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CANADIAN SUMMER SCHOOL IN GERMANY (CSSG) 2024

May 8 - June 26, 2024

**GRMN 4447: German Immersion Community Service Learning
(6 credit hrs)**

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Office hours With CSSG team members by appointment in the afternoon (2:00 - 4:00 p.m.)

Time Classroom hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Some student presentations and course activities will take place in the afternoons. Up to fifty Community Service hours will occur variously Monday-Friday 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Times suggested after 5:30 p.m. must be discussed with the program director.)

Texts

1. Selected book chapters, articles, specialist website pages on Community Service Learning provided by the instructor(s). The number of readings is to be determined in consultation with the instructor(s) and may be based on the students' chosen focus.
2. Textbook, grammar book, &/or novel from corresponding German language course (either GRMN 3446 or GRMN 4446).
3. Dictionary of your choice recommended (preferably German-German).
4. Additional reading material may be distributed by the instructor.

Prerequisite

Normally GRMN 2446, 3446, or 4446 at the Canadian Summer School in Germany or equivalent and other senior-level German language courses from any Canadian university. While German courses vary across the country, we assume that students coming into this course have studied all the major grammatical structures. Students enrolling in this course must be able to demonstrate a high level of German language proficiency. They must also acquire the prior consent of the Director of the Canadian Summer School in Germany.

Course description and objectives

Students provide 50 hours of community service to the CSSG community and/or partner in Kassel during an intensive 7-week study abroad program in Germany.

(Option 1) If contributing to the CSSG community, service will take the form of supervised classroom support for various classroom tasks and activities and one-on-one peer consultation on language grammar forms and German literacy development. Students may

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also provide further valuable support for out-of-class pedagogical and intercultural/experiential components of the language immersion program. Students will critically reflect on activities as planned, taught, and interpreted as well as their professional interpersonal interactions and relations with language teachers and students.

(Option 2) If contributing to external partners in Kassel, service will take the form of any number of appropriate supervised tasks in various organizations or communities. Students will not work with children or youths. Students may also provide further valuable support for out-of-class pedagogical and intercultural/experiential components of the language immersion program if they wish to or if they need to make up CSL hours. Students will critically reflect on activities as planned, undertaken, and interpreted as well as their professional interpersonal interactions and relations with different volunteer location stakeholders (clients, volunteers, employees, etc.).

The course provides an authentic capping project opportunity for students (especially of the advanced language course) as well as an authentic international practicum experience. In addition to undertaking (1) the 50 hours of community service and (2) language classroom activities and homework, students will complete a selection of the following compulsory and negotiable academic activities: (3) keep a detailed and reflective community service activity log in German, which integrates progress reports; (5) complete select readings on CSL (in English and/or German) and discuss those readings with the instructor(s); (6) maintain a personal record of second language development or *Sprachlernbiographie* (paying attention to one's lived and imagined linguistic, intercultural, and/or professional identities); (7) make a presentation on community-engaged learning to the CSSG community (and/or the local partners) in German; and (8) compose an academically-informed and critically self-reflective report (up to 10 pages) on their CSL experience (with emphasis on the analysis not of tasks but of the imagined community and one's imagined self).

The primary language of instruction and assignments for this course is German, though some texts, discussions, and research activities (correspondence, interviews, etc.) might be in English.

The CSL student

CSL students are socially responsible individuals committed to volunteerism and community enhancement through action and social justice. They are engaged in experiential learning through community service activity in which they mobilize and translate their practical and analytical skills for real-world matters and identified community needs. CSL students are not fully trained experts, nor are they necessarily fully qualified in a given discipline. But they are highly knowledgeable and can bring their lived experiences, personal agency, and content knowledge to the community while also learning by providing service to that community.

Course instruction

This is a team-taught course by Canadian professors with the cooperation of other members of the CSSG team as well as local partners. This means that, even though specific professors will assign you specific tasks, you will be taught and supervised by all professors and instructors. Any of the professors could mark your assignments, and you can also contact any professor for help with class work or any other issue pertaining to the course.

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Language agreement

The CSSG is an immersion program. It is therefore essential that students demonstrate a commitment to communicate solely in German during all CSSG activities. If a CSSG instructor hears a student speaking a language other than German, the instructor will remind the student to revert to speaking German. Each week, students and the CSSG team will anonymously nominate a student who has shown an exceptional commitment to speaking only German outside of the classroom (the nomination must include the name and circumstance). This student will receive a token of recognition for their efforts to uphold the CSSG Language Agreement.

Grading policies, required work, and late assignments

Evaluation of your performance in this course will take several forms. The evaluation system is designed to reflect your ability to actively and effectively participate in a wide variety of language related activities, both in and out of the classroom. You are expected to come to class every day, be prepared to interact in German in a variety of situations, keep up with the material, complete and hand in assigned homework when due, and take exams and quizzes.

We believe that learning a foreign language is the development of a skill, not the acquisition of a body of knowledge. You begin with the basics and through study and practice you advance to greater complexity. The key expression is meaningful practice, especially in tune with other speakers, or learning by working collaboratively with others. Therefore, this course is designed to allow you to take an active part in each class, to hear, respond to, read, and speak a lot of German. In class, we frequently engage in partner- and group-work as this maximizes your opportunities to practice your language skills. As a result, the quality of the education you receive as well as your ultimate performance in this class will depend on the amount and quality of your own effort, as well as willingness to engage with others.

***Late assignments will be accepted; however, 10% will be deducted for each day past due. Always communicate with your instructor in these situations.

Evaluation:

Language course components		
• Pre-course assignment and resubmission	2.5% - 5%*	45%
• Language learning/teaching journal	15%	
• Homework (either writing tasks or grammar*)	5% - 7.5%*	
• Quizzes	2.5% - 5% - 7.5%*	
• Midterm oral exam	2.5%	
• Final exam (including final oral exam)	12.5%	
General program component		5%
• Peer evaluation & support	5%	50%
Community Service-Learning component		
• Community service (= concurrent requisite)	0%	
• Reflective activity logs & integrated practical progress report	15%	
• Selected readings on CSL	10%	
• Presentation on CSL to CSSG community	15%	

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• Critically self-reflective essay	10%	
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Grade amounts & tasks marked with an asterisk () are negotiated at the start of the course.

Assignment dates

- Pre-course assignment (due on the **first day of the orientation** in Hann. Münden; the resubmission is due within a week of receiving feedback).
- Language learning diary (for **due dates**, refer to the language course syllabus).
- Homework (more or less **daily**).
- Quizzes (the dates for the 4 quizzes will be negotiated and announced in the language class).
- Midterm oral examination is on **June 3**.
- Final exam is on **June 24**.
- Peer evaluation & support takes place on **May 10, 22, and June 6, 20**.
- Community service tasks (throughout the program; **50 hours in total**).
- Activity logs (written **each day CSL is conducted**; usually **handed in weekly**; progress report must be integrated at least as part of the weekly review).
- Select readings (can vary weekly and may **continue across the program**).
- Presentation on CSL to CSSG community is on **June 20**.
- Critical self-reflective essay is due **June 24, or sooner**.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Pre-course assignment. (2.5% - 5%) All students must research 5 places in Kassel as well as 1 place in Bamberg and 1 in Berlin that they would like to visit and write (in German) why these places are interesting to them. This assignment will be the basis for other assignments in the course, including oral presentations. You are required to write approximately 150 words on each place and use the internet, correspondence with the host family, travel guides, etc. as resources. **DO NOT copy and paste sentences from these resources but use your own words** and cite your sources. The purpose of the pre-course assignment is to familiarize yourself with these cities and allow the instructor to assess your writing skills. You are required to use complex sentence structures, i.e., subordinate and relative clauses, different tenses (where necessary), appropriate vocabulary, etc. You will discuss your text with the instructor who will provide you with feedback on how to improve your writing skills, grammar, etc. Students may hand in a revised version on a later date agreed upon with the instructor.

Language learning/teaching diary. (15%) The objective of the language learning diary is to improve your writing skills and active vocabulary. Furthermore, the diary will give you the opportunity to critically reflect on your personal language acquisition process, your development of cultural awareness, and to develop your thoughts and opinions about your interactions and experiences in Germany, in general, and Kassel, in particular. Feel free to include creative work such as anecdotes, poems, songs, etc. You can write about any topic, but try to link that topic to your personal linguistic and intercultural development and please write at least four times, even if briefly, about your interaction with your tandem partner. Also, use the language diary to incorporate and practice newly learned vocabulary. When you focus on your language acquisition, you are encouraged to 1) briefly describe the experience and the interaction, 2) record any specific words or phrases or grammar needed (especially

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any learned in class), 3) record any new words or phrases heard and even picked up, 4) identify gaps in your language and look up words or phrases that would have facilitated communication, 5) explain whether the communication was successful (i.e., “Did you achieve what you set out to?”) and whether there was any new cultural learning involved, and 6) set/adjust personal learning goals (i.e., identify and tackle common errors, set targets for speaking more often and in more varied places, strive to activate new vocabulary, use more complex sentences, ask more questions, etc.). This assignment will also provide feedback about your learning progress to the instructor and aids in designing customized tasks. You will hand in the language learning diary 4 times accounting for four new entries (minimum of one full page each, double-spaced, and no more than two pages for each entry). If the submission deadline falls on a travel date you may submit the diary on the following Monday. However, you need to inform your instructor to get permission. By writing frequently in a low-stakes environment, you will develop more fluency in your German writing skills. Your journal will be graded on the breadth and depth of your reflections, accuracy, complexity, as well as overall comprehensibility.

The fifth (and last) submission (2 pages, double-spaced) is a reflection on your intercultural and language learning progress and development. You are required to use your past journal entries to reflect on your learning journey in the program. Do you notice any development between your first journal entries and later entries (language learning, intercultural learning)?

Homework. (5% - 7.5%) Quizzes. (2% - 5% - 7.5%) Midterm oral examination. (2.5%) and Final exam. (12.5%) Refer to the syllabus for the corresponding language course for details of these assignments and course components. Students in this course will be exempt from writing the essay component in the final exam.

Peer evaluation & support. (5%) Across the program, students will engage with one another to set personal learning goals and support one another in striving toward them. You will meet with a series of other students from the program on 4 occasions (during the afternoons of **May 10, 22, & June 6, 20**). On these occasions, you will use a worksheet provided to you to self-evaluate and discuss your motivations, goals, and learning strategies with a peer who will complete that worksheet on your behalf. Peers will not evaluate each other, rather they will take notes, offer personal feedback, and help you stay focused on your learning goals. After each meeting, you will submit the report about you to your instructor who will grade it based on task completion and depth of engagement. You will receive each report back so that you can refer to them when engaging with another peer on the next peer evaluation day.

Community service tasks. (0%) Students provide 50 hours of supervised support for various activities and/or events with a community partner designed to match the partner’s needs and the student’s learning goals. This community service is a requisite of the course that is completed concurrently and counts 0% (zero %) toward the final grade. Students are expected to fully engage in the community service. Engagement is considered being an active contributor, being prepared for activities, following requests and guidelines, taking informed initiative, generally showing willingness to communicate with others (listening, asking

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questions, etc.), being curious and creative, being flexible and willing to adapt, and especially applying one's learning.

Reflective activity log and progress report. (15%) Students will keep a detailed, reflective, individual CSL **activity log** in German that records the dates, times, and duration of activities / responsibilities, name(s) of the cooperating community members, brief descriptions of the nature of activities / responsibilities and the student's specific role, and a general idea and tally of the clients involved in the respective activities. The log must also include a self-assessment of the experience from an emotional, social/cultural, and/or professional perspective. That is, students should briefly address any *critical incidents* (practical or intercultural misunderstandings, problems, mistakes, conflict, challenging conditions) by explaining what happened, why, and whether / how the incident was resolved (i.e., what strategies worked or not). If no critical incident occurred, students can briefly address *important or successful moments* by explaining what happened, why it was successful for the student and/or partner/client, which transferrable skills were used, which personal or shared principles were activated. In each case, the student should briefly identify *what was learned*. A general log entry must be written for each volunteering session and usually submitted weekly (or biweekly) to the program director.

The activity log must include a **progress report** in German more or less weekly. The progress report accounts for the practical progress made in conducting all aspects of the community service, acknowledging the needs and aims of community partner and the students' ongoing commitments and next steps, as well as descriptions of any adaptations to the partner's or one's own goals and to outcomes thus far for the community.

Selected readings. (10%) Students will be required to read approximately four selected articles and book chapters on community service learning. The articles are in German and English, and the follow-up questions and discussion will be in German and, possibly, English if necessary. The discussions will take place more or less weekly, varying depending on the service hours of the students. Students may wish to expand this component of the course with further readings for the more formal inquiry of the critical self-reflective essay (see below).

CSL presentation. (15%). Students are required to make a presentation on community-engaged learning to the CSSG community (and/or local partners) in German. The presentation will include descriptions of the general nature and aims of CSL as well as *both* participant and partner experiences, goals, and outcomes. The presentation may offer suggestions as to how to develop or improve these experiences as well as reflect on next steps or commitments. It must also consider the needs and interests of the audience and seek audience feedback. The presentation will likely require some research and background reading, certainly include site information, and may integrate recommendations and future plans as they related to experiences. It may draw on the activity logs and critical essay but must be different from these items in aim and style.

Critical self-reflective essay. (10%) The final component of the course comprises an academically informed and critically self-reflective essay in German (up to 10 pages, typed, Times New Roman, x12 font, double-spaced) on the CSL experience. This final report ought

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to encompass all aspects of the student's involvement (i.e., the community service, the readings, the log and perceived progress, the presentations, the linguistic and intercultural development through engaged interaction with community partners, etc.). This essay must place an emphasis on the analysis not only of tasks and their practical content but of the outcomes related to the imagined community and one's imagined self (i.e., expectations and reassessments, adaptations, advantages and benefits, limitations, improvements, alternative actions, future commitments, etc.). The essay focuses on self-reflection by description and analysis of one's own role and development of learning through engagement in immersion. The student may refer to their activity logs and should make use of the CSL experience (important / successful moments & critical incidents) to self-assess what one has learned and draw conclusions for one's future (personal, social, professional, even linguistic) future practice.

Grading:

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Quality Points	Percentage Equivalent
Excellent	A+	4.3	90-100
	A	4.0	85-89
	A-	3.7	80-84
Good	B+	3.3	77-79
	B	3.0	73-76
	B-	2.7	70-72
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	67-69
	C	2.0	63-66
	C-	1.7	60-62
Marginal Pass	D	1.0	50-59
Fail or withdrawal after deadline	F	0.0	0-49

Any student may request feedback on the current status of her/his overall grade at any given moment in the semester (and after a minimum of 15% of the gradable components of the course have been completed).

CSSG behaviour agreement

All students are required to sign the CSSG Behaviour Agreement and are also bound by the Saint Mary's University Code of Student Conduct. Please see the Documents section of the CSSG website for these documents. Please refer to the University *Academic Calendar* for the Code of Student Conduct.

Academic integrity, offences, regulations, and appeals:

Students are reminded of the regulations on special examinations and academic integrity as outlined in the Saint Mary's University *Calendar*. Plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation of facts, and participation in such acts are viewed as serious academic offences by the University. Sanctions for such offences range from a reprimand to suspension or expulsion from the University. Please refer to the University *Calendar* for information on the

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University's definitions of these offences. Information on grade appeals can be obtained from the *Calendar*.

Use of translating services (e.g., Google Translate) or generative artificial intelligence services (e.g., ChatGPT) is not allowed under any circumstance. These are not dictionaries and are not considered good resources for learning languages: They will not help you learn to use German independently and confidently, and the results they present are often inappropriate for the specific communicative context, difficult to understand, or simply wrong. If you use one of these services, your instructor will know because the service will inevitably use vocabulary and grammatical structures beyond your current level of knowledge. The use of such services is not allowed in this course at any time. Your instructor(s) will treat instances of suspected use of translation or AI services as cases of academic misconduct. Please refer to the *University Calendar* for information on the University's definitions of these offences.

Recording of lectures

Recording is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Specialized support and disability services

Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with their professor and must have written documentation of their disability from their home university.

Cell phone use

Out of respect for the instructor and other students wanting to learn, texting and other cell phone use is not allowed in the classroom. Digital dictionaries or smart phones are permitted for checking single words and basic expressions. They are not permitted for sentence-length translation and during quizzes and exams.