	Good 66%	Good 50%
	Satisfactory 0%	Satisfactory 16%
	Poor 0%	Poor 0%
LISTENING	Very good 16%	Very good 33%
	Good 33%	Good 66%
	Satisfactory 33%	Satisfactory 0%
	Poor 16%	Poor 0%

Overall Ratings of Design and Learning Experience for the Two Different Courses

Online German II	7.3 of 10 (Likert scale)
Face-to-Face German I	8.6 of 10

4.2 Results and Discussion

Question 1: Overall, what is your preferred learning style in college? Why? Consider face-to-face, online, and hybrid.

When asked for the preferred learning style or delivery method for learning a foreign language in college classes, face-to-face courses were more popular than online courses in the first year of language learning by all interview participants. All interview participants were beginning-German learners and had reservations about the online learning environment in

general. Having to physically go to class and learning from the interaction and group-related feedback of the cohort were factors of preferred learning of this structural element. In regard to the hybrid instruction, the option of face-to-face for speech and online for reading and writing in the first year was a structural element that students favored. Their reasoning was the acquisition of the speaking part of language learning, which is easier in the face-to-face format than online. Its progression in the second year can lead to online learning only. In regard to reading and writing, students preferred the online class, because those elements require time and depth that are only possible in online courses.

Question 2: If you compare face-to-face German I and online German II, what were the strengths and shortcomings in delivery?

When asking students about the comparison between face-to-face and online instructions, several strengths and weaknesses were pointed out. Having personal engagement time with the teacher and other learners, limited learning content and time to learn, more interaction with fellow students, and more practice with direct conversation were factors that described the students' preferences and strengths of the face-to-face class. The outstanding factors in the online class were the personal learning environment and time, as well as the pace of learning via a structured weekly module: having an entire week to watch the videos, study, and work on assignments. Repeatable grammar instructions through the Learning Glass compared to a one-time shot in the classroom—was another benefit of online delivery. The dynamics of the group, the individual needs of a student in the group, and the group itself take more focus and time than an independent online learner who creates their own learning environment.

Table 3

Strengths (S) and Shortcomings (SH) of Face-to-Face and Online Classes

FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
<p>Have to physically go to class. I think this can be good or bad. (S) (SH)</p>	<p>Personal learning environment. Not being required to show up in class allows a lot of flexibility in schedules. (S)</p>
<p>Being in class at a certain time regularly helps with being prepared and presenting during all course lessons. (S)</p>	<p>The ability to learn at one's own pace is helpful, especially when one is faster or slower than fellow students. (S)</p>
<p>Homework assignments are turned into the publisher's electronic textbook grading, or to the teacher/tutor. Outside of class material, I don't care for publisher-offered electronic homework. (SH)</p>	<p>Homework assignments are turned in online. (S)</p>
	<p>Time, flexibility, and ability to review all materials. Assignments have clear due dates and intents. (S)</p>
	<p>Having online tests that allowed multiple attempts and marked the questions I got wrong helped me to figure out which things I hadn't quite grasped yet. It allowed me to take note of exactly what I was missing, and to be able to keep working and studying until I really understood. (S)</p>
<p>Personal engagement time with teacher and other students. As someone who was very new to the German language, it helped to be in a group setting where I could practice speaking with other people. It challenged me and made me more confident with the language. (S)</p>	<p>Personal engagement time through video. When I took German I in person, I would sometimes feel rushed and needed more time with some subjects than the rest of the class did. The online course was really nice in this regard because I was able to go over things as many times</p>

Being able to ask questions and get immediate answers was very helpful in the beginning. When I first started learning German, it was very confusing to me and it was nice to be able to talk to the professor face-to-face. (S)

There's a lot more conversational exercises. The teacher is right there to correct and help you. In the face-to-face class, the textbook exercises get as much attention as the class time and learner and group dynamics allow. (S)

Given time to learn.

More interaction with fellow students. More practice with direct conversation. (S)

Ability to be corrected by others more spontaneously in person. (S)

Learning content is limited to the day of the instruction. (SH)

The time used in a face-to-face class to work on textbook exercises is limited. (SH)

Grammar instruction

one time (SH)

Too bad it's given only one time, but I guess that comes with the classroom. (SH)

It's better than having to get it all from the book. (S)

as I needed, pause and rewind videos, etc. It allowed me to really focus on the subjects that I struggled with and to take extra-detailed notes. I felt that this greatly improved my ability to learn. (S)

With German II, I felt that the weekly **Flipgrid videos** were enough speaking practice, since I was more comfortable with speaking at that point. (S)

Own time to learn via a weekly module, having an entire week to watch the videos, study, and work on assignments. (S)

I liked that I had the freedom to do schoolwork on my own schedule and felt like this made me more productive. I've really enjoyed doing the course online! I had never taken an online course before and wasn't entirely sure what to expect, so this was a very pleasant surprise. It works much better with my particular style of learning. (S)

Working at one's own pace, and having videos to watch over and over if something is not understood. (S)

Grammar instruction

is repeatable (S)

I liked being able to watch the Learning Glass videos over and over, until I got it. (S)

Authentic language speaking by teacher and in-person students use the language verbally more in the context of the group. (S)

I loved coming to class and spending time with everyone! I really enjoyed the sense of community that we had. It was a great introduction to the language and made me want to continue learning German! (S)

As someone who was very new to the German language, it helped to be in a group setting where I could practice speaking with other people. It challenged me and made me more confident with the language. (S)

There's more comradery between the students. (S)

It was easy to ask questions directly to the instructor, the students could practice speaking to each other in the class, and we could all follow along at the same time. (S)

Learning content is limited. (SH)
There was a very structured and laid-out plan to how the course was set up. (SH)

In the face-to-face class, the textbook exercises get as much attention as the class time and learner and group dynamics allow. (S)

Feedback

There is feedback on homework only if a student decides to turn in a paper copy. (SH)

Authentic language speaking by teacher via Flipgrid and audio readings, Learning Glass videos. (S)

With German II, I felt that the weekly Flipgrid videos were enough speaking practice. (S)

The Flipgrid assignments are to compensate for not being in the classroom, so the feedback is different and more individualized, but less spontaneous than in the classroom. (S)
(SH)

Learning content is open. (S)

Table 4

Participant Quotes to Challenges in Online Learning

If a lesson or concept is not covered in video or the textbook pages clearly enough or at all, it is much harder to overcome or know where to read for answers.

Grading is harder, because you may get a small detail wrong in a sentence, and would probably get partial credit in person. With online multiple choice, it's all or nothing. Also, you don't get much feedback on wrong answers online.

Getting in contact with the instructor might take a little bit longer than in a face-to-face class, mostly because of having to email them rather than just talking to them in class. On the other hand, a professional online teacher answers students' needs in 24 hours, which is sometimes sooner than in a face-to-face class.

I don't have the flashcards that came with the textbook and I don't have time to make them myself, so it's a lot harder to learn the new vocabulary words. (We have vocabulary pages in the weekly module now!) (We have a vocabulary page now!)

There are assignments created especially for online. In a face-to-face class, the same assignment would not be possible. For example, the music assignment is an individualized assignment to listen to the text of a song; that takes time.

Most people taking online classes simply lack dynamic-enough schedules to practice conversation with others (as in my case). So I don't know if that is a problem universally resolvable.

Question 3: With online delivery becoming more common, what design elements would you select as a designer, and what would your preferred course delivery model as a student be?

When asking students about their choice of design elements and their preferred course model, the participants found the face-to-face class or hybrid model preferable during the first

year of language instruction, because of the personal connection to the teacher and the conversational possibilities in class. Design elements in each model were to give extra attention to the speaking of the language in the electronic format to compensate for the missing classroom.

Other, universal design elements mentioned were inclusiveness, a straightforward, easy-to-read syllabus, structured modules that show visual design as well as inclusiveness, simple deadlines, and other organized content that they liked. There was also a call for more guided feedback and more speaking opportunities besides meeting on Zoom and Flip Interact. The Learning Glass videos, produced at the eCampus studio as a visual element for grammar instruction, were received well, and added to all principles of language learning online. According to one student, many learning portals need too many links, while links through Blackboard and Canvas, and writing assignments through Google, are hubs of learning and easy to use in comparison to some publisher-based classes. Building up a video library of documentation of teaching that adds to the authenticity and quality of a course was also mentioned. Other design elements included drawing from the local student body on campus in person to combine face-to-face and online options, adding the hybrid component to the speaking instructions and interactions, and sponsoring the growth of a German language community, including club activities.

The overall preferred learning style of the students is hybrid classes, because they include the speaking part of language learning in class. This important level of “real time” speech practice, engagement, and feedback add to the language learning. However, students who are more experienced with online classes find online learning altogether easier than beginners, and therefore are able to easily apply the technology and its consequent teaching. Some students think online learning starting on the 102 level has many advantages, because it takes more time

to read and write than to speak, especially if one wants to dig deeper on their own. This requires easy-to-read, laid-out assignments and engaged, reflective teachers.

As a result of the short evaluation research, I asked for professional feedback on course design and assistance. In my second year of teaching online, I had received professional feedback from the designers at eCampus who were and still are the other responsible party in the teamwork between curriculum and high-performance production. At the moment, the designated eCampus designer and myself are upgrading and renewing all courses while transferring them onto the new Canvas platform.

An excellent source for feedback and evaluation of my courses is to receive student feedback on the courses through a new program, the Learner Experience Advocacy Program (LEAP), introduced by UAF eCampus. The program partners together students and online instructors to gain high-quality feedback on course design and teaching practice. My participation in LEAP will elevate the courses onto a new professional level by opening them to further professional feedback and future analysis, and at the same time, installing a connection between students and teachers, other professionals, and the community, therefore gaining new experience and knowledge. My two student advocates are guests in the courses they review, and they focus their feedback on established course design areas. The program facilitates regular meetings between student advocates and instructors. The LEAP students who are assigned to my course are essential to move the course forward.

When I learned of Quality Matters (QM), an international organization that specializes in standards and professional development for online courses, I applied to have the courses peer reviewed to adjust the course structure of both face-to-face and online classes and to have them checked for the standards shown in the QM rubrics. The internal review at UAF revealed small

technical issues—for example, that I should attach and embed videos in a more user-friendly way. As mentioned, this seems to be a small issue, but looking at it from the student perspective, it could easily become a point of frustration over technical issues that might lead to a loss of interest in the content.

Chapter 5 Reflections and Recommendations on the Project “The Online Challenge”

5.1 Reflections

In this paper, I attempted to show that an effective online language course can be delivered using certain instructional methods and strategies and a model of design that is based on reflective pedagogy and the course’s learning goals and outcomes. Having been given the opportunity to develop and teach professionally designed online German language classes for UAF, it became possible to open German 100- and 200-level language courses to students in and outside of Alaska, and around the world. Our courses include students from 20 different towns and villages in Alaska, from Ketchikan all the way up to Bethel, the Lower 48, Israel, Hong Kong, and Germany.

The evaluation of online versus face-to-face language learning provided insight into how to make different delivery models more effective and rewarding for future students and teachers. This paper describes the research methodology and scientific approach of reviewing the effectiveness of different delivery methods in elementary German language courses. Its purpose and the outcomes are meant to challenge the common criticism that online courses are less effective than face-to-face courses. This study also offers new ways of learning and teaching a foreign language. Influenced by my ontological beliefs of questioning what is in front of me, I wanted to ask students to share their opinion about the two courses, and I chose a mixed methods approach to prove my hypothesis. The different findings in the Speaking and Reading sections show that online classes and face-to-face classes each have their strengths and their weaknesses. Online wins in Reading and Writing, whereas face-to-face wins in Speaking and Listening.

Students accept the online Speaking platform as a valid speaking feature. The platform offers feedback from the cohort, so students exchange knowledge amongst themselves, which satisfies their desire for interaction and comradery. However, this means that students have to put out their personal effort to connect with their peers, while in the face-to-face class that takes place automatically. Another benefit of Speaking online: Flipgrid offers more individualized possibilities, and class time is not a factor. The Reading and Writing sections seem to be accepted as equal between the two courses, though online gives more individualized options for freewriting and interpretations. Although Speaking online is a challenge to be addressed, online offers many advantages of personal learning environments and self-learning opportunities. All in all, face-to-face time is regulated by the university, while online learning gives a student the possibility to explore and include more self-learning in a purposeful, interactional, as well as personal learning environment.

In retrospect, we created a course in which some textbook exercises get more attention in the online course because they are an active part in the weekly module, as students are required to read them, write about them, and record themselves reading their writing on the weekly Flipgrid video. Purposefully designed assignments from exercises in the textbook connect all parts of language learning linguistically and promote language awareness and production (see “Learning Glass Videos,” “Flip Video Assignment,” and “Music Assignment”). There are no generic or publisher-created assignments and assessments, which authenticates and personalizes the course.

When grading freewriting assignments and comparing them with the opinion section of the music assignment and the speaking assignment on Flip, I am able to connect the learner’s abilities and disposition. Although the weekly Flip video feedback to the student is very time

intensive at times with high student numbers, it is a necessary method to be in touch with every student, and to get an idea of who a student is. Giving attention to the interconnection of the different areas of learning also gives a glimpse of who the student is and how they view and approach online learning (example from genitive exercises in German 102: [GER 102 for Thesis](#)).

5.2 Recommendations

As an online teacher, one has the chance to reach their students by being interactive, engaging, and dynamic, as well as offering a personal style and good, effective, nonjudgmental communication in order to pull students into a course. This is our only chance to show ourselves as a teacher. When removing our own person from a course to become the grader and technician, we are missing our teaching chance. Since the COVID crisis has diminished, students are returning to face-to-face classes as well. Teaching online has taught me to structure my face-to-face classes in new ways and to include more assignments that replace the textbook. For example, the setup of the final exam in the face-to-face class will be more of a freewriting style instead of linguistically organized questions.

Having developed and taught seven different 100- and 200-level German online courses to a large number of students, and having asked students about their learning experiences in a face-to-face and online class, I have shown the effectiveness of different delivery methods in teaching elementary German language courses at the college level.

The findings of the project “The Online Challenge” will hopefully influence other educators to move their language courses to an online platform and use instructional design strategies to design and develop their online courses.

The demand for online learning remains very strong, and it shows in the increase in student numbers in German 100- and 200-level courses, which more than doubled in the last three years. This is possible with consciously designed professional courses. The forecast for online classes is an increasing demand on the student side, and on the provider side it calls for the provision of flexible attendance options and digital modalities. Online learning is establishing itself as an equal part of learning in higher education, and as the creators of courses we need to show how excellent courses can be. The abovementioned changes in the area of online learning and the important experiences from developing and teaching online courses need now to be evaluated, transposed, and applied back to my face-to-face courses.

5.3 Limitations and Further Research

The question of whether it is possible to learn to speak a language online should be rephrased to “How is it possible to learn a language online?” My answer is “Yes, it is,” and my course shall prove that it is possible, because online educational technology offers many applications, including the hybrid learner model for online students to learn to speak online. It is the teacher’s decision to have the interest to explore and use these gadgets or not.

This and other new projects about remote teaching will be necessary steps to update previous face-to-face courses with new perspectives. Ten years ago, the written exam in the face-to-face class was a 10-page handwritten exam to be finished in 90 minutes. It was structured with vocabulary, comprehension questions, grammar, and culture. In the current online written exam, students write a 500-word story that they choose, which forces them to apply all those concepts as well. There are many explanations for the difference between the two exams, but I know that students like to think for themselves instead of learning for test questions.

After teaching face-to-face for 8 years, and online for 5, I am going to teach hybrid for the first time in the fall of 2022. That means I will use my online experience to design face-to-face components that are in sync with learning objectives, goals, assignments, and assessments. This is quite contrary to how I started out. My “maiden voyage” hybrid approach is to use the online curriculum for both classes and use the speaking content in class. Because both classes have to be equal in content and delivery, the different content designed has to be equal. In the face-to-face class there is more speaking because of the classroom, while in the online class there is more writing and reading that cannot be substituted in class because of time limitations, etc. In short, all the work from students online and in person will be online and will be graded online. The in-class time is to allow in-person learning in all areas, but mainly in listening and speaking.

5.4 Afterword

Teaching online has been a challenge and an adventure to unknown horizons that my left-brained self never foresaw. When designing, and now redesigning, courses and teaching synchronous and hybrid online, I rediscovered the value of using music in the courses from my own learning of the English language through musical texts. Music also gave me back the structural knowledge of thinking about the end product as a logical step-by-step process that is open-ended but presents a result. I also profited from speech and voice training, especially when recording audio texts. Last year, I began inviting students to assist with audio readings. My experience in stage performance made it easy to perform for students, making it easier for them to hear me clearly and be able to comprehend. It was not difficult to produce decent videos and Learning Glass videos in the studio and to encourage students in my weekly videos to not be afraid to record themselves. The aforementioned interests, skill sets, and values take a lot of time

and energy to grow into. In German, we say that “there is no master falling from heaven,” which translates as “to get really good at it, one has to spend enough time practicing.” The time that goes into designing a professional online course is never-ending, so one must be passionate about it and never question the amount of time spent. Chris and I spent numerous hours in weekly meetings working on the courses. We designed in a true team fashion: I gave him the content and what I wanted, and he formatted Learning Glass videos for grammar instruction, music, and speech assignments for three different-level courses. The numbers show the work. So far, we have created 14x3 (42) weekly quizzes per course, 14x3 (42) music assignments, 150x3 (450) homework assignments, 25 Learning Glass videos, 50 audio vocabulary pages, and approximately 50 audio text readings.

Because I was raised and educated in Germany, I seem to have brought that attitude with me that is so well described in *The Magic Mountain*, by Thomas Mann, when Hans Castrop, the main character, describes the German attitude in three words: “work, food and sleep.” This is how to build a professional online course. As change is imminent, so are the changes that occur when designing, teaching, and evaluating an online course. As educational and online research continue, a course continually evolves, and is never done.

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Appendix A

IRB Letter of Exemption

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O0py-TbeGUjzGMjN67iShoCZuTGHA_TTEXgZ-tfRJ-8/ed

Print of survey:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tD3LncHv9RCCbbxRRgnj9xz_6noEu44YU7h3_18Znng/edit

You are invited to participate in a 20-minute survey to compare and evaluate online and face-to-face course effectiveness and overall learning outcomes. Elementary German I was offered to you as a face-to-face-delivered course, and Elementary German II can be taken by online delivery only. This evaluation will provide insight into how to make different delivery models more effective and rewarding for future students. Your answers are confidential.

Volunteer Statement: You are a volunteer. The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. If you decide to participate, you may stop at any time. You will not be treated any differently if you decide not to participate in the study or if you stop once you have started.

Confidentiality Statement: Any information about your participation, including your identity, is completely confidential. The following steps will be taken to ensure this confidentiality: A unique code will be generated to label your data. The relationship between this code and your identifying information will be kept strictly confidential and maintained offline in a locked office; this list of associations will be destroyed within a year of survey collection. When

reporting the results of surveys, care will be taken to ensure that no individual's response can be dismissed. If you have questions, please contact Helga Wagenleiter, hwagenleiter@alaska.edu.

Participant Consent: My participation in the survey is the acknowledgment that I have read and understand the consent agreement and agree to participate.

Appendix B

Questionnaire

SurveyMonkey Survey

Effectiveness of Delivery Methods in Elementary German Language Courses

You are invited to participate in a 20-minute survey to compare and evaluate online and face-to-face course effectiveness and overall learning outcomes. Elementary German I was offered to you as a face-to-face-delivered course, and Elementary German II can be taken by online delivery only. This evaluation will provide insight into how to make different delivery models more effective and rewarding for future students. Your answers are confidential.

Volunteer Statement

You are a volunteer. The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. If you decide to participate, you may stop at any time. You will not be treated any differently if you decide not to participate in the study or if you stop once you have started.

Confidentiality Statement

Any information about your participation, including your identity, is completely confidential. The following steps will be taken to ensure this confidentiality: A unique code will be generated to label your data. The relationship between this code and your identifying information will be kept strictly confidential and maintained offline in a locked office; this list of associations will be destroyed within a year of survey collection. When reporting the results of surveys, care will be taken to ensure

that no individual's response can be missed or falsified.

If you have questions, please contact:

Helga Wagenleiter, email: hwagenleiter@alaska.edu, Tel: 907-460-5600

Participant Consent

My participation in the survey is the acknowledgment that I have read and understand the consent agreement and agree to participate.

Demographics and Interest in German

1. Why are you interested in learning German? (Check all that apply.)

- Interested in the German language, culture, and history
- Core requirement for university degree
- Professional purpose (e.g., tourism, business, travel) Other (please specify)
- Class was recommended to me
- Teacher was recommended to me
- Limited other language classes are available

2. What is your current academic standing? (Spring 2020 semester)

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other
- Higher degree (Master's)

3. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

- Other
- Undisclosed

4. Age

- Under 18
- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55+
- Senior

5. How many online classes have you taken, including this semester? (Online includes synchronous/hybrid and asynchronous delivery.)

- 0–1
- 2–3
- 4–5
- 6+

6. What is your preferred learning style or delivery method for college classes?

- Face-to-face, in-class learning with a teacher
- Online learning format, asynchronous (self-guided learning without online meetings)
- Online learning format, synchronous (online meetings)
- Online/hybrid/mixed format (some online meetings or 1–3 face-to-face meetings)
- Other (please specify)

(The following questions will rate the design and effectiveness of online and face-to-face German courses for learning the language. Your information will inform future course design.)

7. Overall, what are the strengths of the *online-delivered* German II course? (Name 3)

8. Overall, what are the strengths of the *face-to-face-delivered* German I course? (Name 3)

9. What are the primary challenges, if any, you are encountering in the German II online course?

10. Comparing your online learning and face-to-face learning experiences, how valuable is it for you to interact with the teacher face to face for learning a foreign language?

Extremely valuable

Very valuable

Not so valuable

Not at all valuable

11. If you had a choice, select the delivery method you would prefer for learning a foreign language.

Online asynchronous

Online synchronous

Face-to-face

Online/hybrid/mixed format

Other (please specify)

12. Comprehension: Very good, Good, Satisfactory, Poor, or Very poor.

Online German II: _____

Face-to-Face German I: _____

13. Rate your overall *online* and *face-to-face* course learning experience in *speaking* comprehension: Very good, Good, Satisfactory, Poor, or Very poor.

Online German II: _____

Face-to-Face German I: _____

14. Rate your overall *online* and *face-to-face* course learning experience in *reading* comprehension: Very good, Good, Satisfactory, Poor, or Very poor.

Online German II: _____

Face-to-Face German I: _____

15. Rate your overall *online* and *face-to-face* course learning experience in *writing* comprehension: Very good, Good, Satisfactory, Poor, or Very poor.

Online German II: _____

Face-to-Face German I: _____

16. Overall, how do you rate the design and learning experience of the online German II course you just took?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Satisfactory

Poor

Very poor

17. Overall, how do you rate the design and learning experience of the face-to-face German I course you took?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Satisfactory

Poor

Very poor

18. How could the online class be improved to support the comprehension of the German language and make learning fun?

19. How likely is it that you recommend German as an online class to other people?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

20. How likely is it that you take another language course delivered in an online format in the future?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

21. Please add any other comments you may have about the effectiveness of online and face-to-face learning and course delivery.

Appendix C

Interviews

<https://drive.google.com/drive/search?q=The%20Online%20challenge>

Overall, what is your preferred learning style in college? Why? (Consider face-to-face, online, and hybrid.)

- My favorite is hybrid because you get the engagements and the ability to ask questions and more effectively in real time in person, and you also get the online resources and clear structure that you can have when everything's set up online as well as the flexibility of working online. I'm in with using online as the method for German 102. One of the big strengths is the flexibility and ability to work around my schedule, and to have access to materials online and see the assignments clearly laid out.
- Because I'm able to receive feedback quicker and I'm also able to give you questions. So, that's a big terminator of why students take face to face. Hybrid, that's a very interesting one. To be honest, I haven't exactly taken hybrid classes, so I don't exactly know how to feel about that. And I was able to learn a bit better, because I get to see you actually teaching this to us.
- My preferred learning style is dependent on a few factors, first off if it's face to face it depends on how good the teacher is and how enthusiastic they are because I've gotten more out of an online class due to the fact that the teacher was uninterested and/or did not understand the concepts of self. Hybrid is very good.

If you compare face-to-face in German I and online in German II, what were the strengths and shortcomings in delivery?

- I'm in with using online as the method for German 102 for above reasons, whereas in person you'd have to physically go to class, do the homework assignments and bring them into class. And that was much more fixed. So there's flexibility online. In class one gets a bit more engagement time.
- The online classes, I could learn at my own pace, and I can. Basically, it gives me time to work on it. Strength of the online course is that I can see what we're going to be taught, I could see where we are. For the face to face class the shortcoming is that it's not at my own pace. About the learning glass, you know that's like an instruction that you can repeat at home at your own pace 100 times until you get it.
- I'm indifferent between the two, I think they are both capable of delivering good programs, and online is good as long as the teacher is there/is present. It depends on your aptitude and it depends on your level of interest in the class because you might have to dig deeper into the class and into the subject. Online takes more effort on the students' part to learn it in some respects, if you want to really dig deep versus in person, where the teacher is right there and they can explain it to you instantaneously, so there has to be a higher level of maturity to do well and succeed in an online class. My hearing might not always be the best so in the face to face class I can hear all the different accents that people will have when you're in a room with people. So I can hear all of the other sounds that people are making and figure out which sounds to make. I can see their mouth move, then I know okay.

With online delivery becoming more common, what design elements would you select as a designer, and what would your preferred course delivery model be as a student? Describe it.

- Having as many as possible links through Blackboard or on it is really easy because it saves us from going through learning portals. I'm not a big fan of publisher based classes. Being able to do writing assignments through Google is sort of a better way where you can really, you can do it almost like it's written out or you can have more freeform questions than using the quiz structure. Through hybrid or online, you're able to build up those videos and sort of those resources from previous teachings, like my

thermodynamics class has multiple videos that Professor recorded years prior, that are the resources. So I think sort of having Blackboard is a hub with pulling in YouTube and Google docs for homework or online submissions, as well as the quiz structures.

- I just want to know the teacher, on the other end, and so that's where I feel kind of the hybrid portion takes care of that, just as long as you can see a face and actually have some sort of connection, like you know them a little bit, it just makes all the difference in the world, because if I if I don't know the teacher or the person it's hard for me to become enthused. I think people feed off of other people's energy. When you have someone who's genuinely excited to build a course and teach the course then students will, in my opinion, catch up. Like I said before, I've gotten more out of an online class when the teacher doesn't have the enthusiasm to actually teach the class and vice versa.

Appendix D
Course Syllabus

<https://canvas.alaska.edu/courses/11903/assignments/syllabus>

WILLKOMMEN! WELCOME to German 102!

Attached you will find some important information to guide you through this course.

TITLE: GER F102X UX1 Elementary German	INSTRUCTOR: Helga Wagenleiter
NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION: Gruening 606
CREDITS: 4	OFFICE HOURS: Mon 4-5pm (Online)
PREREQUISITES: German 101	TELEPHONE: 907-460-5600
LOCATION: Online	EMAIL: hwagenleiter@alaska.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the continuation of German 101, a 4-credit, 15-week online course in German language and culture, divided into 6 chapters. Essential parts will be vocabulary and grammar, as well as learning how to speak and tell your story.

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are 4 basic skills of language learning. They will occur throughout the chapters in your textbook and in other given materials, in your own work, in group work, and through discussion boards. You will learn to speak and write in German about yourself, your interests, your family, and your life in college or elsewhere.

Through your study of German, you will begin to achieve an international, intellectual identity as you discover new dimensions of imagination in speech.

COURSE GOALS

- The main goal is to help you reach a second basic level of communicative competence in German through recognition, understanding, and use of linguistic structures. Conversational fluency can be reached through an emphasis on listening, comprehending, speaking, reading, and interacting.
- Develop a basic vocabulary of 1,000 words.
- Develop knowledge of German culture through language, texts, and audiovisual materials.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE - “Know your grammar!”

- Recognition and use of linguistic structures.
- Understanding of the dialogues and other reading material in the textbook.
- Knowledge of basic rules of German grammar and pronunciation.
- Knowledge of basic geographic features of German-speaking countries.
- Knowledge of basic ethnic and socio-cultural features of German-speaking countries.
- Knowledge of basic German history of the 20th century.
- Familiarity with some culturally conditioned behavioral norms and customs as they affect daily life in the German-speaking world.

PERFORMANCE - “Tell your story!”

- Pronounce German sounds correctly.
- Read the dialogues and other reading selections in the textbook with reasonably authentic inflection and accuracy.
- Apply appropriate German grammar rules when responding, orally and in writing, to the questions based on dialogues and reading.
- Sustain simple conversations in German and respond appropriately in formal and informal settings.
- Comment appropriately on cultural information gained from the textbook and the instructor about the German way of life (in English in our Forum session on Thursdays).
- Answer basic questions about the history and geography of German-speaking countries.
- Compare German and English grammatical structure and vocabulary. (This is put into practice through weekly etymological research by you, the student, about the history of a word, common in English and German, called a “cognate.”)
- Share your own unique story with other German speakers, cumulated and tested in your verbal exam.

DISPOSITION - “Meet the people and the country!”

- Appreciation of basic aspects of geography, history, political systems, and socio-economic conditions in the German-speaking countries.
- Appreciation of cultural diversity between German and American values, conventions, and lifestyles.

COURSE READINGS/MATERIALS

Textbook:

Your weekly textbook pages are embedded in the course; however, for extensive pronunciation and other exercises you may use the Standalone Digital Access Version of *Neue Horizonte, Introductory German, 8th Edition, Dollenmayer/Hansen, Cengage Learning, ISBN-13: 978-1-111-34419-1, available at Amazon.com.*

Neue Horizonte consists of an introductory chapter and 12 regular chapters. We will cover chapters 6–12 this semester.

We will also use a video application, **FLIPGRID.com**, to send weekly videos. For live sessions we talk on Zoom, or email/telephone.

For students on UAF campus, I offer weekly life sessions at the Department of Foreign Languages for speaking practice.

Flipgrid and other videos: Your weekly Flipgrid and instructions, as well as other videos, are embedded in the course and can be found in the weekly assignments folder.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE

You will need regular access to a computer and the Internet to access online materials in Blackboard. You will be expected to download the course material as well as upload assignments.

[Accessibility Statement](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Flipgrid Help Center](#)

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Teaching techniques in this course include a weekly interactive session on Flipgrid, lectures via Learning Glass sessions and other videos, use of Blackboard, blogs for pair work, and Discussion Board for small-group discussions. The interactive sessions contain “Kettenreaktion” (chain reaction) for memorization and interactive learning, vocabulary drills, dictations, writing short paragraphs about yourself and your family (also in the form of email), as well as short dialogues.

Course Schedule GER 102 - Spring 2022		
	Topics Covered	Due Dates: Sunday midnight
Week 1: 01-10 - 01-16	Recapture Ch. 6: Present Perfect Tense	01-16-2022
Week 2: 01-17 - 01-23	Chapter 7: Der- und Ein- Words	01-23-2022
Week 3: 01-24 - 01-30	Chapter 7: Verbs with 2-way Prepositions	01-30-2022

Week 4: 01-31 - 02-06	Chapter 8: Subordinate Clauses and Subordinating Conjunctions	02-06-2022
Week 5: 02-07 - 02-13	Chapter 8: The Genitive Case	02-13-2022
Week 6: 02-14 - 02-20	Chapter 9: Adjective Endings	02-20-2022
Week 7: 02-21 - 02-27	Chapter 9: Ordinal Numbers	02-27-2022
Week 8: 02-28 - 03-06	Chapter 10: Simple Past Tense	03-06-2022
Week 9: 03-07 - 03-13	SPRING BREAK Catch up on your homework	03-13-2022
Week 10: 03-14 - 03-20	Chapter 10: Past Perfect Tense	03-20-2022
Week 11: 03-21 - 03-27	Chapter 11: Reflexive Verbs and Pronouns	03-27-2022
Week 12: 03-28 - 04-03	Chapter 11: Adjectives and Pronouns	04-03-2022
Week 13: 04-04 - 04-10	Chapter 12: Comparison of Adjectives and Adverbs	04-10-2022
Week 14: 04-11 - 04-17	Chapter 12: Relative Pronouns and Relative Clauses	04-17-2022
Week 15: 04-18 - 04-24	Oral and Written Exam	04-24-2022

EVALUATION POLICIES

The evaluation of your success will consist of written and spoken word.

You will be able to earn 1,000 points throughout the semester.

Here is the breakdown:

- 14 weekly quizzes - 15%
- Weekly electronic and other homework - 15%
- Midterm exam - 10%
- Flipgrid weekly discussions - 15%

- Music assessment - 15%
- Oral exam - 15%
- Final exam - 15%

Quizzes: (15%)

To measure your progress and see how you are doing in the course, you will take a short quiz at the end of each week. You turn it in by Sunday midnight. You can check your scores right away, and you have multiple attempts should you fail.

Turning in your quizzes will not only give me a better understanding of your progress, but in return will give you the chance to get assistance if needed. Don't hesitate to ask—questions are there to be asked—and hopefully one of your peers or myself will be able to answer per quiz. If you complete all quizzes up to your midterm exam and are satisfied with your accumulated grade, you may allow this grade to count as your midterm exam.

Weekly homework: (15%)

The homework for each week is embedded in your course and is part of every week's assignments. It is an extended form of the format of the quiz.

Midterm exam: (10%)

The midterm exam will measure your understanding and grasp of the material mid semester". You will receive the exam at the end of Week 8.

Flipgrid weekly discussions: (15%)

Acquisition of language is revealed in the ability to speak the language. It is, therefore, most important to validate and test the verbal ability to speak and interact in the German language. Every week, we will be talking to each other on Flipgrid. Your participation in this interactive session will give you the grade for the performance part ("Tell your story") of the course.

Music assessment: (15%)

After listening to my music choice of the week, I would like you to write out 10 vocabulary words that you understand/like from the text (5 points). In addition, I would like you to write a short paragraph about what you understand from the text (5 points). Post these assignments to the week's Discussion Board in our Blackboard course.

Oral exam: (15%)

Throughout the semester we will practice speaking, and your oral exam is the cumulation of all speaking. You may take your oral exam on campus if you are in town, or by submitting a final Flipgrid video.

Final exam: (15%)

In language everything is cumulative, so this exam will cover the whole semester. The final exam for this course has been set for the week of April 19, 2022. The exam will be on Blackboard, and you can take it online.

Included please find the grading scale for your course.

97–100 A+	87–89 B+	77–79 C+	67–69 D+
93–96 A	83–86 B	73–76 C	63–66 D
90–92 A-	80–82 B-	70–72 C-	60–62 D-

C– (1.7) is the minimum acceptable grade that undergraduate students may receive for courses to count toward the major or minor degree requirements, or as a prerequisite for another course. A minimum grade of C (2.0), however, MAY be required by specific programs for prerequisite and/or major/minor courses. Please consult specific program listings in the UAF Catalog.

C– (1.7) is the minimum acceptable grade required for all Core (X) Courses.

EXPLANATION OF NB/I/W GRADES

This course adheres to the UAF policy regarding the granting of NB grades: *The NB grade is for use only in situations in which the instructor has No Basis upon which to assign a grade. In general, the NB grade will not be granted.*

Your instructor follows the University of Alaska Fairbanks Incomplete Grade Policy:

“The letter ‘I’ (Incomplete) is a temporary grade used to indicate that the student has satisfactorily completed (C or better) the majority of work in a course but for personal reasons beyond the student’s control, such as sickness, he or she has not been able to complete the course during the regular semester. Negligence or indifference are not acceptable reasons for an ‘I’ grade.”

Successful, timely completion of this course depends on committing yourself early and maintaining your effort. To this end, this course adheres to the following UAF eLearning Procedures:

1. The first contact assignment (Introduction) is due one week after the first day of instruction. *Failure to submit this assignment within the first two weeks of the course could result in withdrawal from the course.*
2. The first content assignment (Lesson 1) is due one week after the first day of instruction. *Failure to submit this assignment within the first two weeks of the course could result in withdrawal from the course.*
3. *Failure to submit the first three content assignments (Assignments 1, 2, and 3) by the deadline for faculty-initiated withdrawals (the ninth Friday after the first day of classes) could result in instructor-initiated withdrawal from the course (W).*

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE TIME

Depending on the type of contact, I will respond to you right away or in 24 hours with a phone call, email, or text. Electronically graded materials are available right away. Other instructor-assigned work will be returned within 48 hours of the assignment due date, but no longer than a week. Written homework is due Sunday evenings at midnight.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR GRADES

To check your grades for assignments and find comments from your instructor, click on the My Grades link in the sidebar menu. All the assignments and their due dates are listed. If your

instructor has left comments, there will be a Comments link. Click on this link to view comments.

If the score is for a test or quiz, click on the check mark or your score to see results and feedback.

If the score is for an assignment, the title of the assignment is a link; by clicking this link you'll be taken to your submission, grade, and comments.

If you see a green exclamation point, your assignment has not been graded yet.

EXPECTATION OF STUDENT EFFORT

Students should expect to spend 10–12 hours per week on this class. Students are expected to complete the weekly assignments by their due dates. If circumstances arise that cause you to need extra time on any assignment(s), email your instructor for guidance. Extensions of due dates may be granted, but your instructor expects to be informed in advance if you are not able to submit your assignment on time. (Emergency situations will be dealt with as needed.) Students are expected to maintain a working backup plan to be implemented in the event of a computer malfunction or an interruption of their normal Internet service during the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As described by UAF, scholastic dishonesty constitutes a violation of the university rules and regulations and is punishable according to the procedures outlined by UAF. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating includes providing answers to or taking answers from another student. Plagiarism includes use of another author's words or arguments without attribution. Collusion includes unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of any course requirement. Scholastic dishonesty is punishable by removal from the course and a grade of "F." For more information, see "Student Code of Conduct." (<http://uaf.edu/usa/student-resources/conduct>)

SUPPORT SERVICES

UAF eLearning Student Services helps students with registration and course schedules, provides information about lessons and student records, assists with the examination process, and answers general questions. Our Academic Advisor can help students communicate with instructors, locate helpful resources, and maximize their distance learning experience. Contact the UAF eLearning Student Services staff at 907.455.2060 or toll-free 1.800.277.8060, or contact staff directly—for directory listing, go to <http://elearning.uaf.edu/contact>.

UAF Help Desk

Go to <http://www.alaska.edu/oit/> to see about current network outages and news.

Reach the Help Desk at:

- email: helpdesk@alaska.edu
- fax: 907.450.8312
- phone: 907.450.8300 (in the Fairbanks area) or 1.800.478.8226 (outside of Fairbanks)

DISABILITY SERVICES

UAF is obligated to provide accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student who has a disability. Please identify yourself to UAF Disability Services by applying for accommodations. To be considered for UAF Disability Services accommodations, individuals must be enrolled for at least one credit as a UAF student. For more information, contact Disability Services at uaf-disabilityservices@alaska.edu, 907-474-5655, or by TTY at 907-474-1827.

TITLE IX PROTECTION

University of Alaska Board of Regents have clearly stated in BOR Policy that discrimination, harassment, and violence will not be tolerated on any campus of the University of Alaska. If you believe you are experiencing discrimination or any form of harassment, including sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, you are encouraged to report that behavior. If you report to a faculty member or any university employee, they must notify the UAF Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident.

Your choices for reporting include:

1. You may access confidential counseling by contacting the UAF Health & Counseling Center at 907-474-7043;
2. You may access support and file a Title IX report by contacting the UAF Title IX Coordinator at 907-474-6600;
3. You may file a criminal complaint by contacting the University Police Department at 907-474-7721.

COVID

Students should keep up-to-date on the university's policies, practices, and mandates related to COVID-19 by regularly checking this website:

<https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/coronavirus/uaf/uaf-students?authuser=0>

Further, students are expected to adhere to the university's policies, practices, and mandates, and are subject to disciplinary actions if they do not comply.

OTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

There are many resources available to students including:

- [Academic Advising Center](#)
- [CTC Debbie Moses Learning Center](#)
- [Math & Stat Tutoring Lab](#)
- [Rural Student Services](#)
- [Speaking Center](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Writing Center](#)