

2021

# Online Language Enhancement Courses (LECs) Student Handbook



Partner Language Training

Center Europe

Strategic Languages Department

**Partner Language Training Center Europe (PLTCE)  
Online Language Enhancement Courses (LECs) Student Handbook**

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## PART I. INTRODUCTION

**OVERVIEW:** PLTCE is the theater proponent for language training. PLTCE had its humble beginnings as a 4-week accelerated Russian review course in the summer of 1978. Today, PLTCE incorporates 5-week Language Enhancement Courses (LECs) in MSA, Levantine, Moroccan, French, Persian-Farsi, Russian, Ukrainian, as well as Specialized Language Programs (SLP), NATO Standardization and English as a Foreign Language course (EFL).

**MISSION:** The primary mission of the LEC program is to provide advanced language training to US military service members, Department of Defense (DoD) civilians, and NATO allies and partners. PLTCE also provides support to individual command language programs.

**SHIFT TO ONLINE LEARNING:** Following the March 2020 implementation of worldwide travel restrictions to help prevent the spread of COVID19, PLTCE responded by adapting its high-quality LECs in MSA, French, Persian-Farsi, and Russian to an online format.

**LOCATION:** The Marshall Center is located in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Munich lies approximately 70 kilometers/42 miles to the north, and the Austrian Border is 15 kilometers/9 miles to the South.

**TIME ZONE:** Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany is in the Central European Time, which is GMT/UTC + 2 hours during Daylight Saving Time and GMT/UTC + 1 hour during Standard Time. Daylight saving time is observed from the last Sunday in March (02:00 CET) to the last Sunday in October (03:00 CEST). You can check the current time in Germany at <https://time.is/Germany>

## PART II. ACADEMICS

**GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS:** It is important for students to understand that their primary mission while enrolled in a PLTCE course is to improve your language/language teaching/language testing skills to the maximum extent possible.

The teaching-learning relationship is a cooperative one in which both the teacher and the students are engaged in a common effort to establish an optimal program of instruction. Students are expected to take full advantage of this unique learning opportunity and to cooperate with their instructors in establishing and monitoring their own course of study.

**ACADEMIC POLICY:** Students will receive assignments to be completed as requested by the instructor. Repeated failure to participate, prepare, or complete assignments will result in the student being dropped from the class. Do not be late for virtual meetings. Avoid heated political topics. Academic issues need to be brought immediately to the attention of the Department Chair or 1SG.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:** The academic days for online LEC students will vary according to their individual geographic location. Classes run from Monday through Friday. US national holidays and any days announced by PLTCE administration are days off. Classes will still be in session on otherwise-designated Training Holidays.

**PLACEMENT TEST AND DLPT:** Depending on your language, you will receive a diagnostic assessment early in the course. At the end of the course, you should coordinate with your CLPM for the next available Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) session. The DLPT evaluates your proficiency in reading and in listening comprehension and is also useful in assessing PLTCE instruction.

### **PART III. ONLINE STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

**COMMUNICATION:** PLTCE students must interact daily with the instructor, other course participants, and course content by being responsive to emails, announcements, discussions, virtual meetings, and assignments. Students are expected to log-on to the learning management system (LMS), Google Classroom, on a daily basis and in accordance with course requirements to check for news and information, and to maximize their online participation. PLTCE personnel will be notified when students do not demonstrate attendance by accessing course functions and do not submit required assignments.

**DILIGENCE:** PLTCE expects that online students will generally spend a similar amount of time to complete an online course as they would to complete the same course offered in residence (about eight hours per day). As workday overlaps allow, instructors and students will schedule video meeting to complement non-concurrent assignments, to hold discussions, and to ask questions. Students are expected, to the greatest extent possible, to participate in video meetings. There should be a minimum of 4 hours of video attendance each week of class. Time management is critical to the success of online training.

**UNDERSTANDING:** Although there are many benefits to be derived from virtual instruction, online classes require much more flexibility and patience as instructors and learners adjust to new learning management systems, lesson formats, and interaction patterns. Possible concerns are: more difficulties/glitches with technology; challenges keeping focused and motivated; various time zones of instructors and students and compensating for a lack of non-verbal responses (nodding, confused looks, etc.).

**NETIQUETTE:** It can be easy to downplay the human-interaction element when working online. Students must keep up their military professionalism by being kind, respectful, and helpful. Students should also present themselves and their learning space responsibly and with dignity (e.g., no T-shirts with offensive messages, unmade beds, etc.). Remember that this is a serious training, not social networking; therefore, overuse of caps, emoticons, etc. is inappropriate.

### **PART IV. ONLINE RESOURCES**

**COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCESS:** Course participants must have access to the minimum required course components, technologies, tools, and media. PLTCE expects online students to resolve their own technology issues related to computers, related equipment, and internet access. PLTCE cannot assist with troubleshooting issues that students might have with their personal equipment or purchased services. To participate in online LECs:

- Students should have a reliable stand-alone or laptop computer with adequate processing speed and data storage to accommodate the many files to be exchanged during the course.
- Students should have a reliable, high-speed internet connection, preferably with at least 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload capability. Since instructors and students will share lots of files, ISP data caps could limit participation.
- Students will need a Google account, which is established with the creation of a Gmail account. Before the LEC course date, PLTCE will provide students with joining instructions to Google Classroom. Students do not need to create anything within Google Classroom to participate.

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- Students will be given access to BigBlueButton (BBB) virtual meeting rooms, by means of a link to a specific classroom by their instructor. Some instructors may also create a pin that goes along with the link for additional security. Student do not need to create an account with BBB to participate in the virtual meetings, as the link will connect them to the instructor's room directly.

**PROGRAM AND APP TRAINING:** Students may search Google/YouTube for tutorials on the various programs and apps used by PLTCE for online instruction, including Google Classroom, Calendar, and Drive, for example, [Google Classroom video](#). Likewise, BBB tutorials are readily available in English (at [BBB video](#)) and in many of the LEC target languages (which might assist with class administration in the target language).

### **PART V. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**DIRECTOR/CHAIR/1SG OPEN-DOOR POLICY:** Although virtual, the PLTCE Director, Chair of the Strategic Languages Department, and 1SG maintain an open-door policy at all times.

**STUDENT NOTICES:** Students should regularly check the Google Classroom announcements, Gmail email and PLTCE website ([pltce.org](http://pltce.org)) for general information, alerts and student notifications.

**ONLINE CONDUCT:** PLTCE is a military school and as such military professionalism and discipline will be maintained and enforced. The 1SG is the military authority for the school. Violations of the, SOP, PLTCE policy and guidance may result in removal from class.

Teachers are contracted instructors and are responsible for instruction. Online discipline for each class is a matter of personal and professional integrity but is ultimately enforced by the PLTCE 1SG. The 1SG, Department Chair, and the Director are the only people authorized to make changes or exceptions. Contact information is below.

**STUDENT ABSENCE:** Students must request an absence from class BEFOREHAND by coordinating with the 1SG.

**GRADUATION:** Instructors will hold informal Graduation ceremonies at the end of the five weeks of training. PLTCE staff will email Certificates of Graduation to all participating students. However, PLTCE will issue Certificates of Training (DA Form 87) only to those students who specifically make such a request and complete all course requirements.

### **PART VI. STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION**

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