

Elementary Yiddish - 260Y

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Syllabus: 2009 - 2010

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the Yiddish language and the culture of Ashkenazi Jews. Using both the prescribed texts and additional material handed out in class, it will begin to prepare you to express yourself in both written and spoken Yiddish. You will acquire strategies that will help you to continue to study Yiddish independently by developing your understanding of the structures of the language.

Textbooks: Sheva Zucker Yiddish I

Handouts will also be distributed throughout the term.

Course Goals / Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, you will:

1. Know the basic grammatical structures of Yiddish
2. Be able to read Yiddish prose and poetry
3. Be able to communicate in Yiddish with your fellow students
4. Be able to write short, grammatically correct compositions using the vocabulary acquired in class.

Methodology of Evaluation

Grades will be based on the progression towards and the achievement of these course goals as follows:

Attendance and Class Participation: 10%

Home Assignments: 10%

Mid-term Test: 20%

Quizzes: 15%

One Oral Presentation: 10%

Final Test: Written – 25 % ; Oral – 10%

Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time. Since 10% of the final grade is assigned for class participation, attendance is particularly important. If you must miss a class, please let me know.

Class participation requires adequate preparation for class, including assignment completion.

Homework Assignments

You will be expected to complete written assignments from the textbooks as well additional assignments that will be distributed in class. These assignments may be oral. You will also have to submit 6 written compositions during the course (3 per term). The length of each composition will increase from 100 words to 250 words during the year.

Oral Presentation

You will have to present one oral presentation in Yiddish on a subject of your choice. The students will be expected to ask you questions about your presentation (and you will be expected to try to answer in Yiddish).

Mid-term Test

The test will be written in class and will assess your reading comprehension and proficiency in grammar and vocabulary. The mid-term test will take place some time in December.

2nd Term Test

The Second Term Test will consist of a written and an oral portion (conducted at different times).

The Oral Test will consist of a brief conversation with the instructor. The conversation will be based on vocabulary covered in class.

The written test will check your reading comprehension, proficiency in grammar and vocabulary, as well as your ability to express yourself in Yiddish. The date of the 2nd term written test is the end of the winter term.

On a final note:

One of the course objectives is to introduce you to the joys of Yiddish and to have fun learning it. Let me know if you have special interests in the field of Yiddish studies and I will try to incorporate them into our program

Please do not hesitate to talk to me if you have any problems. You can call me, e-mail me or drop in during office hours or schedule an appointment.

See you in class!

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