

German W2521  
Intermediate Conversation I  
Fall 2022 [PRELIMINARY]



**Intermediate German Conversation I**  
**MW, 6:10-7:25pm**

**Instructor: Didi Tal**  
**Office Hours: TBA**  
**Email: dt2587@columbia.edu**

**RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:**

Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch: Deutsch als Fremdsprache.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:**

Desire to speak lots of German! Students in Intermediate Conversation I 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.

**CONTACT INFO:**

For all questions about the courses contact for **Columbia Jutta Schmiers-Heller**, Language Program Director and for **Barnard Irene Motyl-Mudretzkyj**, Language Program Coordinator..

**An electronic version of this syllabus will be available under:**

<https://germanic.columbia.edu> Registration information: Columbia Bulletin, Vergil, or the Barnard Registrar.

**COURSE GOALS AND SESSION FORMAT**

**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 journal.

**Session format:**

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

- 1) daily warm-ups concentrating on every day needs and community building;
- 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 various computer media

### **PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is the primary component of your grade so it is important that you attend and participate in all class meetings. Missing class will not only hamper your own progress, but will negatively affect your grade. If you cannot join us on a given day, it is important to let your instructor know ahead of time, so that alternative steps to make up the missed work can be discussed. This course is conducted in German. Come ready to experiment and contribute! Be prepared to work about two hours out of class for every hour in class. If you need to miss class, **inform your instructor in advance**. It is your responsibility to find out what was covered in class, make up and hand in all class work and homework. **Stay engaged.**

### **GRADING:**

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

### **DEPARTMENTAL GRADING SCALE**

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<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>A+</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
Numerical index	98+	94-97	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	65-69	64-

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### **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.

### **LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC**

While this class is a rigorous academic course, it is clear that all of us are dealing with anxiety, stress, uncertainty, trauma, and grief to varying extents, and there may be unforeseen disruptions in our lives. Our goal is to create a culture of flexibility and care in our class community, and we believe such a culture builds upon consistent engagement, empathy, and clear communication. We will try to create channels for these and model expectations, but we will also rely on you to help build our community and provide feedback so that we can make adjustments when needed.

### **ACADEMIC, MENTAL, AND PHYSICAL CARE**

**Please take care of yourself.** 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>. **Additional resources:** Food pantry at Columbia, <https://thefoodpantry.studentgroups.columbia.edu/>, Dean's Emergency Fund, <https://cc-seas.financialaid.columbia.edu/deans-fund>

### **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.

### **GERMAN STUDIES:**

Direct questions about language courses German at Columbia to **Jutta Schmiers-Heller**, 403A Hamilton Hall, x44824 ([js2331@columbia.edu](mailto:js2331@columbia.edu)); To major or concentrate in German, contact **Prof. Dorothea von Mücke**, 410 Hamilton Hall, x41891 ([dev1@columbia.edu](mailto:dev1@columbia.edu)). Barnard students please contact **Irene Motyl-Mudretzkyj**, 320c Millbank Hall, x44287 ([imotyl@barnard.edu](mailto:imotyl@barnard.edu)).

### **DEPARTMENTAL ONLINE PRESENCE:**

Webpage: <https://germanic.columbia.edu> // <https://german.barnard.edu>.

Twitter: @CUGermanic

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CUGermanic>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cugermanic/>

### **DEUTSCHES HAUS:**

(420 W. 116 St.) is a center for academic, cultural, and social exchange. Programs and events include lectures, films, conferences, recitals, art exhibits, and gatherings like Kaffeestunde. All levels of German students are encouraged to attend events which provide students with a great opportunity to practice speaking German. <https://germanic.columbia.edu/deutsches-haus>

### **SEMESTERPLAN:**

Class content is student-driven and so we do not have a set Semesterplan. You as students get to determine together which topics you would like to explore and we develop our plan together. Our topics and achievements will be documented throughout the semester and you will be able to see what we have accomplished by the end of the semester.