

GM150 German Conversation

Spring Term 2020

Instructor: Narges Roshan
Course Number: GM 150
Times: Wednesday, 15:45-17:15
Friday, 15:45-17:15
Location: to be announced
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

The course is designed to help students boost their speaking skills and communicate in German with ease and confidence. Understanding and responding to what people speak on the street and in everyday situations poses challenges for many language learners; the course will tackle these challenges hands-on and from multiple angles, always with an eye toward what is most useful for students stepping beyond the “English language bubble” on campus.

Classes will be structured around topics of student interest and combine vocabulary building and pronunciation exercises with the creation of various speaking scenarios where students practice expressing themselves spontaneously and explore dialects, accents and modes of intonation. The course is open to students who have completed B1; the objective of the course is to create a comfortable speaking environment for intermedium to advanced learners.

- **The classroom interaction will be in German.**
- **Active and consistent classroom participation is crucial**

ATTENDANCE

Since interaction is critical for language learning, we take class attendance very seriously. Please note the following regulations:

- You will be allowed no more than **two absences** during the semester. Repeated lateness also counts as an absence.

If you have any **medical issues** or other concerns that could impact your compliance with these regulations, you need to inform your instructor during the first week of the semester. For information on disability accommodation, you should consult with Scott Jung, Enrollment and Program Manager, s.jung@berlin.bard.edu

The process for applying for disability accommodation is explained in the Student Handbook with links to the forms here: <http://www.berlin.bard.edu/for-students/student-handbook/policies-and-regulations/#c4206>

Please be punctual and considerate. Switch off your cell phones before each class (including the vibration setting). If you are texting, emailing, surfing the web – you are considered absent! Also please keep bathroom breaks to a minimum. Interruptions are bad for everybody's concentration and impolite.

LEARNING

Confidence – Getting to know your own language skills by using German actively.

Telling stories in German will motivate you to use everything you know in German.

Competence – Exploring and learning strategies to understand and use narratives will help you to develop narrative competence in German.

Performance – Combining confidence and competence will enable you to speak spontaneously, freely in class and in public.

GRADING

Your Grade will be based on class attendance, quality of participation, oral and written homework assignments and presentations:

Class Participation	50%
Midterm (Presenting a Promotional Campaign)	25%
Final Exam (Presenting a Ted Talk)	25%

Conversation through Narration

Narrative competence

Narrative competence is a „interdisciplinary key competence“¹ (Nünning 2012) and therefore crucial for language acquisition. This course is designed to make use of narration (storytelling) in order to improve speaking skills. The concept is based on the idea that students are able to express themselves freely and informally through homileic discourse (Ehlich, Rehbein 1979). Homileic discourse refers to forms of discourse such as small talk; telling stories, experiences, jokes, anecdotes etc. as part of daily life.

Homileic discourse serves the purpose of creating mutual trust and a community among equal conversational partners, but can also be used for institutional discourse. During the semester we will work out strategies to get from homileic discourse to institutional discourse by making use of oral and written skills. This approach is based on Konrad Ehlich's text concept (1984): "Text is not limited to writing, but text is also oral."² (Ehlich 1984:16).

Exploring narrative competence

The course will encourage students not only to analyze but also to produce narratives by promoting a performative learning environment.

I. Some main questions that will be discussed in class

- What is discourse? (interdisciplinary term)
- What is narration?
- What are narratives? What are metanarratives?
- What is *narrative₁* and *narrative₂*/ *Erzählen₁* und *Erzählen₂* (Ehlich)
- What is narrative competence?
- How to develop narrative skills?
- What are differences and similarities between oral and written storytelling?

II. Performative Learning

In order to use oral storytelling skills students are required to present two main projects:

1. Promotional Campaign in class (combining oral and digital storytelling) (10 min.)
2. Ted Talk on stage (10 min.)

1 Im Original: „interdisziplinäre Schlüsselkompetenz“ (Nünning 2012)

2 Im Original: „Text ist nicht auf Schriftlichkeit einzuschränken, sondern Text ist auch mündlich.“ (Ehlich 1984:16).

SYLLABUS

This syllabus is subject to change. You are responsible throughout the semester for knowing what you have to do for each class.

Week 1 (Jan. 27 – Feb. 02)	
Week 2 (Feb. 03– Feb. 09)	
Week 3 (Feb. 10– Feb. 16)	
Week 4 (Feb. 17– Feb. 23)	
Week 5 (Feb. 24– Mar. 01)	
Week 6 (Mar. 02– Mar. 08)	
Week 7 (Mar. 09– Mar. 15)	
Fri, Mar 13, 2020	Midterm Presenting a Promotional Campaign
Week 8 (Mar. 16– Mar. 22)	
Week 9 (Mar. 23– Mar. 29)	
Week 10 (Mar. 30– Apr. 05)	
Spring Break (Mon, Apr. 6 - Mon, Apr. 13, 2020)	No Class
Week 11 (Apr. 15 – Apr 19)	
Week 12 (Apr. 20– Apr. 26)	
Week 13 (Apr. 27 – May 03)	
Fri, May 1, 2020	Federal Holiday
Week 14 (May. 04 – May 10)	
Fri, May 8, 2020	Federal Holiday
Week 15 (Mon, May 11 – Fri, May 15, 2020)	Completion Week
Wed, Apr 22, 2020	Final Presenting a TED Talk in German