

Sample Syllabi:

Intensive Nepali Language

(2 course credits = 8 semester units)

Objectives

The aim of this course is to provide you with a basic working knowledge of the Nepali language and to promote communication and interaction with the people of Nepal. Instruction emphasizes oral proficiency as well as practice in reading and writing the Nepali script. Classes are taught in Nepali, with minimal English translation. All instructors are native Nepali speakers skilled in proficiency-based, communicative, interactive teaching methods. Sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary are progressively introduced each day within situational contexts and with limited English explanation, encouraging you to understand and use Nepali in natural contexts. Language instructors accompany students on trips and treks, providing both structured and informal field instruction. As a part of your language training, instructors emphasize the cultural context of daily lessons and incorporate cultural information into the language curriculum. Throughout the semester, classes are held 3-5 hours per day, 5-6 days per week, for a total of approximately 200 in-class hours. Class size is small, with a student-teacher ratio of 3:1. Two Pitzer course credits (8 semester units) are awarded for successful completion of the course.

Course Components

Orientation Period: You will spend the first 10-12 days of the semester at the program house, preparing to move in with your Nepali host families. During this period, class is held 5 hours per day, with an emphasis on developing the oral language skills needed to communicate on a basic level. In addition, during this period, language instructors facilitate a number of 1-2 hour orientations to familiarize you with specific situations you may encounter while living in rural Nepali villages and teach you the language to deal with these situations.

Literacy: Classes in reading and writing the Nepali script (devanagari) are integrated into the language curriculum early on in the course. Although the emphasis of the course is primarily on proficiency in spoken Nepali, classes in written Nepali enable you to read signs, write letters and stories, as well as help you with pronunciation.

Nepali-Speaking Environment at the Program House: In addition to the importance of formal language class, you must practice what you have learned outside of the classroom in order to become proficient in Nepali. You are asked to make a commitment to using what you have learned with your peers outside of class, thereby helping both yourself and the other members of your group in the language learning

process. Each week, Nepali-only periods are scheduled during which no English is spoken, encouraging you to develop creativity and confidence in their language skills.

Language Activities: Throughout the semester, you are given time both in and out of formal language class to complete a series of language activities. These exercises are designed to encourage you to practice your Nepali outside of the classroom.

Trips and Trek: Language instructors accompany students on all program trips outside of the Kathmandu Valley and conduct language classes for 3-4 hours per day at these field sites. Both before and during each trip, language class includes vocabulary, structures and topics relevant to the area. In addition to regular language class, you are required to complete interviews with local people on relevant topics during each trip.

Preparation for Independent Study Project: After formal language classes end, you have three weeks to research a topic of your choice during the Independent Study Project period of the program. In preparation for this research, throughout the semester instructors assign practice interviews and focus on your proficiency in Nepali in order to enable you to function on your own in remote areas of the country where little or no English is spoken. During the final weeks of the language course, class time is provided for you to learn vocabulary and develop interview questions appropriate to your research site. In addition, you are given guidance in writing about your project in the Nepali script.

Assessment for Intensive Nepali Language course will be based on the following criteria:

- 10% – Quizzes
- 20% – Oral Examination
- 20% – Diagnostic Worksheet Examination
- 15% – Nepali Writing (devanagari) Examinations
- 25% – Commitment to speaking Nepali outside of the classroom/contribution to the language learning process (based on language instructor, administrative staff and peer evaluations) –
- 15% -Culturally appropriate respect for language instructors; enthusiasm and participation in class

Language Functions and Topics Covered in the Course

- Interpersonal relations: greetings, introductions and partings
- Identification of objects
- Location of people and objects
- Description of people, places and things
- Making generalizations
- Telling time
- Asking permission
- Asking about availability of items
- Expressing needs
- Expressing likes and dislikes
- Indicating duration of an activity

- Asking prices
- Asking directions
- Indicating possession
- Explaining why
- Polite and informal commands and requests
- Making comparisons
- Expressing reported speech
- Describing abilities
- Indicating purpose of objects or actions
- Expressing personal opinions or plans
- “If” clauses
- Verb forms
- Vocabulary topics include Chitwan National Park (animals, plants, etc.), health, trekking, cooking, family, parts of the body, food and taste, shopping, colors, calendars, and travel and transportation.