Study Guide for German – Cultural Competency Assessment

Geography

- Identifying and locating Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein
- Identifying major geographical features of the countries mentioned above
  - River and lakes
  - Mountain ranges
  - Regions
  - Major cities and harbors
- Recognizing major agricultural and industrial regions of the German-speaking world

Lifestyles and Societies

- Contemporary lifestyles
  - Food
    - Traditional dishes and specialities
    - Regional specialities
  - Mealtimes
    - Times and names of meals
  - Customs
    - Meeting people
    - Visiting people
    - Greeting people
    - Behavior in public places
  - Holidays
    - Religious holidays such as
      - karfreitag und Ostern
      - Pfingsten
      - Fronleichnam
      - BuB- und Bettag
      - Weihnachten
    - Public holidays
      - Tag der Arbeit (1. Mai)
      - Tag der Deutschen Einheit (3. Oktober)
      - Schweizerischer Nationaltag (1. August)
- Family relationships
  - Families and their homes
  - Relationships with people outside the family
  - Vacations/holidays
- Education
  - School systems
Higher education
- Regional variations
- Specialties

Foreign influences
- Relations with others European countries
- Immigration questions in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria
- Monetary units (Euro and Swiss Frank)

Sociolinguistic Elements of German

- Social interaction patterns
  - Customary usage of certain expressions in specific situations, particularly in public places

- Language appropriate to a given task or audience
  - Formal situations
    - Use of Sie as opposed to du
  - Informal situations
  - Familiar expressions and forms
  - Colloquial language

- Body language
  - Common gestures and their meanings

- Identification of cultural aspects that differ from corresponding aspects of the United States cultures

History

- Origin of present-day political systems in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein
- History of the twentieth century
- Political organizations of named countries
- Historic personalities, such as
  - Otto Von Bismarck, Kurt Waldheim, Kaiserin Sissi
- Events with strong historic impact such as
  - Das Kaisereich
  - Verfassung der Pauls Kirche in Frankfurt
  - Weimarer Republik
  - The First World war
  - The Second World War
  - The first chancellor (Konrad Adenauer)
  - Crucial aspects of the history of the German mind
  - Main lines of intellectual history
  - National icons
  - Symbols and national identity
  - Famous buildings and cultural artifacts
Contemporary world politics and economics as they affect German-speaking countries and regions
  ➢ Role of the political systems, structures, institutions, parties
    • Elections and voting
    • Court systems
  ➢ Relations with other European countries
  ➢ Organization of the government in Germany
  ➢ Recurring topics of public interest
  ➢ German economy, business, and industry
    • Fashion – *Trachten*
    • Food
    • Beer and wine
    • Tourism

**Literature and the Arts**

- Major works and authors of the literature of Germany and other German-speaking countries. For example
  ➢ Sixteenth-to eighteenth-century German literature
    • Martin Luther
    • Gotthold Ephraim Lessing
    • Heinrich von Kleist
    • Johann Wolfgang Goethe
    • Johann Gottfried Herder
    • Friedrich Schiller
    • Friedrich Hölderlin
  ➢ Nineteenth-to twentieth-century German literature
    • E.T.A. Hoffman
    • Gebrüder Grimm
    • Günter Grass
    • Ingeborg Bachmann
    • Arthur Schnitzler
    • Max Frisch
    • Berthold Brecht
    • Franz Kafka
    • Thomas Mann
    • Sarah Kirsch
    • Ilse Aichinger
    • Martin Walser
    • Marie Luise Kaschnitz
    • Helga Novak

- Significant figures, works, and events in the arts
  ➢ Traditional theater and opera such as
    • *Faust* (Johann Wolfgang Goethe)
Wilhelm Tell (Friedrich Schiller)
Der Ring der Nibelungen (Richard Wagner)

Music

Major composers and conductors such as

- Johann Sebastian Bach
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Ludwig Van Beethoven
- Johann Strauss
- Richard Strauß
- Paul Hindemith
- Herbert von Karajan
- Gustav Mahler

Art and architecture

- Käthe Kollwitz
- Franz Marc
- Das Bauhaus
  - Walter Gropius, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger
- Adolf Loos
- Oskar Kokoschka

Film

- Bernhard Wicki: Die Brücke
- Rainer Werner-Fassbinder: Die Ehe der Maria Braum
- Josef von Sternberg: Der blaue Engel

Dance

- Regional traditions
- The waltz
- Reihentanz