



GERMAN

For more information, please visit our web site at: www-personal.umich.edu/~jshie

The following pages offer basic information about the RC German program, including notes on placement and descriptions of the proficiency exam, RC German courses, and co-curricular activities. The RC German Program guides students to an upper intermediate level of language mastery using a semi-immersion approach. RC German intensive language students benefit from learning in small team-taught classes that focus on student learning. Since up to 70% of students who take German I have never studied German before, we take pride in working closely with students, helping them make connections, and witnessing their success mastering the language.

Notes on Placement

Course #	Credits	Prerequisites
RCCORE 191:	8	None. (Students with some HS German take RCCORE 191 in Fall. Those with no background in German often elect RCCORE 191 in the Winter.)
RCCORE 291:	8	RCCORE 191 or equivalent. (Often students with 3-4 years of HS German.)
RCCORE 321:	4	Proficiency. Non-RC students must have permission of instructor.
RCCORE 311:	4	Failed attempt at Proficiency Exam or permission of Program Director

Incoming RC students who already know some German (i.e., High School study) should take the LSA German Placement exam during orientation, even if they do not plan to take German at that time. Students with some high school background in German usually place into German 191 or 291 on the basis of the LSA German Department Placement Test. RCCORE 191 is for students with limited (or no) previous practice using German; students with one to three years of high school German often place into that course and find it to be the right level. Although the placement test is generally a good indicator of levels, occasionally students "try out" RCCORE 291 (second year German) and decide with their instructors that it would be best to drop back to RCCORE 191 (first year German) a few weeks into the semester. Since German I and II meet at the same times, this can be done easily.



Incoming students with more extensive backgrounds (several years of German in school and/or experience abroad) are sometimes advised to take the RC German Proficiency Exam in August. See the section on "proficiency" below.

RC German Course Descriptions and the RC German Proficiency Exam

RCCORE 191 & RCCORE 291: Intensive German I and Intensive German II. RCCORE 191 (Intensive First-year German) and RCCORE 291 (Intensive Second-Year German) each meet twice daily, four days a week (M,T,Th,F) for eight credits per course. The intensive courses strike a balance between emphasizing mastery of grammatical features and development of reading writing, listening, and speaking skills. Progress in these courses is measured by participation in discussions and class activities, performance on quizzes and tests, and participation at co-curricular activities (lunch table and coffee hours). Students receive ongoing feedback on their work and they have opportunities to work with instructors and advanced students outside of class.

The goal of Intensive German I is to provide students with a solid knowledge of German grammatical structures, a basic vocabulary, and practice speaking and understanding spoken and written German. Students in this course cover the entire first year of study in one semester. At the end of the first semester, students can understand simplified written texts and short, spoken passages without the aid of a dictionary and they can express themselves spontaneously in everyday conversation. The final exam for RCCORE 191 is modeled after the proficiency exam, but geared to the first-year (novice) level. It measures grammatical accuracy and aptitude in all four language skills.

Intensive German II covers second-year German in one semester. The goals of the course include review and expansion of the grammar and vocabulary presented in RCCORE 191 and further development of student's reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. As in the other RC German courses, all instruction is conducted in German. Classroom instruction includes discussions, impromptu speaking exercises, writing assignments, and listening and reading exercises. Reading materials focus on autobiographical writing from the 20th century. The arts (including imaginative writing, music, and theater) are often integrated into instruction in German II. In RCCORE 291, class is sometimes held in an art gallery, an art studio, a local café, the library, or a museum. A primary objective which RCCORE 291 students strive to meet is "passing proficiency". The proficiency exam serve as a qualifying exam for the next required course in the sequence, RCCORE 321 (German Readings.)

The German Proficiency Exam is given three times each year—in August (for advanced incoming RC students), in December and in April. All RC students who have completed RCCORE 291 (or the equivalent), or RCCORE 311 (Accelerated Review) are required to take and pass the RC German proficiency exam before going on to RCCORE 321 (German Readings).



The proficiency exam is a 5-part, comprehensive test of language ability that measures: a) listening comprehension; b) reading comprehension; c) mastery of German grammar; d) ability to express ideas in writing; and e) speaking skills. Conscientious work in our first- and second- year intensive courses normally develops sufficient linguistic abilities to pass the proficiency exam. Since the proficiency exam is a qualifying exam for German Readings, students who let time lapse before going on to the German Readings course, must re-take the German proficiency exam.

RCCORE 311: Accelerated Review

This course is designed for students, whose linguistic skills are not sufficiently developed to pass the proficiency exam. The course is intended for students who do not pass Proficiency after RCCORE 291, and for students who attempt, but do not pass Proficiency as incoming students, but whose skills are advanced enough that they do not need to take RCCORE 291. Only students who have already attempted the proficiency exam may enroll in RCCORE 311 without special permission.

RCCORE German 321: German Readings

The RC German Readings course is open to all RC students who have passed the German Proficiency Exam. RC students are required to take the RC Readings course the semester after passing the proficiency exam. The goal of the course is to use and improve language skills by reading, writing about, and discussing topics. Class sessions are usually on an informal lecture-discussion basis and students are often responsible for leading discussions. Recent topics of German Readings courses have included: German Twentieth Century Writers, Multicultural Germany, Romanticism, The Art and Politics of Weimar, GRIPS Theater (political children's theater), Brecht's Epic Theater, and Improvisation for the Theater.

Course Policies for RC German classes, including attendance policies and course requirements are available to students the first day of class or they are available on-line.

U-M RC "Deutsches Theater"

RCCORE 321 Sec. 002 (Winter semester):

This is a Play Production Seminar that has one German Readings course as a pre-requisite. (Exceptions to this are made when students receive permission of the instructor. In those cases, students may petition to have the Play Production Seminar count as their German Readings requirement.)

The RC German Program is a pioneer in language learning through theater. "Deutsches Theater" (DT) has staged over twenty German language productions since 1985. Participation in DT is voluntary. Being in a play is an excellent way to improve pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and "Sprachgefuehl" (sense of the language). "Deutsches Theater" is an ideal way for students to



improve their German before they work or study abroad, but it is also a course, in which advanced students who have already studied abroad, can continue to improve their German. Since “DT” productions are multi-media projects, there are ways for students with interest in music, photography, dance, and theater to get involved, even if they have limited experience with German. (See the RC German Web Site for more information on “Deutsches Theater.” (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jshie>))

Special Features of the RC German Program

The RC German Program promotes ways to extend learning beyond the traditional classroom in ways that meet the needs of students with various learning styles. Student learning is enhanced through students’ participation at the program’s co-curricular activities. We have found that attendance at the lunch table and coffee hours are so critical to language mastery, that all RC language programs require students to attend these at least three hours each week.

Co-curricular activities of the German Program are:

- German Mittagstisch (lunch table) where 25-35 students eat every day. (It meets on M,T,Th, F from 12-1).
- German Kaffeestunde (Coffee hour) with baked goods, coffee and tea Mondays from 4:00-5:00.
- A bi-weekly “Filmabend” (Film Night) where students see feature films on the big screen.
- Opportunities to travel to German-speaking countries exist through study and work abroad (through U-M or other programs). Sometimes students even travel with an RC instructor.
- Workshops for students. The RC German Program routinely sponsors workshops for students learning German. In the past, these have ranged from collage workshops with a prominent artist from Berlin to readings and discussions with a contemporary German writer.
- Theater, Theater, Theater! In the Fall, students can participate in a German Theater reading circle (“Theaterkreis”) that meets Wednesday nights to read plays together in the RC Theater. In the Winter semester, students can participate in the RC’s own “Deutsches Theater” (described above). As part of the Play Production Seminar, students often go on an overnight retreat at a nearby camp.



Continuing Studies in German

Students who go through our program are well qualified for an internship or for study abroad and there are many opportunities to do so. In fact, in recent years, 50%- 75% of students on U-M study abroad programs in Germany come from the RC's German program. The U-M Office of International Programs (OIP) offers Junior Year study abroad opportunities in Freiburg and in Tübingen. Additionally, there are numerous study abroad fairs, career fairs, and information events for students who wish to study abroad on a program not sponsored by the University of Michigan. RC students often take advantage of the many internships in Germany available through U-M. These enable students to live and work in Germany during the summer months when it is not possible to study at a German university.

A great number of RC German students also go on to take upper-level courses in the LSA German Studies Department where they can major or minor in German after they have completed RCCORE 321 (German Readings). Of course, many RC students choose to continue study of German in the RC, by taking different Readings courses or by participating in German Theater. RC students sometimes do independent studies with RC instructors, including FLAIR (Foreign Language Applied to Independent Readings), a one-credit option for which students read materials from a class taught in English in the original German. (Examples of this are students reading Freud, Jung, or Neitzsche in German for a class taught in English.) Finally, advanced RC students (particularly those who have studied abroad) sometimes do a college teaching internship through the German Program for two credits. This allows them to get some teaching experience by working with students in the RC German I course under the supervision of the German Program director.

Access to the German Language through Media and Technology

The use of media and technology enhances and supports student learning. In the RC German Program, we show feature films in German, we help you explore the Internet for useful web sites and we help you navigate the University of Michigan's fine library system for print media. U-M's library system has one of the largest collections in the world that includes an impressive array and quantity of books (e.g., literature, history, art, music, psychology), journals, and daily newspapers in German. In the East Quad Benzinger Library, you'll find some light and engaging German reading material (comic books, short stories, modern novels, and magazines).

Course syllabi for RC Intensive German courses are on-line and they contain links to on-line resources like dictionaries and other reference works, as well as links to radio and TV programs in German-speaking countries (so that students can listen to German radio while doing homework). The class web sites will soon feature exercises and practice tests for students to access.