

The University of Toronto

## **ELEMENTARY YIDDISH (FALL SEMESTER)**

German 260Y

Instructor:	<b>VARDIT LIGHTSTONE</b>	Dept:	German
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Hours:	TBA (& by app.)	Tel.:	TBA

Class meets on **W 10am-12pm and F 10-11 a.m.**

### **DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the Yiddish language of Ashkenazic Jews. Yiddish is a Germanic language, but due to the unique social situation of Jews in Eastern Europe it also has large Hebrew-Aramaic and Slavic elements. Yiddish was spoken in Eastern Europe, including Russia, Germany, Poland, and Lithuania, as well as in non-Eastern European countries such as Canada, the United States, and Argentina, from c. the 12<sup>th</sup> century to the present day.

While learning the language the course will also introduce students to Yiddish literature and culture, providing a greater understanding of the historical and contemporary, religious and secular communities that speak and spoke this language.

### **COURSE GOALS**

This course will begin to prepare students to express themselves in Yiddish, acquire strategies to learn Yiddish independently by developing an ability to understand the structure of the language, and to cue in on the features of spoken and written Yiddish. In the first semester students will learn: to read and write the *alef-beys* (Yiddish/Hebrew alphabet); have a basic conversation; use gendered nouns and adjectives properly; use the present tense; to structure sentences; to tell time.

### **REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATION**

Attendance and class participation	20%
Home assignments	30 %
Mid-term test	25%
Final test (in-class)	25%

### **MATERIALS**

Uriel Weinreich, *College Yiddish* (the necessary pages for this semester will be provided as a PDF); handouts (distributed during the term). Some classes are accompanied by power-point presentations or online resources. Students will be able access those through the course website.

## 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. A binding course syllabus will be provided at the first class session.

Week 1: Introduction to Yiddish and the Yiddish Alphabet

Week 2: Yiddish Alphabet

Week 3: Yiddish Alphabet and Gender of nouns

Week 4: Word order and Questions

Week 5: Adjectives; The Accusative Case

Week 6: Plural of Nouns; The Dative Case

Week 7: Mid-term test; The use of “מען”

Week 8: Pronouns; Introduction to the present tense

Week 9: The Imperative; Present tense of Irregular verbs

Week 10: The Infinitive; Time

Week 11: The Dative Case without Prepositions; Review

Week 12: Review; Final Test