TO: Persons With Responsibility for Developing, Implementing, and Evaluating Modern Language Programs

This publication, *Modern Languages for Communication*, is a framework for the development of local curriculum which will integrate principles of second language acquisition with New York State program requirements and the Board of Regents goals for elementary and secondary education.

The syllabus places emphasis on communicative proficiency and the understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

It is intended as a working document for educators at the district and classroom level to use when they assess, modify, or develop their local district curriculum and classroom instructional objectives. It serves as a guide to the following areas:

- Statement of philosophy
- Review of Regents goals
- Components of communication
- Description of learning outcomes
- Process of curriculum development
- Implications for instruction
- Outline for planning
- Role of evaluation
- Suggestions for interdisciplinary activities
- Uses of technology

This publication has been sent to District Superintendents, Superintendents and Administrators of Public and Nonpublic Schools, Public School Teachers of Modern Languages K(c)12 and Public School Supervisors.

Additional copies are available from:

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ATTN: Modern Language Syllabus

MODERN

LANGUAGE

FOR

COMMUNICATION

NEW YORK STATE SYLLABUS

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Albany, New York 12234

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FOREWORD

Modern Languages for Communication is designed to help local school district personnel develop curricula and programs that will fulfill New York State mandates to provide students with instruction in a second language. It will also meet Board of Regents goals for elementary and secondary education and implement Part 100 of the Commissioner's Regulations.

This syllabus has been prepared to assist school personnel in developing foreign language programs consistent with the Board of Regents plan, Education for a Global Perspective, and the Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York State.

In an increasingly interdependent world, teachers, school administrators, and curriculum supervisors must cooperate in preparing students for world citizenship. The ability to communicate in languages other than English is an important component of a global perspective. Fostering that ability is the special responsibility of foreign language teachers. Communication skills in a language other than English provide direct access to the minds and spirit of the peoples of the world. The Board of Regents, governing body of education in New York State, believes that second language proficiency is an important component in the education of today's students as they prepare for a productive and rewarding life. Not only does it prepare students for a world in which peoples and nations are becoming increasingly interdependent, but it also contributes to the development of their creativity and to their capability for critical thinking.

Curriculum specialists, administrators, classroom practitioners from the field, and staff of the Bureau of Foreign Languages Education participated in developing this syllabus. Their names appear in Appendix A, and their contributions are acknowledged with gratitude.

Special gratitude is expressed to the Federal Republic of Germany for assigning curriculum and instruction consultants to the State Education Department beginning in September 1981. Rudolf M. Stock (1981-84) and Wolfgang Schnitzler (1984 ff) brought to the project their experiences with the curriculum model for functional communication developed by the Council of Europe. Rudolf Stock worked closely with Alain Blanchet, Associate in Foreign Languages Education, on research and the preparation of a four-component framework for identifying communication skills to be developed through instruction in modern languages in New York State. Wolfgang Schnitzler subsequently demonstrated at numerous workshops instructional strategies for developing functional communication skills.

The four-component framework was discussed extensively with second language teachers and supervisors at State-wide and regional workshops. In addition, the State Education Department conducted a Curriculum Symposium in March 1984, at which öparticipants reviewed and critiqued the framework as a model for describing communicative learning outcomes for modern languages.

In July and August 1984, contributors identified the specific learning outcomes to be achieved at three instructional levels. The instructional levels are identified in the syllabus as Checkpoints A, B, and C. During the ensuing months, Bureau of Foreign Languages Education staff developed the syllabus draft.

In March 1985, the draft was reviewed and critiqued by members of a Syllabus Review Committee and by additional consultants. During September-November 1985, 400 second language teachers selected at random participated in a field review of the syllabus draft. The State Education Department is grateful to all teachers who contributed their thoughtful comments and suggestions. The draft was revised on the basis of the field review responses.

INTRODUCTION

Modern Languages for Communication integrates principles of second language acquisition with the Board of Regents goals for elementary and secondary education and New York State's program requirements. It is meant to provide for school district personnel a framework for program development, management, and implementation.

This syllabus specifies goals and identifies the components of intended outcomes of second language learning so that administrators, supervisors, and teachers may design programs to achieve them. These outcomes are stated in terms of the students' anticipated ability to communicate in a second language at three different checkpoints in the program. In each case, this ability is identified by the purposes for communication (functions), the situation or context in which the communication may occur, the topics on which communication may occur, and the proficiencies, which describe the scope and level of linguistic accuracy that are expected. The achievement of these outcomes requires the integration of skills, knowledge, and cultural insight.

Although this syllabus identifies the components of intended learning outcomes, it does not prescribe specifically the methodology to be used. It does, however, offer precise implications for instruction. The goals of modern language education in New York State necessitate the development of functional communication in the context of the target language culture, and stress communicative proficiency, understanding, and appreciation of different cultures. This focus of instruction is expected to evolve over a period of time that may vary from district to district as each produces its own plan for program development and implementation. Therefore, this is a working document for educators to use at the district level when they assess, modify, or develop their own program and plan for the next step: development of a local curriculum and appropriate instructional objectives. It includes the following:

Philosophy - sets the stage; describes both the necessity and the desirability of acquiring a modern language in today's world; explains the communicative approach on which the syllabus is based.

Goals - states the Regents Goals for Elementary- and Secondary-School Students and states the goals of this syllabus; shows how the syllabus goals relate to specific Regents goals.

Learning Outcomes: An Introduction - defines the components of communication and their relationships to the learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes: Components - describes the four components of communication: functions, situations, topics, and proficiencies; provides the framework for local determination of more specific content, scope, and sequence.

Learning Outcomes: Checkpoints - represents the four components of communication graphically.

Curriculum Development - describes a process by which the framework of the syllabus can be used to develop a specific local curriculum for second languages.

Implications for Instruction - offers suggestions for developing communicative outcomes.

Outline for Planning a Unit of Instruction -provides one of many possible ways to develop a unit of instruction.

Evaluation - addresses the role of evaluation in the teaching of modern languages.

Interdisciplinary Activities - suggests ways to enhance the teaching of modern languages by promoting the interrelatedness of studies in all disciplines.

Technology - describes ways to enhance the teaching of modern languages by using available technology such as television, videotapes, and computers

"Without an increasing number of person-to-person contacts, we are unlikely ever to achieve a peaceful world."

James Cass
Saturday Review, Jan. 11, 1975

PHILOSOPHY

Language is our connection to our community and to the world. Through language, we identify the world around us, express our concerns and dreams, and share our experiences and ideas.

The ability to communicate in a second language increases the opportunities to interact with other peoples and to understand other cultures. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent, it is important for every person to acquire the skills for communication with others and for cross-cultural understanding.

In addition to the practical application of communication skills, the benefits derived from the study of a second language are many and contribute to the attainment of the Regents goals for elementary and secondary education.

Empirical findings indicate that second language study:

- fosters a sense of humanity and friendship;
- increases students' adaptability to different environments and modes of acting and thinking
- furnishes the key to thinking patterns, cultures, and social institutions of other peoples;
- provides insights into the human mind and language itself;
- prepares students for a world in which nations and peoples are increasingly interdependent;
- develops the skills and habits essential to the learning process, creative inquiry, and critical thinking

- helps students to increase their sensitivity to and understanding of the language, values, customs, and traditions of others;
- leads students to discover and examine their own personal values and civic responsibilities;
- provides insights into America's values and an appreciation of national responsibilities in the world community;
- is an asset to many careers and to professional advancement.

In light of these benefits, the study of a second language should be an integral part of every student's educational experience. All students deserve the opportunity to study a second language in order to prepare themselves for an informed and productive role in tomorrow's world community.

In the teaching of a modern language, the fundamental purpose is to enable students to communicate with native speakers of that language and to understand their culture better. Thus, this syllabus emphasizes a communicative rather than a linguistic approach to teaching modern languages. Rather than teaching students vocabulary words or grammatical structures in isolation, teachers are urged to help students regard and use the modern language as a tool that will enable them to accomplish a specific communicative purpose (function) in a particular form and setting (situation) about a particular subject (topic). The focus is always on **what** the students can do with the language and **how well** they can do it (proficiency).

"Global interdependence virtually demands an ability to communicate in a language other than English."

William D. Sims
Schooling for a Global Age

GOALS OF MODERN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The goals of *Modern Languages for Communication,* in the spirit of the Regents Action Plan, address the needs of today's students as they prepare to meet the challenges of the 21st century in a rapidly changing world.

The underpinnings of the Regents Action Plan critical thinking, reasoning skills, the synthesis of knowledge, humanistic understanding, social awareness, creativity, and self esteem are the foundation of the three major goals of the modern language syllabus: Communication Goals, Cultural Goals, and General Educational Goals. Although the three major goals are listed separately, they are not intended to remain isolated, but rather to be integrated into an interdependent whole.

COMMUNICATION

The primary goal of second language teaching is the achievement of functional communication in the context of the target language culture.

The goals expressed by the Regents Action Plan delineate specific areas of concentration related to second language instruction:

Each student will master communication and computation skills as a foundation to:

Comprehend written, spoken, and visual presentations in various media.

Speak, listen to, read, and write at least one language other than English.

Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different

race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, öeconomic, and

social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes.

CULTURE

Achievement of the cultural goals will enable students to develop greater understanding and appreciation of cultures in other countries as well as in their own country and community.

The Regents have incorporated cultural goals in the following statements:

Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through the following disciplines and use the methods and knowledge in

interdisciplinary applications:

Language and literature in at least one language other than English.

Each student will acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and intellectual accomplishments of civilization and develop the skills to express personal artistic talents. Areas include:

Ways to develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts.

Aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art.

Ability to use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups.

Understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.

Each student will acquire knowledge about political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in this country and other countries. Included are:

Knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in various nations; ability to compare the operation of such institutions; and understanding of the international interdependence of political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental systems.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Instruction in a second language is an integral part of the students' total learning experience and will provide a basis for interdisciplinary activity.

The following goals stated in the Regents Action Plan support this goal:

Each student will master communication and computation skills as a foundation to

Think logically and creatively.

Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems.

Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize, and use that information for those purposes.

civic values and acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes necessary to participate in democratic self-government.
Included are:

Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights.

Respect for self, others, and property as integral to a self-governing, democratic society.

Ability to apply reasoning skills and the process of democratic government to resolve societal problems and disputes.

attitudes which enable development of:

Self-esteem.

Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge.

The Board of Regents in its *Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York* has identified ten Regents Goals for Elementary- and Secondary-School Students. They are given in Appendix B, with those that especially pertain to second language instruction set in boldface type

"This nation and its people are inextricably intertwined with the rest of the world."

John Richardson

Assistant Secretary of State

1976

LEARNING OUTCOMES: AN INTRODUCTION

This syllabus defines communication in terms of four components: functions, situations, topics, and proficiencies. The integration of these components constitutes learning outcomes. These outcomes are presented at three instructional intervals, Checkpoints A, B, and C.

In the context of a communicative emphasis teachers should be concerned with the skills to be developed and the way students process information according to their learning styles, needs, interests, and abilities. Since students are less concerned about the nature of language than about what they want to do with it, the emphasis in the foreign language classroom should be on the negotiation of meaning rather than on the structure of language. The crucial issue is what students communicate and how well. The **what** refers to the purpose and the content of the communication (functions, situations, and topics); the **how well** relates to the linguistic accuracy, originality, scope, and cultural authenticity with which the communicative task is carried out (proficiency). All four components are essential in constructing learning outcomes.

- **FUNCTIONS**

- **SITUATIONS**   **WHAT**

- **TOPICS**   **= LEARNING**

- **PROFICIENCY**   **HOW WELL**   **OUTCOMES**

The four components are defined as follows:

- *Function* - the purpose of communication. In any given communication, an attempt is made to achieve one or more ends, for example, asking for help, giving advice, or seeking information. The functions listed in this syllabus are broad enough to include more specific purposes for communication.
- *Situation* - the context in which the communication occurs. Situations in this syllabus indicate the communicative partners, their roles, and the channels of communication.
- *Topic* - the subject of the communication. Topics are universal elements about which communication takes place.

- Proficiency - the degree of accuracy and the scope of the communication. Proficiency does not mean native or near-native command of the language. It refers to the various degrees of control of the basic elements of language.

Culture is an integral part of communication. The aspirations, beliefs, and understandings that shape patterns of behavior of a linguistic group form the cultural context that makes accurate and meaningful communication possible. This cultural dimension pervades all four of the components of communication.

The combination of these four components constitute the learning outcomes. These outcomes are measured at the following three instructional intervals:

Checkpoint A - learning outcomes for one unit of Regents credit. (Proficiency Examination)

Checkpoint B - learning outcomes for three units of Regents credit. (Regents Comprehensive Examination)

Checkpoint C - learning outcomes for five unit-of-credit Regents sequence. (Local Examination)

Standards for local diploma credit will be established by local schools.

Functions, situations, and topics listed under one checkpoint are listed under subsequent checkpoints as well in order to reflect the cumulative, spiraling nature of language acquisition. Students progress from the simple to the complex and from the known to the unknown. It is neither possible nor feasible to expect students to master every aspect of a particular function, situation, or topic at one time. Instead, students are expected to handle these components with increasing ease as their experience with the language grows.

Curriculum planners can use this information to develop the scope and sequence of a local curriculum in modern languages. Teachers can plan specific instructional activities and select and develop materials consistent with a communicative emphasis. The components can be combined in innumerable ways to form learning objectives that meet the

challenge their abilities.

The components of learning outcomes are displayed in two different ways, first by component, and second by checkpoint. The display by component is on the following pages:

point on the following pages:

"For students, the ability to communicate with people from other cultures (at home and abroad) is fundamental for personal growth as well as for the survival and progress of mankind."

Robert Leetsma

U.S. Office of Education

The graphic to the right provides a visual display of the integration of the four components at each checkpoint.

COMPONENTS OF COMMUNICATION
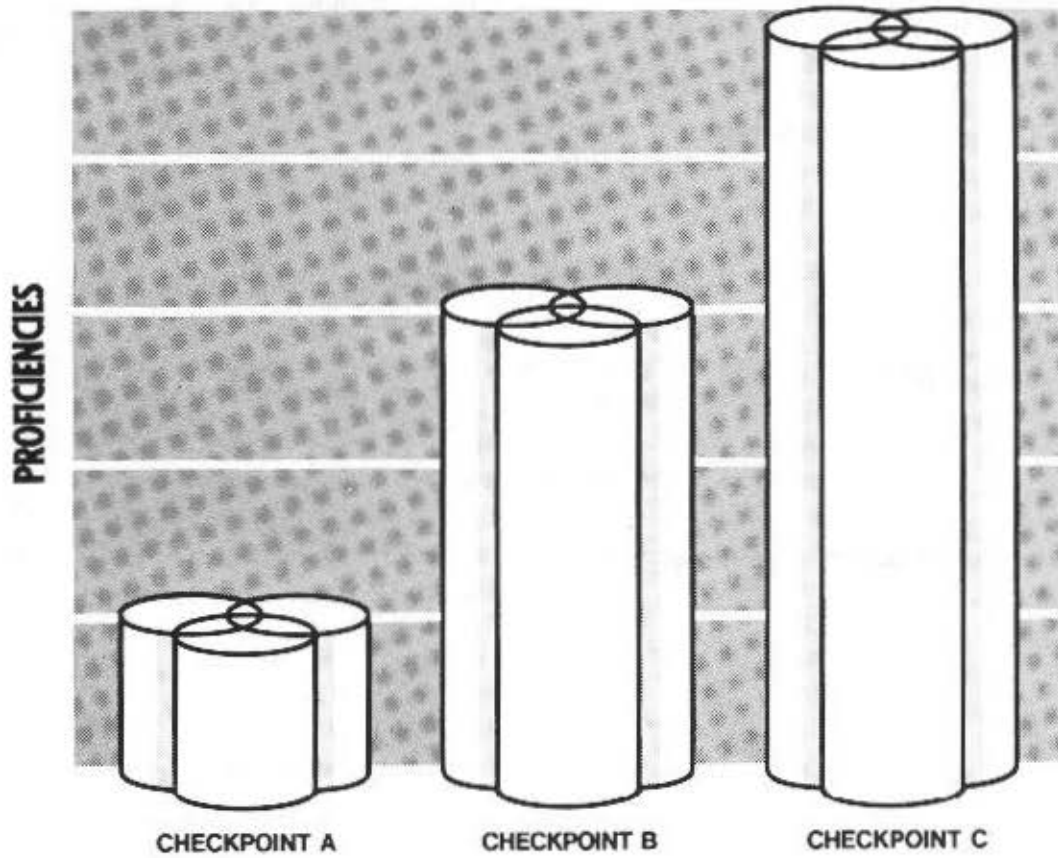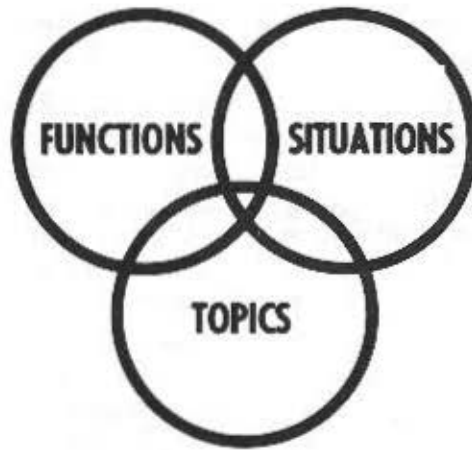
LEARNING OUTCOMES: COMPONENTS

FUNCTIONS

Functions denote the purposes for communication. For example, in a given situation one may wish to ask for help, give advice, issue a warning, or try to convince someone. The functions listed here are broad and may be applied to any communicative situation or given topic at any checkpoint.

FUNCTIONS

- Socializing
  — greeting
  — leave-taking
  — introducing
  — thanking
  — apologizing
- Providing and obtaining information about:
  — facts
  — events
  — needs
  — opinions
  — attitudes
  — feelings
- Expressing personal feelings about:
  — facts
  — events
  — opinions
  — attitudes
- Getting others to adopt a course of action by:
  — suggesting
  — requesting
  — directing
  — advising
  — warning
  — convincing
  — praising

SITUATIONS

The situations listed here indicate the contexts in which communication occurs. They define the communicative partners, their roles, and the channels of communication (oral or written). They establish the parameters for the negotiation of meaning between two or more people or between one person and an oral and/or written sample of language.

The situations are listed according to the primary skill students must use: listening, listening/speaking, reading, or writing. However, it is important to note that several skills may be involved in any act of communication. In all cases, each situation must be considered in relation to the functions, topics, and proficiencies. The age, ability, and experience of the student should also be taken into consideration.

SITUATIONS

	A	B	C
LISTENING			
Information and announcements from providers of common public services* in face-to-face communications	•	•	•
Information (bulletins/announcements) provided over loudspeakers, radio, and television	•	•	•
Short presentations of interest to the general public given in person, on radio or on television		•	•
Songs, live and recorded			•
Feature programs on television, in the movies, and on the radio			•
LISTENING/SPEAKING			
Interaction with providers of common public services* in face-to-face communications	•	•	•
Informal everyday conversations with individual peers and adults	•	•	•
Informal conversations with peers and familiar adults	•	•	•
Interaction with providers of common public services* by telephone		•	•
Group conversations among peers and familiar adults		•	•
Group discussions with peers		•	•
Informal presentations to groups of peers and familiar adults		•	•
READING			
Information provided to the general public on forms, signs, billboards and posters, labels, programs, timetables, maps, plans, menus, etc.	•	•	•
Announcements, ads, and short reports of general interest in newspapers, magazines, and other publications; short, informal notes	•	•	•
Simple business correspondence and pamphlets		•	•
Facts, opinions, feelings, and attitudes in correspondence from acquaintances and friends (peers and adults)		•	•
Letters to the editor and feature articles from general-interest publications		•	•
Excerpts from poetry and prose for cultural appreciation		•	•
WRITING			
Forms to be filled out for the use of common public services	•	•	•
Informal notes for communications in everyday life situations	•	•	•
Brief reports describing simple situations and sequences of events		•	•
Personal letters to acquaintances and friends (peers and adults)		•	•
Formal letters to agencies, institutions, and businesses on topics of personal needs		•	•
Short samples of expository or creative writing			•

*Sales personnel, bank tellers, ticket agents, police, hotel personnel, etc.

TOPICS

The topics listed here form the basis for meaningful communication in any culture. They are listed in no particular order, since their use depends on the students' needs and interests. Students are not expected to acquire comprehensive, academic knowledge of the topics; but rather, to be able to engage in communication about them. Topics must be considered as they apply to functions, situations, and proficiencies. Teachers are encouraged to add topics which are of interest to the students and to adapt instruction to their students'communicative needs, ages, and abilities.

point because language acquisition is cumulative and spiraling in nature. Teachers should reintroduce, reinforce, and expand communication on the topics as the students' proficiency increases. The checkpoints are neither starting points nor ending points of instruction but are indicators of what learning outcomes should have been achieved at that interval in the learning process

1. PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

	A	B	C
Biographical Information			
age	•	•	•
nationality	•	•	•
address and telephone number	•	•	•
family	•	•	•
occupation	•	•	•
place and date of birth	•	•	•
Physical Characteristics			
Height	•	•	•
Weight	•	•	•
Complexion	•	•	•
facial features	•	•	•
body shape	•	•	•
color of hair/eyes	•	•	•
disabilities	•	•	•
Psychological Characteristics			
Character	•	•	•
Personality	•	•	•
likes and dislikes	•	•	•
tastes and interests	•	•	•

2. HOUSE AND HOME

	A	B	C
Types of Lodging			
House	•	•	•
Apartment	•	•	•
rental/ownership		•	•
Rooms and Other Lodging Components			
Identification	•	•	•
size/function	•	•	•
furnishings	•	•	•
garden/terrace/balcony	•	•	•
appliances		•	•

3. SERVICES

	A	B	C
repairs		•	•
public utilities			•
deliveries			•

4. FAMILY LIFE

	A	B	C
family members	•	•	•
activities	•	•	•
roles and responsibilities		•	•
rapport among family members			•

	A	B	C
common activities	•	•	•
local stores/facilities	•	•	•
recreational opportunities	•	•	•
responsibilities/expectations			•
rapport among members of the community			•

6. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Physical Features

	A	B	C
big city	•	•	•
small town	•	•	•
village	•	•	•
suburb	•	•	•
country	•	•	•
geography of area	•	•	•

Climate and Weather

	A	B	C
seasons	•	•	•
temperature/precipitation/wind	•	•	•
natural catastrophes		•	•
flora and fauna		•	•
impact on human life			•

Quality of Environment

	A	B	C
opportunities for recreation and entertainment	•	•	•
ecology			•
economy			•
aesthetics			•

7. MEAL TAKING/FOOD/DRINK

Types of Food and Drink

	A	B	C
everyday family fare	•	•	•
regional and national specialties	•	•	•
fast food	•	•	•
food and drink preparation	•	•	•
special occasion menus		•	•

Mealtime Interaction

	A	B	C
regular family meals	•	•	•
eating with friends/relatives	•	•	•
eating out	•	•	•
socializing in public establishments			•

8. HEALTH AND WELFARE

Parts of the Body

	A	B	C
Identification	•	•	•
Care		•	•

Illness and Accidents

symptoms of illness	•	•	•
medical services/treatment		•	•
insurance/social services			•

9. EDUCATION

Secondary School Organization

types of schools	•	•	•
subjects	•	•	•
schedule/school year	•	•	•
programs		•	•
content		•	•
examinations/grading		•	•
diploma			•
students' organizations			•

School Life

extracurricular activities	•	•	•
relationships among students		•	•
relationships between staff and students		•	•
discipline		•	•
roles/responsibilities/expectations			•

Educational System

Structure			•
personnel			•
society's needs/expectations			•

10. EARNING A LIVING

Types of Employment

commonly known occupations	•	•	•
summer/part-time employment		•	•
volunteer work			•

Work Conditions

preparation/training		•	•
work roles/responsibilities		•	•
remunerations/benefits		•	•
relations with colleagues and employer			•

Major Issues in Employment

job market situation			•
new trends in employment			•
labor/management relations			•

Available Leisure Time

after school	•	•	•
weekends	•	•	•
holidays	•	•	•
vacations	•	•	•

Activities

hobbies/sports/other interests	•	•	•
use of media	•	•	•
organizations and facilities		•	•
cultural resources		•	•

Special Occasions

religious events	•	•	•
traditions and customs	•	•	•
family occasions	•	•	•

12. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES

Communications

Telephone	•	•	•
Mail	•	•	•
Telegram		•	•

Government Agencies

post office	•	•	•
customs		•	•
police		•	•
embassies and consulates			•

Finances

Banks		•	•
currency exchange offices		•	•

13. SHOPPING

Shopping Facilities and Products

shopping centers	•	•	•
specialty shops	•	•	•
neighborhood merchants	•	•	•
department stores	•	•	•
markets	•	•	•
mail-order companies		•	•

Shopping Patterns

time (opening hours...)	•	•	•
currency	•	•	•
interaction with sales staff	•	•	•
staples and everyday purchases	•	•	•
modes of payment		•	•

Shoppers' Information

prices	•	•	•
advertisements		•	•
consumer publications			•
labels/information brochures/directions			•

14. TRAVEL

Transportation

means of transportation	•	•	•
maps	•	•	•
timetables and fares	•	•	•
signs and instructions	•	•	•
interaction at ticket counters	•	•	•
advertisements/promotional information	•	•	•
itinerary		•	•
interaction at travel agencies		•	•
travel information agencies			•

Lodging

youth hostels		•	•
camping/caravanning		•	•
hotels and pensions		•	•
private guest arrangements		•	•

Holiday Travel Patterns

Destinations		•	•
Activities		•	•

15. CURRENT EVENTS

Political, Social, and Economic Aspects

miscellaneous news	•	•	•
political parties		•	•
present governments		•	•
current political issues		•	•
current economic issues		•	•
general description of society		•	•
executive, legislative, and judicial			•
status of the economy			•
trends in the economy			•
social classes and their relations			•
social programs			•
current social issues			•

Cultural Aspects

arts (theater/cinema/music)	•	•	•
people in the arts	•	•	•
special events	•	•	•
institutions/facilities		•	•
historical and artistic sites		•	•
folklore		•	•
trends			•

Relations between United States and Target Language Countries

opportunities for exchange	•	•
influence of one country on another		•
cultural links		•
economic relations		•
governmental relations		•
individual perceptions		•

The proficiencies listed here are descriptions of standards of competence in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture that are expected to be achieved at each of the three checkpoints. The term "proficiency" does not mean native or near-native "fluency." Instead, it refers to the degree of control of the language that the student should be able to demonstrate at each checkpoint.

The proficiencies in this syllabus are stated in such a way as to accommodate the varied learning designed to stress the successful communication of meaning rather than placing undue emphasis on attaining structural accuracy, particularly at the early stages of language learning.

Proficiencies are to be applied to the functions, situations, and topics as indicators of how well students are expected to communicate.

LISTENING

Checkpoint A

Can comprehend simple statements and questions. Usually comprehends the main idea of extended but simple messages and conversations. Often requires repetition for comprehension even when listening to persons who are used to speaking with non-natives.

Checkpoint B

Can comprehend short conversations on simple topics in everyday situations. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetitions and/or circumlocutions for understanding. Can understand frequently used tense forms and word-order patterns in simple sentences. Has both general and detailed understanding of short, discrete expressions but has only general understanding of longer conversations and messages within familiar communicative situations. Can sustain comprehension through contextual inferences in short communications on familiar topics with native speakers who are aware of the non-native status of the listener.

Checkpoint C

Can understand standard speech delivered with some repetition and rewording by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Can understand the essential points of discussions or presentations on familiar topics. Tension, pressure, emotional stress, and unfavorable listening conditions as well as vocabulary and complex utterances may hinder comprehension. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones and understand inferences.

SPEAKING

Checkpoint A

Can initiate and respond to simple statements and engage in simple face-to-face conversation within the vocabulary, structure, and phonology appropriate to the communicative situations and functions of this level. Can be understood, with some repetitions and circumlocutions, by native speakers used to foreigners attempting to speak their language.

Checkpoint B

Can initiate and sustain a conversation, but limited vocabulary range necessitates hesitation and circumlocution. Can use the more common verb tense forms, but still makes many errors in formation and selection. Can use word order accurately in simple sentences, but still makes errors in more complex

and familiar communicative situations. Can employ selectively basic cohesive features such as pronouns and verb inflections. Extended communication is largely a series of short, discrete utterances. Can articulate comprehensibly but has difficulty in producing certain sounds in certain positions or combinations. Speech is usually labored. Has to repeat to be understood by the general public.

Checkpoint C

Can handle most communicative situations with confidence but may need help with any complication or difficulty. Vocabulary, with some circumlocutions, is sufficient to communicate.

Can handle elementary constructions accurately.

Limited control of more complex structures may interfere with communication.

READING

Checkpoint A

Can understand simple material for informative or social purposes. Can understand the essential content of short, general, public statements and standardized messages. Can comprehend the main ideas of materials containing simple structure and syntax when relying on visual cues and prior familiarity with the topic. Understanding is limited to simple language containing only the highest frequency grammatical patterns and vocabulary items. Can sometimes guess at cognates and highly contextualized unfamiliar vocabulary. May have to read the material several times in order to achieve understanding.

Checkpoint B

Can understand simple narrative and descriptive authentic materials and edited texts within a familiar context. Has specific comprehension of selected passages in familiar sentence patterns. Can follow essential points and some details of expository writing when dealing with areas of special interest and is able to guess meaning from context.

Checkpoint C

Can understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some expository texts on topics related to areas of special interest. Can read excerpts from literature for pleasure. Is able to separate main ideas from lesser ones and thus begins to analyze materials written for the general public. Is able to use linguistic context and prior knowledge to increase comprehension. Can detect the overall tone or intent of the text.

Checkpoint A

Can express basic personal needs and compose short messages on very familiar topics based on personal experience. Writing consists mostly of mastered vocabulary and structures in simple sentences and phrases. Although errors in spelling and grammar are frequent, writing can be understood by native speakers used to dealing with foreigners.

Checkpoint B

Can write simple notes, letters, and short reports using elementary vocabulary and commonly encountered structures. Can express present, future, and past ideas comprehensibly. Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Begins to develop sequential relationships. Writing is comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners.

Checkpoint C

Can compose unified and organized texts on everyday topics with sufficient vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circumlocution. Is able to show good control of the morphology of the language and of the most frequently used syntactic structures, but errors may still occur. Can express complex ideas sequentially with simple language. Writing is comprehensible to a native speaker not used to reading the writing of foreigners.

Checkpoint A

Has knowledge of some aspects of the target language culture and is aware of the existence of cultures other than his/her own. Is able to function in authentic, common, everyday situations but makes frequent cultural errors that impede communication even with native speakers accustomed to dealing with foreigners.

Checkpoint B

Shows understanding of cultures as systems of values that evolve with time and is able to show how certain values are associated with certain behavior patterns in his/her own culture as well as in the target language culture. On the basis of previous experience with the target language culture, is able to distinguish some culturally authentic patterns of behavior from idiosyncratic behaviors. Still shows misunderstandings in applying this knowledge, and miscommunicates frequently with native speakers not accustomed to foreigners.

Checkpoint C

Shows understanding of most culturally determined behaviors of the target language speakers and begins to demonstrate a general appreciation for their culture. Is generally able to avoid major misunderstandings in common everyday situations with native speakers not accustomed to foreigners. Is able to use the context to guess at the meaning of some unfamiliar cultural behaviors. Shows some initiative and ease in using culturally appropriate behaviors acquired by observation of authentic models.