

The University of Toronto

READING GERMAN FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

GER 6000H-F / Fall 2016

Instructor:	JOSHUA DITTRICH, PHD	Dept:	German
Office:	Odette Hall #312	Email:	josh.dittrich@utoronto.ca
Hours:	T 1-3 (& by app.)	Tel.:	xxx

Class meets on **T 3-5 p.m. in CR 403**

Lerne das Einfachste! Für die, deren Zeit
gekommen ist, ist es nie zu spät!
Lerne das A-b-c, es genügt nicht, aber
Lerne es! Laß dich nicht verdrießen!
Fang an! Du mußt alles wissen!

(BERTOLT BRECHT)

DESCRIPTION

This intensive course is designed for students interested in acquiring proficiency in reading German texts. Offered as a half course, it is ideal for those preparing for departmental reading examinations or research with German archives. In 12 sessions, this course teaches German reading knowledge following the grammar-translation method designed for graduate students from all disciplines. Because of time constraints, it is a fast-paced course that will cover fundamental aspects of German grammar while focusing on acquiring essential structures of the German language to develop translation skills. No previous knowledge of German is required; the course is conducted in English.

COURSE GOALS

Participants will acquire a foundational reading vocabulary and a thorough understanding of German grammar by means of analytical discussions, homework exercises, and reading assignments. The concentrated work in class includes texts from a variety of disciplines, including the humanities, natural sciences, social sciences and contemporary journalism.

Upon successful completion, students will be able to decipher German texts with the help of a good dictionary; understand key lines of argument in academic prose; identify and appreciate major stylistic features of literary writing; and pronounce German words correctly. Since the course focuses exclusively on reading and translating German, participants do not learn how to speak or write in German.

REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATION

Course participants will be assigned **CR** or **NCR** grade (where a final average of at least 70 is required for credit). It is up to the individual department to determine whether this mark satisfies their German language requirement.

Regular attendance and active class participation	10 %
3 Quizzes (in class, 25 minutes each)	30%
Vocabulary Building Assignment	10%
Midterm exam (in class, 1 hour)	20%
Final exam (in class, 2 hours)	30%

Attendance & Participation:

Students must attend all classes and participate fully in class discussions. Absences require a doctor's note or they lower the student's participation grade. Repeated tardiness affects the participation grade. In all cases of absence, please notify me as soon as possible by email. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a penalty of 10% per absence to the participation mark.

Weekly Reading and Translation Exercises:

In advance of each weekly meeting, you will be asked to read through several chapters of April Wilson's *German Quickly* and translate as many as possible of the sentences and reading exercises that you find in the assigned chapters. You are expected to self-correct your homework using the answer key in the back of the textbook. Self-correction is a valuable exercise in learning from one's mistakes, identifying problem areas and posing specific questions to bring up in class. A portion of class time each week will be dedicated to answering any questions you have from the homework and in going over problematic passages together. Please note that homework assignments may be subject to change, and I will announce any changes in class. If you miss a class meeting, it will be your responsibility to contact your fellow students (not the instructor) to catch up on the missed class. If you are struggling at any point during the semester, please contact me for additional help or clarification of the course materials during office hours.

Quizzes:

The 3 quizzes will be written in class with the aid of a dictionary of your choice in no more than 25 minutes. They will focus on important vocabulary, essential grammatical structures, and short translations. Thorough knowledge of previously discussed grammar and syntax is expected. Make-up arrangements can be made as long as you contact the instructor at least 24 hours in advance.

Vocabulary Building Assignment

I will not test vocabulary per se, but as all our tests are timed, you will want to memorize a broad, basic German vocabulary (i.e. most of the words that appear in Wilson's book) so that you can use your time as efficiently as possible for translating *sentences* (as opposed to looking up individual words).

Beyond this basic and cumulative vocabulary work, you will be asked to prepare a list of 40-60 specialized or technical terms (with definitions) that are specific to your area of research. You should choose a combination of (1) technical terms crucial to your discipline whose German equivalents you will need to be able to recognize (e.g., how exactly do you say "uneven development," "false cadence," "mixed media installation" etc in German?); and (2) specialized historical/critical German words derived from original sources crucial to your area of research

(e.g., if you are working on psychoanalysis, you would want to include a range of Freudian terms in the original German). Please avoid obvious cognates (e.g., orientalism and Orientalismus). This assignment is designed to help prepare each student directly for reading relevant academic work in German in their field, or for doing specific archival or textual-analytical work. It is due in class in hard copy on our penultimate meeting, Nov. 29.

Midterm Exam:

The midterm exam, to be completed in class in week 7 (Oct 25th), will take 60 minutes and it will focus on the vocabulary and grammar covered in the first half of the course. Dictionaries are allowed.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be written in class on our last class meeting (Dec. 6). You will have a choice of passages to translate with the aid of a dictionary. Each passage will be an “authentic” contemporary or historical German text, and I will do my best to offer a selection of texts that will speak to the range of academic interests and disciplines represented in the class. You will be evaluated both on the accuracy and the “speed” of your translation, that is, I am interested in seeing not only how well you translate, but also how much material you can work through, with reasonable accuracy, during the two-hour exam.

MATERIALS

Wilson, April. *German Quickly: A Grammar for Reading German*. Rev. ed. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007. Available at the U of T bookstore; or online ISBN 978-0820467597

For additional, entirely optional reading practice, I am placing the following text on reserve at Kelly Library:

Korb, Richard Alan. *German for Reading Knowledge* (Boston, MA: Heinle, 2014).

You are strongly recommended to invest in a large (unabridged) German-English dictionary. This is a crucial resource for attaining a nuanced understanding how German words function grammatically and semantically. I recommend the Collins 8th edition (2013, ISBN 978-0007510832). The Oxford 3rd edition (2008, 978-0199545681) is also good. You won't need to bring this to every class, but it will be a crucial resource for completing homework and translation assignments.

Online dictionaries:

<http://dict.leo.org>

<http://www.dict.cc>

<http://canoo.net>

Optional Material (for those in need of basic introduction to grammar):

Zorach, Cecile, Charlotte Melin and Elizabeth Kautz. *English Grammar for Students of German*. 5th ed. Ann Arbor: Olivia and Hill Press, 2009.

CALENDAR

Note: The purpose of this calendar is to provide a general idea of how this course is structured. It may be subject to change.

Week	Topics	Important Items
1 Sept 13	Ch. 1-3: General Introduction, Present Tense of Verbs, Personal Pronouns, Case Endings	
2 Sept 20	Ch. 3-5: Case Endings, Adjectives & Adverbs, Prepositions	
3 Sept 27	Ch. 5-7: Prepositions, Verb Placement, Pronouns	Quiz 1
4 Oct 4	Ch. 8-10: Weak Nouns & Adjectives used as Nouns, Various Uses of <i>Es</i> , Future Tense	
5 Oct 11	Ch. 11-13: Comparison of Adjectives & Adverbs, Da- and Wo-Compounds, Verb Prefixes	Quiz 2
6 Oct 18	Ch. 14-18: Verb Tenses, Plurals, Common Suffixes	
7 Oct 25	Ch. 19-20: Modal Auxiliaries, Zu Construction	Midterm
8 Nov 1	Ch. 21-24 Coordinating Conjunctions, Basic Verb Placement, Dependent Clauses	
Nov 10	NO CLASS "FALL BREAK"	

9 Nov 15	Ch. 25-27: Relative Clauses, Reflexive, Overloaded Adjective Construction	Quiz 3
10 Nov 22	Ch. 28-31: The Passive, Subjunctive I & II	
11 Nov 29	Ch. 32-34: Other Subjunctive Forms, If a Sentence Starts with a Verb, Other Pronouns	Vocabulary Assignment Due
12 Dec 6	Please bring a good dictionary!	FINAL EXAM