

**Syllabus German W2521 - Fall 2018 [PRELIMINARY]  
Intermediate German Conversation I  
MW, 6:10-7:25pm**

**Instructor: Niklas Strätker**

**Office: TBA**

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Phone: TBA**

**Email: [http://ns2953@columbia.edu](mailto:ns2953@columbia.edu)**

**Recommended materials:**

Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch: Deutsch als Fremdsprache.

**Course prerequisites:**

Desire to speak lots of German! Students in Intermediate Conversation II should have completed the equivalent of one and a half years of college German. This conversation group is designed for students who are now taking Intermediate German V2101 or who wish to maintain their spoken German at least at the advanced intermediate level.

**Course goals:**

- 1) to improve your ability to speak and understand and manage German in everyday situations;
- 2) to provide opportunities to participate in conversational situations on any topics you are interested in discussing such as:
  - a. Deutschland (Österreich und die Schweiz) gestern und heute
  - b. Deutsche Geschichte (z. B. die Wiedervereinigung)
  - c. Deutschsprachige Nachrichten, Musik, Literatur, Politik
  - d. Deutschsprachiger Film
  - e. Reviewing German Grammar
- 3) to strengthen and get skills to understand German spoken at normal conversational speed;
- 4) to expand active and passive vocabularies (through a collective vocabulary list) and speaking skills.
- 5) to maintain a certain level of written German through short written activities, such as a weekly blog.

**Course format:**

Class sessions will consist of a variety of activities throughout the term, including:

- 1) daily warm-ups concentrating on every day needs
- 2) paired or small group conversations and interviews on a variety of topics;
- 3) dialogs/role plays based on everyday situations and videos
- 4) student presentations, reactions to and discussions resulting from presentations,
- 5) web / audio-visual presentations;
- 6) discussions of short readings on a variety of topics;
- 7) web-based reports by individuals and/or small groups.
- 8) work with blogs, the web, and other computer media

**Participation/Attendance:**

Class attendance is the primary component of your grade. Students are expected to attend and participate in ALL class meetings. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. Missing class will not only hamper your own progress, it may limit a partner's class participation, too.

**Homework:**

Homework includes PREPARATION for in-class activities; this may include written assignments as well as exercises and activities to prepare for oral presentations during class. Preparation for oral and written assignments will be necessary and influence your grade directly.

**Grading:**

Daily preparation / homework 20%  
Weekly blog entries 10%  
Collaborative Vocabulary List 10%  
Oral presentations 10%  
Final oral interview 10%  
Class attendance and participation 40%

**Final Interviews: TBA**

Intermediate German Conversation II (W2521) meets MW 6:10-7:25; students are expected to attend ALL class meetings, and are encouraged to visit Kaffeestunde (in Deutsches Haus, 420 W. 116 - dates and times to be announced) and departmental events (dates and times to be announced) to practice their German!

**Learning preferences and accommodations:**

We acknowledge in our courses that people learn in different ways. For example, having visuals to support text may work better for some students, whereas others learn better by listening to the instructor. Please talk to your instructor about your learning preferences, so we can make the course work as well as possible for everyone. If you have, or suspect, a disability of any kind, please be sure to contact the office of disabilities (see link below) so that accommodations can be put in place. The earlier we know about it the better it will work.

**Academic, Mental, and Physical Support**

Student life can get very intense. If you feel that you need help in any way, please don't wait but act immediately. Let your instructor know that you are struggling. Most importantly, contact your Dean/Advisor so they can help you. In addition, visit Columbia's/Barnard's websites to know what services are available to you:

<https://health.columbia.edu/services/ods> and <https://www.barnard.edu/health>

**German Grammatical Gender:**

Nouns in German have a gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter) that often does not obey any apparent logic. The German language also assigns humans a gender, and German is not special for having a rigid binary gender system. Pervasive gender normativity is reflected in our use of language, and language instruction is one of the spaces in which such traditional structures are reinforced. At Columbia and Barnard, we strive to be respectful and inclusive. Whereas we still need to learn language in its normative form, I encourage you to be aware of the implications of such norms and to be attentive to your classmates' and instructors' desires. Please contact your instructor right away should you have any preferred name and/or preferred pronoun by which you would like to be addressed. Although there are limitations to what the language allows grammatically, the German Department faculty and staff are committed to finding solutions that work for everyone.

**Semesterplan:**

We do not have a set Semesterplan. You as students get to determine together which topics you would like to explore. Our topics and achievements will be documented throughout the semester and you will receive a retroactive Semesterplan at the end of the semester.