“Wer ich bin: Das Selbstkonzept”

Elementary German: Exploring Self-Identity in the German-speaking World
German 101, Fall 2014

Welcome to GERMAN 101!
We in the Department of German Studies are glad you decided to learn German. As you might know, English and German have many words in common (“Gesundheit”, “Bratwurst”, Kindergarten”, etc.). This will help you to learn the language quickly. Nevertheless, you need to be an active learner in order to succeed. The following will give you a brief overview of what you can expect from this class and what will be expected from you.

Course Objectives:
German 101 is the first half of the elementary German sequence entitled “Wer ich bin: Das Selbstkonzept” and the first semester of the Department of German Studies’ integrated four-year, content-oriented undergraduate curriculum. In this course you will explore the roles and group affiliations that contribute to the identity of young adults in the United States and the German-speaking world. Through this exploration you will be introduced to the principles of the German language and to life in German-speaking countries, and you will begin the long-term development of your ability to speak, understand, read and write German.

Course Materials:
- Required:
  o Online quizzes at BB
  o supplemental texts for each thematic unit, the reader is handed out in hardcopy, the rest is on-line (Blackboard). Please be sure to print out and write your “ABs” (=Arbeitsblätter) on time. Get familiar with your BB-site.
- Recommended (and you bought it with the book) for self-study:
  o On-line activity pack at www.mhhe.com/dnk6. Offers different level exercises, partially with immediate feedback.

Course Description and Approach:
As you perhaps have noticed, first-year German has a title, “Wer ich bin: Das Selbstkonzept,” that indicates a particular thematic focus to the two-course sequence (101 & 102), namely, an exploration of the roles and group affiliations that contribute to the identity formation of young adults in the United States and the German-speaking world. Specifically, you will examine the following six different roles or groups this academic year, devoting 4-5 weeks to each:

  German 101: (1) Student; (2) Hobbyist; (3) Family member
  German 102: (4) Consumer; (5) Tourist; (6) Citizen

By focusing on an overarching topic for an entire course, German 101-102 reflects the teaching philosophy of the Department of German Studies that language is best acquired when learners have to explore content and communicate meaningfully about it.
On the one hand, then, because of its explicit thematic emphasis that frames and informs how the language is approached, this course differs from traditional first-year language courses. The six different roles or group affiliations listed above serve as thematic units for the course, and for each unit we will focus on those aspects of the German language that are needed to communicate effectively about that theme. In an ideal world, there would be a textbook that would adhere to this approach, but that is unfortunately not the case. As a result, we will supplement the textbook with additional texts that deliver the content that we feel is important for the topic. In addition, we will not always progress through the textbook in a chronological order. If, for example, a certain language feature that is needed to communicate effectively about a theme does not appear until later in the textbook, then we will jump ahead and study it for its relevance to the unit. For those who are very used to moving through a textbook one page at a time, this will take some adjustment, but we hope you will see quickly how necessary it is to use the textbook flexibly so that we learn structures and vocabulary that are necessary for communicating successfully about the themes in the unit.

On the other hand, this theme-oriented approach does not mean that we will not study the traditional building blocks of language, namely, grammar and vocabulary. In fact, you will probably see right away that much of what you do for the class resembles how you might imagine a typical first-year language course; that is, you will read texts, learn relevant vocabulary, study grammatical structures that appear in the texts, complete exercises for homework on the grammar and vocabulary, interact with classmates and the instructor on specific topics, and complete writing assignments. What all these activities have in common is that they aim to familiarize yourself with the language and the content that you will need to communicate meaningfully about the topic at hand.

Finally, we want to remind you that learning a language is a long-term, non-linear, and error-full process. In other words, you will make wonderful progress this year, but you should not get frustrated by the challenges that the language presents. You will make mistakes, and that is completely normal. In fact, your errors are what indicate to us where we need to focus more attention and how your abilities are developing. You also might find that some aspects of the language that you thought you understood or had a firm grasp on are now causing your trouble. That, too, is completely normal. There is only so much that your brain can handle at a given point, and it is typical that new material takes up cognitive resources that you had used earlier for some other component of the language.

As you embark on this exciting and challenging process, the class will be conducted mainly in German, and you will be expected to make your best effort to respond in German. For the remaining 23 hours and 10 minutes of the day, you can speak English, but for 50 minutes four times a week, really push yourself to use the German language to communicate. Make good use of our free tutoring (speak with the tutor about your ABs) and EPASS.

Assessment:

1. Attendance + Participation + Preparation (30%) Attendance and participation are essential to your progress. You will be allowed a maximum of 4 absences during the semester without penalty for routine doctor visits, minor illnesses, job interviews, and travel for non-emergencies, etc. Beginning with the 5th absence, a penalty of -1%
will be levied on the earned final grade for each class missed. The best policy to adopt is to keep your instructor informed if you miss any classes or assignments. Extended illnesses and family emergencies will be treated as exceptions and handled on a case-by-case basis. Be prepared to show proof of the need for the absences, however, if your instructor asks for it. Note that you can make up for one absence by participating in a 4th extra-curricular event of the department (guest-lectures, parties in the German House, film etc.). In addition, if you attend the departmental Mittagessen once, this attendance can be used as make up for one absence. Varsity athletes can get excused by coaches’ e-mail for announced absences but must, of course, do the required work.

Completing homework thoroughly, regularly, and on-time is extremely important. Learning a foreign language is a long-term process, and cramming simply does not work. If it is any comfort, there are explanations in English in the book to help you understand concepts. If the explanations do not make sense to you or you are still having difficulty with a topic and would like to discuss it in English, come to my office hours. You also might find the optional exercises in the online activity pack helpful.

All homework needs to be done on time as preparation for class. Your instructor will take up and grade about one AB per week, others can be handed in for correction. Homework will be graded according to the following criteria:
- “√+” (95%): Homework handed in on time and indicating a very thorough effort, including a conscious attempt to use and experiment with language features emphasized in class. Random grammar mistakes, particularly as part of experimentation, will not adversely affect your grade;
- “√” (80%): Homework handed in on time and indicating a satisfactory effort but consisting of no more than the minimum and/or displaying consistent mistakes on grammar already covered in class;
- “√-” (65%): Homework handed in on time but indicating an unsatisfactory effort.

Note: Homework that receives a check or check minus can be corrected, turned back in, and, assuming the issues have been addressed, receive a mark of 90%. Late homework will not be accepted and will receive no credit.

Easily avoidable mistakes (gender and spelling) will lower your language evaluation grade. Avoid those by using on-line dictionaries to check gender and Google Docs or Microsoft Word to check spelling (Tools → Language → German).

Regular homework assignments could consist any of the following activities: (re)reading an assigned text, reading a grammar explanation in the textbook, learning vocabulary, completing a worksheet or grammar exercise, writing an essay, or preparing for an in-class speaking event.

Coming unprepared to class will be noted.

Part of your participation grade is based on your attending at least one extra-curricular event (such as films, parties, guest lectures, etc.) during each of the three instructional units for a total of three extra-curricular events during the semester. Not fulfilling this requirement will result in deduction of your participating grade by 3%. After such an event please send a 40-word description (as much in German as possible, some English ok) to your instructor. There is a great amount of flexibility as to what counts as an appropriate activity because we want you to seek out those
aspects of the German-speaking culture that interest you. Soon you will notice the benefit of it and the fun that can evolve from engaging with German-speaking cultures.

2. **Quizzes (10%).** Most will be online (BB) and will have to be completed within two days according to schedule. After that date you will NOT receive credit. Keep taking the on-line quiz until you achieve 90% success or better. You can also work with the lab manual to practice your listening comprehension using the audio material online (www.mhhe.com/dnk6). In addition, there will be one vocabulary quiz per instructional unit (based on WF) and occasional take-home quizzes on specific grammar. If your grammar quiz result should be lower than 80% you will need to meet with one of our tutors and explain to the tutor what the problem was and how you learned to correct it. The tutor will sign your corrected quiz after that session and you can hand in the improved version for an up to 7% improvement.

3. **Unit tests (20%).** There will be a 50-minute written test after each of the first two units.

4. **Writing assignments (15%).** At the end of each of the three units you will complete a writing assignment on a topic relevant to the unit. Submit your writing as a hard copy to your instructor and on-line (BB, safe assign). The first draft -your original- will be annotated and returned for revision.

5. **Speaking events (Midterm 5% ; Final 10%).** The midterm speaking task will be a 5-minute dialogue with a classmate outside of class. The final speaking task will be a 5-minute interview during finals’ week.

6. **Final written exam (10%).** The time slot for this exam is determined by the registrar. Please do not make any winter travel plans until you have checked the final exam schedule on the registrar’s website. As this is a block exam for all 101 students we are not really flexible.

7. The grade F factors in as 50%, an assignment not done as a 0!

For your convenience, much of the material supporting your learning progress is stored in Blackboard. Students can practice there independently and find interesting links.

EXTRA HELP: This year our Fulbright Teaching Assistant from Austria is Magister Anna Berger, who will be supported by 2 advanced German students and offer extra-help sessions. Details on these sessions TBA.

**Class Participation Criteria:**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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| A     | always well-prepared  
      | always is attentive and eager to volunteer  
      | always tries to use German with classmates and instructor  
      | always makes the most of each exercise  
      | shows real resourcefulness and imagination when using the language  
      | always responds to and engages classmates in a respectful manner  
      | remains critical and open-minded toward target and native culture  
<p>|       | usually well-prepared |</p>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Usually is attentive and volunteers occasionally. Usually tries to use German with classmates and instructor. Usually makes the most of each exercise. Completes exercises with some imagination and resourcefulness. Makes some effort to engage fellow students. Shows some development of cultural sensitivity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Adequately prepared and attentive. Occasionally needs to be reminded to use German with instructor and classmates. Responds and completes exercises with minimal imagination. Does not engage classmates beyond the minimum requirements for an assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Usually unprepared. Makes little effort to participate or complete exercises. Rarely tries to use German with instructor or classmates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Makes no contribution to class whatsoever.</td>
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**Honor Policy**
All courses in the Department of German Studies strictly adhere to the Emory College Honor and Conduct Code. The general rule to remember is that any work that you turn in to your instructor or tutor should be your own. Asking an advanced learner of German or a native speaker to proofread your work before turning it in is **not permitted**. Also, it is not allowed to translate complete sentences with any on-line translation program. If you want help understanding an assignment before turning it in, set up an appointment with your instructor.

**Final words of advice:**
Come to class prepared, **having read the assigned pages in the textbook** and completed work online or on a worksheet. Feel free to ask questions in class. Get off to a good start. Postponing your studies will only make learning the language that much harder. Seek my advice during office-hours if you are having trouble. Don’t wait too long! View this class as an exciting opportunity to learn how others live and communicate and, in turn, come to better understand how you live and communicate.
Office for Undergraduate Education – Information for Syllabus – Fall 2014

- The Office for Undergraduate Education (OUE) central office is located in White Hall 300
- Please visit or call 404.727.6069 with questions about academic affairs, concerns or policies.
- All Emory College of Arts and Sciences policies may be found in the College Catalog: http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/catalog/index.html

Academic Advising and Class Deans
If you have any academic concerns or questions about Emory College of Arts and Sciences policies, you should first meet with an OUE academic adviser. If an academic adviser is unavailable to meet with you, you may meet with an OUE dean during open hours.
- OUE Academic Adviser appointments: Visit White Hall 300 or call 404.727.6069
- Deans’ Open Hours: http://college.emory.edu/home/administration/office/undergraduate/hours.html

Academic Support
There are a range of resources available to Emory undergraduates designed to enrich each student’s educational experience.
- Visit http://college.emory.edu/advising for a list of support programs and appointment directions

Access and Disability Resources
Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR formerly the Office of Disability Services, ODS) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to your professor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received.

Honor Code
Upon every individual who is a part of Emory University falls the responsibility for maintaining in the life of Emory a standard of unimpeachable honor in all academic work. The Honor Code of Emory College is based on the fundamental assumption that every loyal person of the University not only will conduct his or her own life according to the dictates of the highest honor, but will also refuse to tolerate in others action which would sully the good name of the institution. Academic misconduct is an offense generally defined as any action or inaction which is offensive to the integrity and honesty of the members of the academic community.
- The Honor Code, a list of offenses and the Honor Council process may be found; http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html