




Term 1 2025-2026

Course Code & Title:	SOUNDS OF GERMAN	
Language of Instruction: German / English	Units: 3	

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the phonetic system of the German language. It is primarily designed to help students who are learning German to improve their understanding, speaking and reading skills. Although theoretical content on the subject of German phonetics will be provided, students must conceive this course as a workshop rather than a lecture. Constant practice through pair work, games, interactive activities, recordings will be included and active participation from the students is therefore expected.

Prerequisite GERM 2000 equivalent competence.

Learning Outcomes

After taking this course, students are expected to:

- (1) generally improve their reading, listening and speaking skills in German;
- (2) understand and produce the rhythmic groups, intonation patterns and stress of German.
- (3) understand and describe some basic articulatory features of German speech sounds;
- (4) be able to use the German IPA symbols provided in dictionaries;
- (5) understand the relationship between the German pronunciation and writing system.

Course Syllabus

ALPHABET	Spelling (revisions) & syllables
GERMAN SPEECH SOUNDS	<i>German IPA symbols & basic articulatory features of German vowels and consonants.</i>
RHYTHM, STRESS & MELODY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- word stress- sentence stress & rhythm- pause & melody
EXAMPLES OF TOPICS COVERED	
<i>Greetings & introductions; place of living; food; shopping; family; numbers etc. Games, poems and songs will also be used.</i>	

Course Components

Teaching Mode

On-site face-to-face interactive classwork: 100%

Learning Activities							
Interactive classwork[1] (hr) in / out class		Extra-curricular activities (hr) in / out class		Web-based teaching (hr) in / out class		Homework / Self-study (hr) in / out class	
3		2		0.5		3	
M		O		M		M	

M = Mandatory / O = Optional

[1] Interactive classwork focuses on student-centered activities as pair work, group work, role-playing and student-teacher interaction.

Assessment Type		
Task nature	Description	Weight
Participation and homework	Active participation in class activities and homework.	20%
Quizzes	Quiz 1: Perception and Production of Vowels and Diphthongs. Quiz 2: Perception and Production of Consonants. Transcription.	15% 15%
Recording	Self-recording about a given topic	25%
Performance	Reading and performance in groups	25%

Notes:

- Students are required to arrive on time.
- Students are required to attend at least 75% of the class. Treat 75% attendance as the minimum, not the maximum.
- **Should a student miss more than 25% of the class, he/she will automatically fail the course.**
- If a student is unable to attend, he/she should review the content and homework that are missed and make them up him/herself.
- **For missed tests, make-up tests will not be arranged unless the student can provide an official supporting document, such as a medical certificate.**

Assessment Rubrics	
Grade Descriptors	
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Learning Resources
Course Materials
Handouts will be provided by the teacher.
IT Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds of German and Interactive International Phonetic Alphabet Chart: http://www.coli.uni-saarland.de/elaut/Languages_Sites/sampaDeutsch.htm • Sounds of German with formation information: https://soundsofspeech.uiowa.edu/german • Moodle course webpage

Reading & Library Resources
Recommended materials: • A bilingual German/English dictionary with information on pronunciation provided in IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet): https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/german-english/ • Prof. Dr. Kerstin Reinke (2012): <i>Phonetiktrainer A1–B1</i> , Ernst Klett Sprachen, Stuttgart • Ursula Hirschfeld, Kerstin Reinke, Eberhard Stock (2007): <i>Phonetik intensiv: Aussprachetraining</i> , Langenscheidt, Berlin und München

Course Schedule (Subject to change):

Week	Date	Remarks	Assessment	Content
1	Sep 1-7	Sep 1 (Mon) Inauguration Ceremony for Undergraduates (classes suspended until 1:30pm)		Introduction & alphabet
2	Sep 8-14	E-add/drop on CUSIS 8-14 Sept (Mon-Sun)		German vowels
3	Sep 15-21	Special add/drop at department 15-19 Sept (Mon-Fri)		
4	Sep 22-28			
5	Sep 29-5 Oct	Oct 1 (Wed) Public holiday – National Day		
6	Oct 6-12	Oct 7 (Tue) The day following Mid-Autumn Festival Oct 9 (Thu) German Night 🏰 Oct 11 (Sat) Information Day for Undergraduate Admissions		
7	Oct 13-19		Quiz 1	Stress, rhythm & melody
8	Oct 20-26		Recording	
9	Oct 27-Nov 2	Oct 29 (Wed) Public holiday - Chung Yeung Festival		German Consonants
10	Nov 3-9	Nov 6 (Thu) 95th Congregation (all classes suspended)		
11	Nov 10-16	Nov 10 -Nov 21 Course registration for second term		
12	Nov 17-23	Nov 19 (Wed): German Christmas Night 🎄		
13	Nov 24-29		Quiz 2	
	Dec 1-7	Schedule for oral exam as agreed with course Lecturer	Performance	

Learning Resources
Required Readings and Course Materials
provided by the teacher

Course website: Moodle@Keep
https://moodle.keep.edu.hk/
Announcements over the Blackboard site GERM0000
Online Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PONS Dictionary https://en.pons.com/translate Collins Dictionary: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/ Pronunciation Website UIowa: https://soundsofspeech.uiowa.edu/german
Recommended Readings & Library Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinke, Kerstin (2012) <i>Phonetiktrainer A1-B1</i>. Stuttgart: Klett Niebisch, Daniela (2014) <i>Praxisbuch Phonetik: Aussprachetraining für Deutsch als Fremdsprache</i>. Berlin: epubli

Class sections and teacher's contact details:

Class	Time	Classroom	No. of weeks	Teacher	Email
GERM2020	Tu 9:30-12:15	YIA410	12	Mr. Bernd ESCH	berndesch@cuhk.edu.hk

For further information and enquiries, you are welcome to contact:

Contact	Telephone	Email	Office
Mr. Bernd Esch	3943 1546	berndesch@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G24, Leung Kau Kui Building (KKL)
General Office	3943 7110	lin@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G17, Leung Kau Kui Building Office Hours: <u>Monday to Thursday:</u> 8:45am–1pm and 2pm-5:30pm <u>Friday:</u> 8:45am-1pm and 2pm-5:45pm

Feedback for Evaluation

Our language programme highly values students' feedback and comments and is happy to use them for reflection on our teaching and improvement. Students are very welcome to provide comments and feedback on the course at any time to their course teacher or the course level coordinator through email or in personal conversation. In addition, students' feedbacks will be collected in the middle of the term through an open-ended questionnaire and the teacher will discuss the feedbacks in class and make improvements if necessary. The course will also follow the university's course evaluation exercise at the end of the term, and students' feedbacks will be used for future course planning and teaching.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.
- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

All use of AI tools is prohibited

In any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards the final course grades (or used for evaluating attainment of the desired learning outcomes), students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT).

Improper/unauthorized use of AI tools in learning activities and assessments will constitute acts of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty.

In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

For more information about our German programme, please join us on Instagram!

