

# GM101 GERMAN BEGINNER A1 (GROUP A)

Seminar Leader: Manuel Gebhardt  
Email: [m.gebhardt@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.gebhardt@berlin.bard.edu)  
Office hours: by appointment

Monday: 09:00 – 10:30  
Wednesday: 09:00 – 10:30  
Friday: 09:00 – 10:30

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Book Purchases:

- Stefanie Dengler, Tanja Mayr-Sieber et al.: **Netzwerk neu A1.1. Kurs- und Arbeitsbuch**. Stuttgart: Klett Sprachen, 2019. ISBN 978-3-12-607154-3
- Stefanie Dengler, Tanja Mayr-Sieber et al.: **Netzwerk neu A1.2. Kurs- und Arbeitsbuch**. Stuttgart: Klett Sprachen, 2019. ISBN 978-3-12-607155-0

Bookstore near campus: **Buchhandlung Chaiselongue**, Dietzgenstr. 68, 13156 Berlin.  
Phone: 030 476 111 31, Email: [info@chaiselongue-buch.de](mailto:info@chaiselongue-buch.de)

### Strongly Recommended:

- **English Grammar for Students of German**. Eds. Cecile Zorach, Charlotte Melin. Olivia Hill Press, 2001. ISBN: 0-934034-31-1
- or:
- **Essential Grammar of German with Exercises**. Ed. Monika Reimann. Max Huber Verlag, 2012. ISBN-10: 3192015756

I strongly encourage you to make use of the following resources:

- The **Bard Center for Foreign Languages and Culture** provides various language learning materials on the website at <http://fcl.bard.edu/resources/german/>
- Check out the “**Resources**” section at the **Bard College Berlin German Studies Program website**; it provides an overview of useful links and online resources on German language, literature and media at <https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/german-program/>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to found and foster your communicative competence in German. By “communicative,” we mean that you will learn to express your own ideas orally and in writing, and to develop strategies for understanding spoken and written discourse—as opposed to merely memorizing vocabulary lists and grammar rules. By “competence,” we mean that your acquisition of the language must show a high level of grammatical, lexical, and cultural *accuracy*. Our goal is not simply a list of rules and words, but real communication between speakers.

## REQUIREMENTS

To achieve these goals, you have to engage in as many communicative exchanges as possible. The course will give you ample opportunity to do so: in small groups or with a partner, in direct interaction with me, in listening to dialogues between other native speakers on audiovisual media, in expressing your ideas in writing, and in understanding and discussing short texts.

- **Classroom interaction will be in German**, because input and use are the chief engines of foreign language acquisition.
- **Active and consistent classroom participation** is crucial to your success at acquiring the language. A language cannot be “crammed” in. So as to get the most out of this class, you need to constantly use and practice the language.
- **Outside the classroom**, you are expected—and will need to—spend **at least 12 hours** per week, which corresponds to **two hours each day**, doing your homework, and learning and practicing your grammar and vocabulary.
- Make sure to always upload a **digital copy** of your written **homework** to our google drive folder **before class**. Assignments need to be **double-spaced** and have **margins of about 3 cm** on each side for comments and corrections.

Upon completing this course successfully, you will have reached the A1 language proficiency level, corresponding to the levels of the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)** that range from A1 for beginners to C2 for language skills at the highest level.

### Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### Use of AI

I agree with and will enforce the following regularities on the use of AI based on statement from the Harvard Kennedy School:

It is generally acceptable to use generative AI for finding information and for solidifying your knowledge of the course content. For instance, it is absolutely fine to use AI-powered web search and to have conversations with tools like ChatGPT to help explore ideas, refine thinking, and writing, and also presentations, to identify examples, and better understand the course material. Students are, however, encouraged to reasonably limit their use of AI e.g. for creating presentations or essays: in this course, it is essential that any content submitted reflects the language level students themselves are capable of grasping. A presentation widely augmented with content (vocab and grammar) not covered in class, can hardly contribute to our common goal of better understanding each other inside the realm of the German language.

Over the course of the semester, we implement some tools that can help us to make our language learning process more effective.

Please note that computer-generated text and ideas (including anything from ChatGPT) are sources that require citation.

## Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. However, you may encounter circumstances that prevent you from attending classes for which you may be excused, meaning that the absences will not impact your grade.

- These circumstances include illness, religious observance, military obligation, attendance at a conference, a Bard Network event, a civic engagement initiative, a research trip or another compelling circumstance outside of your control (i.e. court appearance, visa appointment, death of a family member). Optional non-academic travel, hosting visiting family and friends, or work schedules are **not grounds** for excused absences. You will be allowed to **self-report your absences four times**, meaning that a notification informing your instructor about the reason for your absence before or within 24 hours of the class is sufficient. If you miss class more than four times, you will need to provide your instructor with appropriate documentation in order to be excused (i.e. a doctor's note).
- All **unexcused absences** will lower your final grade by one step (i.e. if your final grade is a B, you will be downgraded to a B-). **Seven unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course.**
- If you are facing the unusual situation of long-term, serious medical or personal emergencies (generally lasting more than two weeks), you can request a Leave of Absence, to be approved by the Deans, the Head of Student Life or the Director of Academic Services.
- In order to pass the course, you will have to **pass the final exam**. Final exams always take place during completion week and **cannot be rescheduled**. Please note the date of the final exam and schedule your travels accordingly.
- If you have any **general 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 the Head of Student Life. 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>

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

## Assessment & Assignments

About every two weeks, you will take **a test of the “Kapitel” you have studied** (the exact test date will be announced by me at least two classes in advance) and an **essay or presentation assignment**.

The tests must be taken on the announced test days. Tests that are missed will not be rescheduled, and will receive a score of “0%”

**In preparation for all tests and quizzes, you are expected to**

- make frequent use of your textbook and listening exercises
- study the “Wortschatz” for each “Kapitel”

- go to the Schubert-Verlag textbook homepage for free online exercises at:  
<http://www.schubertverlag.de/aufgaben/>

Out of your **essay assignments**, you will complete **two** in class. For writing your **in-class essay assignments**, you may only consult paper dictionaries. Smartphones, tablets and laptop computers are not permitted.

For completing your **take-home essay assignments**, you may only consult dictionaries. The use of translation applications or the like is not permitted.

For **all essay assignments** to be complete, **you must hand in two versions**. The grade you receive for your second version can be maximally half a point above the one of your first version (i.e. if the grade for their first version is a B, the second version can maximally receive a B+). The grade you receive is based on the essay's content, grammar, and structure/vocabulary. You can receive a maximum of 12 points for your essay (4 points for each category).

**Example:**

Inhalt: 4  
Aufbau/Wortschatz: 3.5  
Grammatik: 2  
Gesamt: 9.5 Punkte (B-)

**Policy on Late Submission of Papers**

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

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

Class Participation & Homework	20%
Oral Proficiency	10%
Essays / Take Home Quizzes / Presentations	20%
Chapter Tests	25%
Final Exam	25%

**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! Interruptions are bad for everybody's concentration and impolite.**

## PRONOUNS

In German, persons as well as nouns are assigned a gender (often randomly): male, female, neuter. These gender assignments are part of the normative usage and of the authentic language material, cultural sources and literary texts used in our classes. We are asking everyone to be aware of implications resulting from these rigid grammatical rules and conventions, and to respect the wishes of their fellow students and instructors. Please inform your instructor if you wish to be addressed with a preferred pronoun. Unfortunately, German has presently only limited options for doing so. We will try to find solutions that everyone is comfortable with.

## 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: Sept 2 – Sept 6	<u>Berlin Survival Training</u> “Get your German started!”
Week 2: Sept 9 – Sept 13	<u>Kapitel 1: Guten Tag!</u> (In class Activity: Steckbrief, Sept 11)
Week 3: Sept 16 – Sept 20	<u>Kapitel 2: Freunde, Kollegen und ich</u> (Test 1, Sept 18)
Week 4: Sept 23 – Sept 27	<u>Kapitel 3: In Hamburg</u> (Essay 1, Sept 25)
Week 5: Sept 30 – Oct 4	<u>Kapitel 4: Guten Appetit!</u> (Test 2, Oct 2) (Marktextkursion, Oct 4)
Week 6: Oct 7 – Oct 11	<u>Kapitel 5: Alltag und Familie</u> (Essay 2, Oct 9)
Week 7: Oct 14 – Oct 18	<u>Kapitel 6: Zeit mit Freunden</u> (Test 3, Oct 16)
<b>Week 8: Oct 21 – Oct 27</b>	<b>Fall Break</b> (Yippie, Yippie Yeah!)
Week 9: Oct 28 – Nov 1	<u>Kapitel 7: Arbeitsalltag</u> (Essay 3, Oct 30)

Week 10: Nov 4 – Nov 8	<u>Kapitel 8: Fit und gesund</u> (Test 4, Nov 6)
Week 11: Nov 11 – Nov 15	<u>Kapitel 9: Meine Wohnung</u> (Essay 4, Nov 13)
Week 12: Nov 18 – Nov 22	<u>Kapitel 10: Studium und Beruf</u> (Test 5, Nov 20)
Week 13: Nov 25 – Nov 29	<u>Kapitel 11: Die Jacke gefällt mir</u> (Essay 5, Nov 27)
Week 14: Dec 2 – Dec 6	<u>Kapitel 12: Ab in den Urlaub</u>
Week 15: Dec 9 – Dec 13	<u>Repetition &amp; Catch-Up: Eure Zeit in Berlin</u> (Test 6 + In Class Essay: Dec 11)
<b>Completion Week: Tuesday, Dec 17:</b>	<b>09:00 – 11:00 Final Written Exam</b> <b>(All groups)</b> <b>13:00 – 16:00 Final Oral Exam</b>