

Beginning Nepali

NEPA 1003 - 1503 Online Course

(3 Credits)

Nepal: Intensive Nepali Language

This syllabus is representative of a typical term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from term to term.

Course Description

From shared beginnings in Peace Corps Volunteer language training to now, there has always been an emphasis on language as a key to cultural learning and to greater international understanding. Thusly, our language courses are suited to in country socio-cultural dynamics, where attention is given to communicative context as well as content and where we attribute value to traditional languages and/or minority languages as well as “official” languages.

The study of Nepali is the first prerequisite for successful entry into the native communities of Nepal. The purpose of language training is communication. Students need to be able to communicate in Nepali to work/stay effectively in Nepal. We emphasize language acquisition (Natural Approach) for application in real life situations. The successful completion of the language training will give the learner a good foundation for language usage in day-to-day life. For each component, topics are identified; tasks performed under each topic are determined and designed by the teachers according to the students’ learning styles and capacities. Each lesson presents the situation, e.g. eating with host family, and the topic, e.g. food and socializing. Students learn to use a certain “dialogue” appropriate to the topic. Dialogues are used to assist in expressing needs, wants, questions, responding to questions, giving and asking opinions, and interviewing, etc. The course places emphasis on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

The approach for this course is tutorial in nature and students will be expected to be more self-directed than usual. The course emphasizes regular practice and when possible, community contact, self-study and observation. For each module, topics and tasks are identified and designed by the teachers according to the students’ learning styles and capacities.

Language Levels and Placement

Students are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews conducted during orientation.

Learning Outcomes

The SIT Nepal language course encompasses 45 academic hours (3 credits). Upon completion of the Nepali Language course at SIT Nepal, students will be able to:

- Communicate effectively in Nepali in a variety of speaking situations.
- Demonstrate comprehension of Nepali in a variety of listening situations.
- Understand most native speakers when they speak clearly on familiar topics.

- Express feelings, opinions, and emotions using a simple vocabulary.
- Converse in Nepali with host family members about immediate needs and communicate effectively on a daily basis.
- Discern and compare cultural similarities and differences.

Course Requirement

Methodology

In terms of language teaching approaches, methods and techniques, we utilize multiple approaches for online learning. During the course, students will attend real-time lectures, learn from video and audio lectures, and discussion forums. Since our main focus is language acquisition, we do not allow our learners to speak other languages during the lectures. However we sometimes deal with grammar and other issues related to Nepali language learning in English.

Textbook and course materials

Rana, M., C. Rana, S. Pokhrel, and D. Putnam. 2015. *Nepali the SIT Way: Basic and Intermediate Nepali for Multicultural Competency and Fieldwork*. Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press. ISBN: 978 – 9937 – 2 – 5654 – 4

Rana, M., C. Rana, and S. Pokhrel. 2014. *Nepali the SIT Way: Language Workbook*. Kathmandu: SIT Nepal.

Rana, M. 2012. *Let's Learn Devanagari: Nepali Script*. Kathmandu. SIT Nepal
English-Nepali Pocket Dictionary

Class Schedule[‡]

Students will have at least 45 class hours. The online classes will constitute real-time lectures, recorded video and audio lectures, and discussion forums. Students will be required to participate in all forms of learning.

Assignments

You will have language homework most days. Assignments are given daily after language class ends and are due the next day. Assignments are usually reviewed and returned to students within a day or two.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Assessment

Teachers plan lessons and evaluate student performance at daily meetings. At the end of the course, teachers collectively compose a final evaluation for each student, taking into account classroom performance and the use and development of language skills through participation and practice.

Through periodic and ongoing evaluation students are graded in each of the following areas according to the criteria set out in the syllabi: grammar, vocabulary, oral and reading comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, motivation, attendance, progress, Devnagari and language usage outside of classroom. In addition, there is one mid-term during the course (which includes short question/answer, fill in the blanks, correcting word order, etc.) and final written and oral exams.

The academic director, based on the language teachers' final evaluation, determines the final course language grade. Although not part of grade, students will be given an opportunity to participate for

[‡] Online classes will be scheduled for M, W, F, 8:00 am Nepal Time (+5:45 GMT), 2.5 hours. Rest of the lecture material will be available as audio recording and practice exercises. Students will be required to complete and submit assignments every day.

oral proficiency interview with an outside assessor at the conclusion of language study to gauge students' language acquisition.

Methods of Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on the following criteria in their learning and work in target language:

Grammar

Grammar is the integral part of the language; it governs the composition of word order, conjugation, tenses etc. It is evaluated under assignments, class activities and presentation, exams.

Vocabulary

At least 20-30 new words are taught in class. Students are highly encouraged to acquire extensive vocabulary through learning outside of classroom, books and on their own. Vocabulary is evaluated under assignments, class activities and presentations, and exams.

Intelligibility/Pronunciation/Fluency

Students are expected to be intelligible and clear in their writing, reading, description, discussion in terms of grammar, pronunciation, smoothness of conversation flow. This criteria is graded under class activities and presentations, assignments, and exams.

Attendance/Participation

Students are expected to attend each and every language class and the activities scheduled by teachers.

'Just being in class' cannot be considered 'good participation'. Being motivated in learning, encouraging and being helpful to their classmate and showing respect to language are also important. It is graded under attendance/participation, class activities and presentations, and assignments.

Devanagari

Students' fluency and accuracy are graded in Devanagari reading and writing. It is graded under assignments and exams.

Final grades are calculated as follows:

Assignments (20 %)

Class Activities and presentations (20 %)

Attendance/Participation (10 %)

Exams (50 %)

Mid-term exam (15 %)

Final exam (20 %)

Devanagari exam (15 %)

Grading Scale: The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D

Expectations and Policies

Class attendance is mandatory and unexcused absences will reduce the language grade (see attendance policies in the front matter of the syllabus).

Show up prepared. Be on time, have your assignments completed and points in mind for clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

Have assignments completed on schedule, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

Ask questions in class. Teachers are highly respected in Nepal. Your polite and engaged behavior is expected.

Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

Respect differences of opinion (classmates', teachers'). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Trust in the process. SIT has been teaching Nepali for over 40 years and the teachers have a collective 40+ years teaching in both SIT, Peace Corps, and other programs. It might be tough, but we have seen the tremendous results of our course.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at: <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.