

Advanced Vietnamese

VIET 3003 – 3503 J Term

(3 Credits)

Vietnam: Intensive Vietnamese 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

This course is designed for students who have already achieved an intermediate competence in Vietnamese and are ready to begin to engage with materials meant for a native audience. Students are thus enabled to enrich all aspects of their experience abroad by functioning in the host language during field methods exercises, and when interacting with homestay families and local contacts. Students in this course attempt to move beyond simple discussions to more complex and nuanced interactions. Speaking practice sessions are less structured than those of the lower level classes and focus on the spontaneous production of lengthier sentences. Writing practice targets structured paragraph production, and reading practice introduces texts meant for native speakers.

Instruction consists of 45 hours of formal classroom time spread over a 3-week period in Ho Chi Minh City. Various teaching methods are employed, including in-class discussion on Vietnamese and American subjects, recitations for aural comprehension, and grammar exercises. Homework is assigned daily. Students have opportunities to practice with one language tutor and local student volunteers every week, at least two hours per week. Role-plays and social activities with the instructors are also used as opportunities for learning.

Additional hours of instruction and guided field practice are scheduled during excursions to the Mekong Delta and through the homestay period. These practicum classes take full advantage of the local environment, requiring students to practice their skills with native speakers. Some practicum assignments require students to interview locals about topics of particular interest. Students are then asked to report on excursion assignments upon returning to the classroom in Ho Chi Minh City.

Classes and field-based language activities are taught by qualified, native-speaking language teachers who have experienced in teaching Vietnamese for students of SIT Study Abroad's semester program in Vietnam.

Homework is assigned daily and active participation in class conversations is essential and required. The course includes weekly quizzes, midterm test and final examinations. In class, various teaching methods are employed, including in-class discussion on Vietnamese and American subjects, role plays, recitations for aural comprehension, grammar exercises, as well as out-of-classroom field exercises and social activities with instructors. Every week students also practice their language skills with local students in groups of 2 to 4 students for at least two hours. Furthermore, the

Vietnamese language pledge is designed to fully immerse students in the Vietnamese language and culture throughout the three-week program.

On completion of this level, students will be able to understand Vietnamese spoken by native speakers in a variety of contexts and regional accents. Students will be able to express themselves fluently orally and in writing, using a range of strategies for different audiences and communicative contexts.

Language Levels and Placement

Students are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews and reading/written tests conducted during orientation in Vietnam.

Guided self-instruction under the supervision of host country language instructors is available for students who place above the language levels offered. Final transcripts indicate the grade for the language course.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students are expected to:

- Gain a basic foundation in Vietnamese linguistics;
- Further their knowledge of the factors influencing contemporary Vietnamese society;
- Read and discuss glossed selections from local newspapers and magazines, and modified literary excerpts;
- Practice engaging in fluid conversations with native speakers, expressing their viewpoints with relative accuracy and description;
- Begin to move away from short conversational expression, and towards the production of longer, more complex sentences about academic topics.

Course Requirements

This course includes daily quizzes and homework, weekly tests, and midterm and final examinations. Students are expected to complete 1 to 2 hours preparation work or homework for every hour spent in class. Four hours are dedicated to each of 10 units in the textbook covered over the course of the term. Students have additional 10 hours of practicum or additional instruction on selected topics and 1 hour of weekly one-on-one tutorial.

Reinforcement exercises, both oral and written, are assigned. On average, students are required to complete at least one hour of homework daily. Class attendance is also required; preparation and participation are highly emphasized.

Proactive participation in class discussion is essential and required. Students also participate in out-of-class educational excursions. These practicums take full advantage of the local environment, requiring students to practice their skills outside the walls of the classroom, yet in a structured way with the support of the language instructions.

Language Pledge: Speaking Vietnamese throughout each day, with classmates, teachers, homestay families, and community members will solidify student confidence, enhance fluency, and motivate deeper engagement in the cultural life of Vietnamese communities.

Sample Course Topics

Approximately six hours is dedicated to each of seven topics. Students read various newspaper articles per unit and watch Vietnamese films. Lesson topics include:

- Dialects
- Population demographic and challenges
- Vietnamese folklore

- Education in Vietnam
- Gender and Families
- Religion and Belief
- Economics

Model Conversational, Reading and Writing Topics

- Describing familial relationships and making friends
- Describing the differences and similarity
- Making plans
- Commanding
- Talking about activities
- Talking about traveling
- How to avoid misunderstanding communicate efficiently with people
- Admissions of error
- Exchanging viewpoints
- Telling a story
- Talking about entertainment, festivals, costumes cooking and clothes
- Describing feelings
- Using respect words
- Writing simple essays on specific selected topics

Textbooks and Required Materials

Nguyen Minh Thuyet. 2005. *Tieng Viet Vui. Quyen 3*. Vietnam Education Publishing House Limited Company.

Various articles, video clips, and web sources

Daily Class Schedule

Minimum of 3 contact hours on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. In addition, students will practice language in actual contexts with language teachers, SIT staff, local students, and homestay families, such as at markets, parks, shops, schools and outdoor activities. Several sites visits will be organized in Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta aiming to enhance language learning and applications.

Classes are scheduled accordingly

9:00-10:00 Listening and Speaking

10:00-10:30 Grammar and comprehension

10:30-12:00 Exercises with the guidance from language instructors

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Instructors evaluate students' performance based on observation, written exercises, quizzes and exams given throughout the course. Final grades are assigned by the Academic Director in consultation with the language instructor on the basis of the instructor's evaluation, the student's own self-evaluation, and the Academic Director's observation of the student's participation in classes and their efforts to use the language outside of the classroom.

Oral Proficiency Interview

Final oral proficiency interviews are conducted toward the end of the semester to provide a measurement of students' overall linguistic progress. Thus, the course grade provides an assessment of students' performance in meeting the requirements.

Methods of Evaluation

Daily Class Participation (10%)

Students are encouraged to stay motivated, active, and maintain their involvement in class activities during the course. Students are evaluated based on their constant involvement and ability to engage in a variety of classroom and weekly outdoor activities during the course. They are expected to complete 100% of the total work including weekly outdoor activities. Attendance is mandatory; failure to attend class or repeated late arrival to class will impact the grade in the course. See Attendance section below for more details.

Daily Homework (15%)

Students are expected to do weekly readings and writings following the three main focuses: narrative, descriptive, and persuasive (argumentative) in well-organized paragraphs. At this level, the speed is another goal for daily homework. Students are encouraged to increase the speed of reading, being able to comprehend main ideas and supporting detail of the readings. The completion of 6 readings and 6 writings is required to maintain constant progress.

Field Trip Assignments (15%)

Field trip assignments are designed to advance speaking skills to accumulate experience in the field. There are 2 assignments (One in Cu Chi and One in Mekong Delta). Students can choose the activities with topics given by lecturers or suggest new ones. During the field trips, students are accessible to some resources in the field to collect information for the assignments. Students are expected to use the resources effectively in efficient time. After each field trip, students can check up with lecturers in term of linguistic issues and other necessary preparation to present information. Students present information in front of a small group of Vietnamese Language Volunteers and their peers. Lecturers give final feedbacks.

Presentation (15%)

Students are expected to complete a 10-minute presentation about one of the assigned topics. Previous presentations are provided for reference.

Two Language Tests: Midterm Test (20%) and Final Test (25%)

The two main tests navigate students' concentration on both academic and real-life contexts. These two tests include familiar and unfamiliar topics in reading and speaking skills. The tests are effective tools to check if students have made improvements on their weaknesses noted from homework, field trip assignments and regular feedbacks of lecturers. In addition to technical skills of language study, students are expected to develop cultural competence during the course. Therefore, the two main tests are reflections of students' performance and proficiency in academic and experiential aspects.

The two main tests include both written and oral parts. The written test lasts for 90 minutes and the oral test lasts between 10 and 15 minutes for each student.

The final grade is determined as follows:

Daily class participation	10%
Daily homework	15%
Field Trip Assignments	15%
Presentation	15%
Midterm test	20%
Final test	25%

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory, and absences are penalized by reducing the language grade, except for illness cases, when the student is expected to provide a medical certificate. In addition, two repeated and unjustified late start of class are also counted as an absence and may impact the student's participation grade.

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
Below 64	F

Expectations and Policies

Class attendance is mandatory, and absences are penalized by reducing the language grade, except for illness cases, when the student is expected to provide a medical certificate. In addition, two repeated and unjustified delays are also counted as an absence and may impact the student's participation grade.

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. Engage the lecturer. Teachers are highly respected in Vietnam. 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.

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 program dossier given to you at orientation.

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