Advanced Nepali

NEPA 3003 - 3503 Online Course

(3 Credits)

Nepal: 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. The course places emphasis on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. It is designed for students who already have a certain level of language proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking Nepali, as determined by previous course work and ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview results.

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

Pre-requisites for enrollment are previous Nepali language study completion of beginning and intermediate coursework and/or a score of Intermediate High on an ACTFL OPI test at the time of placement.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Converse with native speakers unaccustomed to foreigners using different aspects of major time frames of present, past and future;
- Deal with social situations in which unexpected complications arise;
- Narrate and/or describe events, places, people, etc. with multiple-paragraph-length connected discourse;

- Initiate or participate in discussion on current social issues;
- Demonstrate socio-linguistic skill by using common expressions, idioms, sayings, proverbs and contractions in appropriate contexts;
- Conduct in-depth interviews with native speakers on their research topic;
- Read Nepali newspapers, magazines and literature;
- Interpret and discuss audio/video (songs, dialogues, movies, plays, radio etc.);
- Analyze and discuss contemporary issues with high levels of sophistication and with few errors when speaking about unfamiliar topics;

Course Requirements

Methodology
In terms of language teaching approaches, methods and techniques, we utilize multiple approaches for online learning. During the semester, 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
Watters, D. P., N. B. Rajbhandary 2010. Nepali in Context: A Topical Approach to Learning Nepali, Kathmandu, Ekta Books, ISBN 978-9937-1-0094-6

Karki, T. B., 2009, Nepali-English Dictionary: A Compendium of Contemporary Written and Spoken Nepali, Kathmandu, Multi Graphic Press, ISBN 978-9937-2-1702-6

Turner R. L., D. R. Turner, 2009, A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of Nepali Language, New Delhi, Adarsh Interprises, ISBN 81-8363-011-1

Class Schedule[‡]
Students will have at least 45 class hours. The online classes will constitute of real-time lectures, recorded video and audio lectures, and discussion forums. Students will be required to participate in all forms of language 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 semester, 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 semester (which includes short question/answer, fill in the blanks, correcting word order, etc.) and final written and oral exams.

[‡] 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.

The academic director, based on the language teachers' final evaluation, determines the final semester language grade. Although not part of grade, students will be given an opportunity to participate for oral proficiency interview with an outside assessor at the conclusion of language study to gauge students' language acquisition.

Evaluation Criteria
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 (10%)
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
Below 64	F

Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Test
Final oral proficiency interviews are conducted toward the end of the course in order to provide a measurement of students' overall linguistic progress. Course grades usually, but not always, reflect performance in the Oral Proficiency Interview.

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 SIT, Peace Corps, and other programs. It might be tough, be 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.

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