German Beginner A2

Instructor: Silke Hilgers
Times: Monday, 13:30-15:00
      Tuesday, 13:30-15:00
      Thursday, 09:00-10:30
Location: P98a.U.04; P98 Seminar Room 1
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Course Description
This course is designed to start you on the road to 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.

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 dialogue between other native speakers on audiovisual media, in expressing your ideas in writing, and in understanding and discussing short texts.

- Most 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 a week, which corresponds to two hours each day, doing your homework, and learning and practicing your grammar and vocabulary.

- Make sure to always bring a hardcopy of your written homework to class. Assignments need to be double-spaced and have margins of about 3 cm on each side for comments and corrections.
The learning goals of this beginner’s class A2 are in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (abbreviated as CEFR). CEFR is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe. It describes what a learner is supposed to be able to do in reading, listening, speaking and writing at each level. Our class fulfills the requirements of the “A2 Waystage or elementary” level. What this means is that once you have completed the class successfully you are able to

- understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
- communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.
- describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

Attendance
Since interaction is critical for language learning, we take class attendance very seriously. You will be allowed no more than three unexcused absences during the semester. (An absence counts as excused only if you can provide a doctor’s note or a note from the Dean of Bard College Berlin, Prof. Catherine Toal.)

***Any additional unexcused absence will result in automatic failure of the course.***

Please be punctual and considerate. Switch off your mobile phone before each class, and keep bathroom breaks to a minimum. Interruptions are bad for everybody’s concentration and impolite.

Course Materials


Note:
Recommendation
I strongly encourage you to make use of the language learning materials on the Bard Center for Foreign Languages and Culture website at cflc.bard.edu/germanlanguage

If you are in for a challenge, you can tune in on Deutsche Welle radio or TV at http://www.dw-world.de/ and Info Radio at http://www.inforadio.de/livestream/inforadio_hoeren.html
Learning and Testing

About every two weeks, you will take a test of the chapter you have studied (the exact test date will be announced by me at least two classes in advance).

The tests must be taken on the announced test days. The only acceptable means of rescheduling a test are: (a) prior arrangements with me in the case of religious holidays, pressing personal or family matters, or (b) written notification from a doctor or from the Dean of Bard College Berlin following the absence. (Tests that are missed and not excused under these terms 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 the CD’s in the back of your Lehrbuch
- study the “Wortschatz” for each chapter that you find in your “Glossar” and your Lehrbuch

Grading

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

- Class Participation 25%
- Homework, Quizzes (announced or unannounced) 25%
- Chapter Tests 25%
- Final Exam 25%

Schedule of Classes

Each chapter of the Lehrbuch will always be accompanied by additional exercises. Chapter tests will take place about every two weeks:

Week 1 (Jan. 27 – Feb. 02) Kapitel 1
Week 2 (Feb. 03 – Feb. 09) Kapitel 1
Week 3 (Feb. 10 – Feb. 16) Kapitel 2
Week 4 (Feb. 17 – Feb. 23) Kapitel 2
Week 5 (Feb. 24– Mar. 02) Kapitel 3
Week 6 (Mar. 03 – Mar. 09) Kapitel 3
Week 7 (Mar. 10 – Mar. 16) Kapitel 4

Spring Break
Week 8 (Mar. 24 – Mar. 30) Kapitel 4
Week 9 (Mar. 31 – Apr. 06) Kapitel 5
Week 10 (Apr. 07– Apr. 13) Kapitel 5
Week 11 (Apr. 14 – Apr. 20) Kapitel 6

**Apr. 18 - Karfreitag, Federal Holiday**

Week 12 (Apr. 21 – Apr. 27) Kapitel 6

**Apr. 21 - Ostermontag, Federal Holiday**

Week 13 (Apr. 28 – May 04) Kapitel 7
Week 14 (May 05– May 11) Kapitel 7
Week 15 (May 12- May 18) Repetition

**Date Exam: May 20, 2014: 10:30-12:00** Final Exam/A2 Test