

SL115 (M/W/R/F 2:25; Van Hise 286)  
**FIRST-SEMESTER CZECH**

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**Course Description and Objectives.** This course is designed to develop communicative skills in Czech: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. The course emphasizes the skills of asking/answering questions and understanding/communicating information on selected topics. It is thematically organized; the themes we will be working on include: the Czech alphabet and sound system, greetings/introductions, classroom Czech (objects and expressions), nationalities, languages, food, family terms, days of the week, places in cities and directions (location), and the numbers 0-49. Structural topics supporting these themes include: the vocative case ('Hey, David!'), the nominative sg/pl of adjs and nouns ('This is our professor'), the accusative sg/pl of adjs and nouns ('We know the Czech president'), the locative sg/pl of adjs and nouns ('We study at this university'), personal/possessive/demonstrative pronouns, possessive adjectives, time expressions, and the present and past tenses of verbs. These themes and structural topics are presented in *Čeština hrou (Czech for Fun)* (Units 1-4), in supplementary materials in the form of handouts (poems, proverbs, songs, etc.), and through computer programs available in the language lab.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- (1) Hold conversations in Czech which reflect comfort with the communicative themes we have treated.
- (2) Understand texts on these themes by applying what they have learned (vocabulary and grammatical structures) to the reading and also by bringing to bear their own world knowledge to make educated guesses about words and structures with which they are not yet familiar.
- (3) Write short compositions on the topics they will have studied.
- (4) Exhibit familiarity with aspects of Czech culture relating to these themes.

These objectives are geared not merely to 'covering' grammar and vocabulary, but to their **functional assimilation** in skill development. Knowledge of grammatical structure and vocabulary items, while essential, will be subsumed under the broader goal of being able to use them for communicative purposes. In other words, memorization of words and grammatical rules is the **starting** point of learning, not the **end** point.

As instructor, I will facilitate the achievement of the course objectives by providing you with a framework in which to learn, but I cannot achieve the objectives or learn for you. Only *independent, consistent (daily) work* and *active assimilation* of the course content on your part will result in the successful attainment of all the course goals and your own personal ones. Progress in this respect will be measured by homework and class participation as well as quizzes, tests and exams. In general, if you follow the syllabus

assiduously and **come to class prepared to practice new topics** (know your vocabulary and grammar!), you will be able to meet the objectives more than adequately.

**Materials.** To supplement the materials listed below (the textbook is available in the bookstore; the programs in the Van Hise computer lab), I will be providing students with a number of handouts throughout the semester.

- Čeština hrou/Czech for Fun*, S. Kresin et al. [with workbook and tapes]
- Computer material to supplement each unit. [available in LSS microlab]

I also enthusiastically recommend the following history books:

- D. Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia* [a Czech cultural history up to ca. 1960]
- T. G. Ash, *The Magic Lantern* [an account of the recent revolutions in C. Europe]

**Requirements.** The following are required for successful completion of the course; I have also indicated how each requirement will figure in the final grade.

•Attendance and participation	10%	
•Homework (daily and by unit)	15%	
•Vocab quizzes (by unit)	15%	
•Tests	20%	[2, written only: 10% each]
•Exams	40%	[2, written and oral parts: 20% each]

**Homework** will come in two varieties: **daily assignments** for the next class period and **assignments done over the course of any given unit** (computer programs, readings, short poems or songs, grammatical overview exercises, etc.). It is recommended that the latter assignments be handed in a few days before the unit has ended so I can correct them and get them back to you before the quiz. *No assignment for any unit will be accepted after the quiz on the unit has been given.* Because we are concentrating a lot of material into one semester, students will be expected to work intensively (and conscientiously) outside of class.

**Tests** will be given at the end of units 1 and 3, a **midterm exam** will be given after unit 2, and a **final comprehensive exam** after unit 4. Tests will be written only; both exams will have written and oral components. Students are strongly encouraged to form small study groups and prepare collectively for tests and exams!

Because comfort with vocabulary is crucial to learning any language (especially Czech!), students WILL BE REQUIRED to produce, with each unit, a set of **flashcards** containing new words and definitions, grammatical notes, and (ultimately) a sentence illustrating contextual usage. **Vocabulary quizzes** will be given in the first half of each unit.

Students are encouraged to keep a **journal** of case usage and verbal conjugation patterns. Tables summarizing this grammatical information are available in the textbook appendix.

**Optional Activities.** The Czech conversation table (Český stůl) will hold regular weekly meetings in the Rathskeller in the Memorial Union (day/time to be announced). You

should definitely try to make a few of these meetings, especially in the second half of the semester as your own knowledge of Czech increases.

There will also be a public screening of a **subtitled Czech film** during the second part of the semester (day/time to be announced). Students will be encouraged to attend.

**Absence Policy.** Excused absences because of illness should be accompanied by a doctor's note. All unexcused absences will affect the attendance and participation part of the student's final grade. More than **four** unexcused absences (ie, four classes) will result in a **loss of 10% of the final grade** (that is, the student will lose a whole letter grade). This is a strict policy since even a small number of missed classes will significantly undermine the integrity of the course. Please try to notify me in advance of absence.

**Grading.** Grades will be earned according to the following scale:

93+	A
88-92	AB
83-87	B
78-82	BC
70-77	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

As the instructor for the course, I am committed to helping you learn as much as possible from the course and achieve the course objectives. I am available for outside help whenever you need it; make an appointment to see me, drop by my office, or call me at home with questions (but please not after 9:00 pm!).

## 1. SEMESTR (PODZIMNÍ)

[Po-pondělí = Mon, Út-úterý = Tues, Stř-středa = Weds, Čt-čtvrtek = Thurs, Pá-pátek = Fri, N-neděle = Sunday]

### 1. Týden - Week 1

[Září - September]

W-Stř	3	Introduction to the Course (Jak se jmenujete? Těší mě!)
R-Čt	4	Česká abeceda (a, b, c...) a české hlásky [sounds!] (č! š! ž! ř!)
F-Pá	5	Lekce 1: Dobrý den! Kdo jste?

### 2. Týden - Week 2

M-Po	8
W-Stř	10
R-Čt	11
F-Pá	12

### 3. Týden - Week 3

Po	15
Stř	17
Čt	18
Pá	19

Písemka [test!] z 1. lekce (30 minut); Lekce 2

#### 4. Týden - Week 4

Po	22
Stř	24
Čt	25
Pá	26
So	27

Lekce 2: Jak se jmenujete? Které jazyky umíte?

Rosh Hashanah

#### 5. Týden - Week 5

Po	29
[Říjen - October]	
Stř	1
Čt	2
Pá	3

#### 6. Týden - Week 6

Po	6
(Út)	7
Stř	8
Čt	9
Pá	10

Yom Kippur

Nemáme hodinu. Ústní část zkoušky [oral part to exam]!  
Zkouška [midterm!], písemná část [written part]!

#### 7. Týden - Week 7

Po	13
Stř	15
Čt	16
Pá	17

Lekce 3: Co si dáte k obědu? Co děláte v pátek večer?

#### 8. Týden - Week 8

Po	20
Stř	22
Čt	23
Pá	24
N	26

Daylight Saving Time Ends! Turn clocks back 1 hour!!

#### 9. Týden - Week 9

Po	27
Stř	29
Čt	30
Pá	31

Halloween!

#### 10. Týden - Week 10

[Listopad - November]

Po 3  
Stř 5  
Čt 6  
Pá 7

Písemka z 3. lekce

**11. Týden - Week 11**

Po 10  
Stř 12  
Čt 13  
Pá 14

Lekce 4: Kde bydlíte? Kde jste dneska byl(a)?

**12. Týden - Week 12**

Po 17  
Stř 19  
Čt 20  
Pá 21

**13. Týden - Week 13**

Po 24  
Stř 26  
Čt 27  
Pá 28

Všichni někam jedou. Hodinu nemáme.  
T-GIVING (americký Den Děkuvzdání)! Hodinu nemáme.  
T-GIVING (americký Den Děkuvzdání)! Hodinu nemáme.

**14. Týden - Week 14**

[Prosinec - December]

Po 1  
Stř 3  
Čt 4  
Pá 5

Hodinu nemáme. Večer se díváme na český film!

**15. Týden - Week 15**

M-Po 8  
Stř 10  
Čt 11  
Pá 12

Post-graduální studenti dělají prezentace! Poslední hodina!

N 14  
7.45

**ZÁVĚREČNÁ ZKOUŠKA! [FINAL EXAM!]**  
na abecedu, 1. lekci, 2. lekci, 3. lekci a samozřejmě 4. lekci!!!

*This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*