

The University of Toronto

## MEDIEVAL GERMAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

German 426H / Winter 2020

Instructor: **NICOLA VÖHRINGER**

Dept: German & History

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3 (& by app.)

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Class meets on **W 3-5** in **TF203**

### DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to the German language, literature, and culture of the Middle Ages. We will learn to read and translate original medieval German texts and inquire into German language history. In addition, you will gain insight into epochal cultural concepts like courtly love, chivalry, asceticism, and gender. We will cover foundational texts such as medieval German love songs and one of the most famous medieval narrative texts in the German language, Hartmann von Aue's *Der arme Heinrich* as well as take a peek at fascinating texts from the monastic realm. We will also explore some examples of contemporary reception of medieval German literature. No previous exposure to medieval culture or language is required. The course language will be German.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

All required texts for the course will be provided on the course website on Quercus. If you should need help with Quercus, please contact Quercus U of T at [q.help@utoronto.ca](mailto:q.help@utoronto.ca) or <http://toolboxrenewal.utoronto.ca/> or consult with your College Registrar.

### EVALUATION

20% Attendance & participation  
15% Presentation  
15% Take-home translation assignment  
20% In-class translation exam  
30% Final paper

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Attendance and participation (20%):* Regular attendance is mandatory. Absences will only be excused according to university regulations. If you must miss class for reasons of health, or personal or family reasons, you must provide appropriate documentation in the form of a College Registrar's letter, or a completed and signed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form, available at this website: <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>. If you must miss class for religious reasons, you must inform me as early as possible, and at least one week in

advance to avoid the penalty. In addition to excused absences each student may have two (2) unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence after the second will result in a reduction of the final grade.

Besides regular attendance, your participation represents a substantial part of your final grade. I expect you to come to class in time, having completed all the readings and assignments. You must bring to class a copy of the assigned text. You are responsible for contributing to and stimulating a meaningful exchange of ideas. You will be graded according to the quality and frequency of your participation.

*Presentation (15%):* For the presentation, you are expected to pick a modern or medieval German word and explain its history and development of meaning as well as the changes in sound and spelling. You will receive a list of suggested resources to consult for this assignment.

*Take-home translation assignment (15%):* For the take-home translation assignment, you will be given a medieval German text similar to the ones covered in the course to translate into fluent modern German or English. You will also be expected to explain some linguistic phenomena that appear in the text.

*In-class translation assignment (20%):* The in-class translation assignment will consist of a section of a medieval German text covered in the course. You are expected to translate the text into fluent modern German or English and briefly answer some context questions.

*Final Paper (30%):* For the final paper, you are expected to write an analysis of a topic/text covered in the course. The purpose of this assignment is to practice asking scholarly questions, evaluating primary sources, relating your interpretation to previous scholarly work, and organizing a written argument. This paper should include primary sources and a minimum of 2 correctly cited scholarly articles and/or books. It should be at least 1800 words in length (not including the bibliography).

**A note on missed or late work:** you can only obtain credit for your work if the delay is related to reasons for excused absences as defined above. If you must submit your work late for reasons of health, or personal or family reasons, you must provide appropriate documentation in the form of a College Registrar's letter, or a completed and signed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form, available at this website: <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>. If you must hand in work late for religious reasons, you must inform me as early as possible, and at least one week in advance to avoid the penalty.

Except for emergencies, all excuses for missing an exam or for late assignments must be discussed with me before the exam or due date. Except for emergencies, I will not accept excuses given after the exam or due date. An unexcused missed assignment or missed exam will result in a zero.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University of Toronto treats cases of plagiarism very seriously. The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the procedures for addressing academic offenses. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or research and citation methods, you should seek information from your instructor or other university resources. See <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students>.

## **ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS**

The University of Toronto provides academic accommodation for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services (<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>) as soon as possible at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or (416) 978 8060.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

All students are expected to use the University of Toronto email address for official communication. You will receive all announcements or other communication exclusively at this address.

My office hours are Tuesdays 3-5pm in the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures (50 St. Joseph Street, Odette Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, #303) or by appointment. I will respond to emails within 72 hours, Monday to Friday, except for all University of Toronto holidays.

**This is a preliminary version of the syllabus. Changes may occur.**