

Syllabus

Course Description

GER 3234 (2678) Introduction to Reading German Text
Course Description, Spring 2016

[Instructor: C. Overstreet, Ph.D.](#)

This is a hybrid course. Students access reading materials in Canvas and meet face-to-face with the instructor.

Required Textbook : A Practice Grammar of German Dryer-Schmitt, Die Neue Gelbe by Dryer & Schmitt; Hueber Verlag (ISBN: 3-88532-722-8); Key (Lösungsschlüssel) may be purchased.

The primary goal of this course

is for students to be able to read on the [B1 level of the Common European Framework of References for Languages: \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

The goal is NOT to teach you how to interpret a text correctly according to a particular theory, but rather how to avoid misreading authentic German text. Interpretative competences are taught in our literature, film, and culture courses. Upon completion of this course you should be aware of what causes misreadings (misunderstanding a text), what resources/tools are available online to detect and correct misreadings, and how you can handle these tools in an efficient and competent way to become an independent intelligent reader.

We will use the newest edition of the Dryer-Schmitt grammar book as well as online resources to review and practice relevant grammatical concepts.

The course consists of three modules

Module 1: Kinderliteratur.

We will begin with some stories written for children. We focus on the relationship between syntax and semantics and learn how to use dictionaries. You will see that the meaning of a word is not attached to it like a label. In most cases, it is the structure of the sentence which determines the meaning of the word. We will review the meaning of verbs and nouns

Module 2: Literary texts

We will read short texts by well known German writers as well as informative texts about cultural topics. In this module, we use Dryer-Schmitt for refreshing our knowledge of

prepositions, prefixes that look like prepositions, and verbs requiring prepositional complements. In addition, we learn to develop strategies to deal with long German sentences.

Module 3: Critical Reading

The objective is to identify and test the authors' argument on a specific topic.

Module 4: Newspaper Articles

Finally, you will read articles on current political or cultural events in Germany.

Technology Tools

Throughout the semester, we will discuss how to approach the different genres with the tools provided in the online environment.

Texts, class materials, homework assignments, quizzes, and tests will be made available online. We will frequently use the discussion board as a way to share and discuss background information for specific texts and/or answer questions about a text together with a partner.

The use of Google translate is not recommended. It is a short-cut that may well keep you from developing your skills as a reader. In fact, for specific assignments, the use of Google translate will be considered cheating.

Homework

You will write summaries of texts, translations, answer content questions and questions about grammatical constructions, etc. If you don't read the text that is assigned for a specific day and do the necessary work to understand it (vocabulary, analyzing and breaking down long sentences, researching background information) you won't be prepared to participate in the class discussion. Late homework is not accepted except for situations which count for an excused absence. After a certain date, the assignment will no longer be accessible. Quizzes cannot be made up. You cannot make up missed homework. For missed homework students receive 0 points.

I will also assign work from the Dryer-Schmitt book and give quizzes about particular grammar items on a regular basis. You may like to purchase the key/answer booklet.

Attendance Policy

Students will be permitted 3 unexcused absences per semester. An excused absence is either one for which a medical certificate is provided or a certified University activity for which a written excuse from the University is provided. A medical certificate must clearly state that the student was unable to attend class on the date the class was missed. While there is no limit to the number of excused absences, the student is still responsible for making up missed work. For every unexcused absence (4th, 5th, 6th ...), students will lose 1% from their final grade. 3 late arrivals add up to one unexcused absence.

Final Grade

Homework 30%

Reading texts and answering questions; grammar assignments;

Participation 10% - Presence and Participation in Classroom Activities (Discussion Board)

Attendance is imperative. Researching background information and posting it on the discussion board

Quizzes 20%

Grammar and vocabulary quizzes

Midterm 20%

Reading text/answering content questions; grammar; translation

Final 20%

Read different genres and answer content questions; translation

The midterm and the final are in part take-at home exams. The midterm will be given after the second module. Exams can only be made up if there is a valid reason that you missed class (excused absence)

Grading Scale: A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-80; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D- 60-62;