The University of British Columbia
Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies
GERN 304: GERMAN FOR READING KNOWLEDGE
Term I Winter Semester 2026-27
Sept 8 to Dec 7, 2026

Land Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Title: GERN 304 (former GERM 433) German for Reading Knowledge
Code: GERN 304 Section: 103 Credit Value: 3
Meeting Times: THURSDAY from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. PST Synchronous ONLINE

CONTACTS

Instructor: Dr. Uma Kumar
Office: Buchanan Tower Room 928
E-Mail: uma.kumar@ubc.ca

Office Hours:
Mon, Wed from 11AM-12PM (in person BUTO 928) **or** on ZOOM by appointment
https://ubc.zoom.us/j/4795711158?pwd=SUtBVzkyMCt5eVFRcFNmOWczOERkQT09
Meeting ID: 479 571 1158 Passcode: 452119

Efforts will be made to reply to emails within 24 hrs. except for weekends.
Please correspond by way of your UBC email account since other "Non-UBC- Email" will end up in the Junk Email folder and may not get answered.
Please do not send me vague, non-specific AI-generated emails and responses.

PREREQUISITES

PREREQUISITES: **No prerequisite, no textbook, NO FORMAL FINAL EXAM!** Only a hard copy dictionary is needed.
Please note: GERN 304 is restricted to beginners or to students with no more than one term of Beginner's German (**GERN 101**, former GERM 100 or equivalent). If you have already taken German courses beyond **GERN 101**, (former GERM 100), please talk to your instructor.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Grade Breakdown

Pathways *Übungen* in 20 EXPLORATIONS	**25%**
Explorations 1-4, must be completed by THU Sept 24, 11:59 pm PST	
Explorations 5-8, must be completed by THU, OCT 1, 11:59 pm PST	
Explorations 9-12, must be completed by THU, OCT 22, 11:59 pm PST	
Explorations 13-16, must be completed by THU, NOV 5, 11:59 pm PST	
Explorations 17-20, must be completed by THU NOV 26, 11:59 pm PST	
2 Practice Tests	**10% (4%/6%)**
Test 1	**17%**
Test 2	**23%**
Final Reading Assignment	**25%**

COURSE OVERVIEW

The **GERN 304** interactive online German reading program, *Pathways to Reading German*, is a guided, multimedia self-study course designed to develop German reading knowledge. The **GERN 304-103** classes are conducted synchronously online via **Zoom** and are supplemented with asynchronous online learning activities. Students are expected to regularly attend the scheduled synchronous class sessions.

The teaching and learning environments are diverse, and the program is cost-effective, as all course materials—*Pathways to Reading German* and any additional resources—are fully integrated into **GERN 304-103** on the UBC **Canvas Learning Management System**:

This reading program focuses on building the skills necessary to understand a variety of authentic German texts, including excerpts from scholarly works, essays, reports, interviews, newspaper and magazine articles, tables of contents, maps, charts, and more. The selected materials are supplemented with a wide range of secondary sources to enhance intercultural learning and foster international awareness beyond the core course content.

The course differs from traditional in-person language instruction. Its format includes a combination of lectures, reviews of assigned reading materials, selected online *Übungen* (exercises), and in-class discussion activities (based on the Explorations) on the **Canvas** platform, GERN 304-103 GERMAN for READING KNOWLEDGE. These activities are followed by question-and-answer sessions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Develop a variety of strategies and acquire reading skills in German that can be applied to their own discipline, research field, or individual area of interest.
- Develop an understanding of essential grammatical and syntactical concepts necessary for reading and comprehending German texts.
- Expand their reading vocabulary based on the themes of the assigned texts.
- Write summaries in English of selected German text excerpts.
- Deepen their understanding of intercultural and international perspectives through reading German texts and researching related secondary sources.

COURSE ORGANIZATION & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Pathways to Reading German is organized into **20 Explorations** (chapters), located in the **Modules** section of the UBC **Canvas** platform. Each Exploration is divided into several **Sections**, which introduce new topics through texts, concepts, and exercises (i.e., *Übungen*).
Students are encouraged to work through an average of 2-3 Explorations per week**.**

The *Übungen* are integrated directly into the Explorations and include various interactive online activities such as Multiple Choice**,** True/False**,** Fill in the Blanks**,** Fill in Multiple Blanks**,** Multiple Answers**,** Multiple Dropdowns**,** Matching**,** and Essay Questions. These exercises are designed to promote meaningful engagement with the material. They are accessible at any time and can be completed, repeated, and reviewed throughout the course.
Each Exploration concludes with a **Reflection** and an **Application** section.

- In the *Reflection* section, students review the grammar, structures, and reading strategies introduced in the module.
- In the *Application* section, students apply and practice what they have learned in a new context.

Most Explorations include a vocabulary list related to the theme of the module. Students are encouraged to add any additional words they find useful. In some Explorations, students are asked to develop their own vocabulary lists based on their learning needs.
Further details about navigating the online Explorations in Canvas are explained in **three instructional videos**, available on the GERN 304-103 homepage: https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/194889 under **Videos: How to Navigate the GERN 304 Explorations on Canvas**.
This online program offers students greater flexibility in organizing their study time, as all course materials—including the *Übungen* and answer keys—are accessible at any time.

LEARNING MATERIALS

Pathways to Reading German – Explorations (GERN 304-103)
The electronic online program *Pathways to Reading German – Explorations* is embedded in GERN 304-103 on UBC CANVAS: https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/194889

Required Dictionary
A **hardcopy German-English dictionary** is required for all **online tests** and the **final reading assignment**.
For other learning activities, students are welcome to use electronic resources such as online dictionaries.
Recommended dictionaries (available on Amazon or the UBC Bookstore):

- *Collins German Concise Dictionary*, 5th Ed. (ISBN: 9780061998621), approx. $24.99
- *Collins German Dictionary and Grammar* (ISBN: 9780008241377), approx. $24.99
- *Compact Oxford German Dictionary*, 5th Ed. (ISBN: 9780199663125), approx. $14.95

Recommended Online Dictionaries (for use outside of exams/tests):

- dict.cc
- LEO
- PONS

Optional Resources
English Grammar for Students of German: The Study Guide for Those Learning German
Cecile Zorach, Charlotte Melin (ISBN: 9780934034388) — Available on Amazon.ca
Online Grammar Resources:

1. **A Review of German Grammar** – Bruce Duncan
   http://www.dartmouth.edu/~deutsch/Grammatik/Grammatik.html
2. **The Internet Handbook of German Grammar**
   http://www.travlang.com/languages/german/ihgg/
3. **German Grammar on the Web**
   http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~skidmore/grammarpage.htm

Required Technical Materials
Students in GERN 304-103 must have the following:

1. A reliable computer with a functioning camera
2. Stable internet access
3. **LockDown Browser** installed for scheduled practice tests and the final reading assignment: https://isit.arts.ubc.ca/respondus-lockdown-browser/
4. A browser that supports video and audio playback

Technical Support Contacts in case issues arise while using CANVAS:

- Email: arts.helpdesk@ubc.ca
- Learning Technology Hub: lt.hub@ubc.ca | https://web.it.ubc.ca/forms/isf/

For general information: https://keeplearning.ubc.ca/

Grades and Assignments

Pathways *Übungen* in 20 EXPLORATIONS 25%
Explorations 1-4, DUE THU Sept 24, 11:59 pm PST (5%)
Explorations 5-8, DUE THU, OCT 1, 11:59 pm PST (5%)
Explorations 9-12, DUE THU, OCT 22, 11:59 pm PST (5%)
Explorations 13-16, DUE THU, NOV 5, 11:59 pm PST (5%)
Explorations 17-20, DUE THU NOV 26, 11:59 pm PST (5%)

The **Übungen** in **20 Explorations** must be completed by the assigned due dates. The final grade for the Explorations will be based on the grade exported on those due dates. Students will continue to have access to the *Übungen* until the end of the course.

Practice Tests

To prepare for Test 1 and Test 2, students will complete corresponding practice tests worth **4%** and **6%**, respectively (**10% total**) during class time in LockDown Browser. These practice tests serve as a *blueprint* for the actual unit tests in terms of topics, type of tasks and text length (approximately 190–200 words).

- Practice tests are available on **UBC CANVAS** for 24 hours.
- They must be completed using the **LockDown Browser**.
- Students will have **ONE attempt**, with a **60-minute time limit**.

PRACTICE TEST 1: **available, MON, Sept 28, 9:00 PM, DUE TUES, Sept 29, 9:00 PM**
Coverage: Exploration 1 to Exploration 7

Test 1 (17%)

Date: THU, OCT 8, during class time in LockDown Browser

Coverage: Exploration 1 to Exploration 7
Format:

- Written **during class time in LockDown Browser**
- **One attempt**, 60 minutes
- Available on **UBC CANVAS**
- **Only a hardcopy dictionary** is allowed — no additional electronic devices or platforms (see pp. 7–8 for details)

PRACTICE TEST 2: ***available, MON, NOV 9, 9:00 PM and DUE TUES, NOV 10, 9:00 PM***
Coverage: Exploration 8 to Exploration 15

Test 2 (23%)

Date: THU, NOV 12, during class time in LockDown Browser
Coverage: Exploration 8 to Exploration 15
Format:

- Written **during class time in LockDown Browser**
- **One attempt**, 60 minutes

- Available on **UBC CANVAS**
- **Only a hardcopy dictionary** is allowed — no additional electronic devices or notes (see p. 7)

FINAL READING ASSIGNMENT (25%)

In place of a formal final exam, students will complete a **Final Reading Assignment** online using **LockDown Browser during class time on Thu Dec 3, which is your last class**.
Coverage: All EXPLORATIONS in the *Pathways to Reading German* online program
Format:

- Same format and task types as the practice tests, unit tests, *Übungen* in the EXPLORATIONS
- **One attempt**, 120 minutes (2 hours)
- Available **Thursday, Dec 3 at 6:00pm PT**
- Due: **Thursday, Dec 3 at 9:00pm PT**
- **Only a hardcopy dictionary** is allowed — no additional electronic devices or notes (see pp. 7–8)

Late submissions of GERN 304 tests will result in 5% deduction of the mark.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students who qualify for extended time accommodations must contact the Centre for Accessibility, notify the instructor, and submit the required documentation **in advance of each test** to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence- GenAI

The Tests and Reading Assignment are designed to assess your individual understanding of course material. Use of GenAI tools during the Tests and Reading Assignment is not permitted.
GenAI tools may not be used to:

- Answer, draft, or check any test or quiz questions during the assessment
- Access AI tools of any kind during the test or assignment period, including on personal devices

GERN 304-103 Course Schedule, Winter 2026-27 TERM 1

WEEK	EXPLORATION and TOPIC	TESTS
Thu Sept 10	**EXPLORATION 1** Introduction: Easy Access to Texts **EXPLORATION 2** Foundation and First Orientation	
Thu Sept 17	**EXPLORATION 3** Deutschland im Überblick **EXPLORATION 4** Berlin: Past and Present	
Thu Sept 24	**EXPLORATION 5** Umwelt, Klima und Energie **EXPLORATION 6** Einwanderer und Neuankömmlinge in Deutschland	***Exploration 1-4, THU Sept 24, 11:59 pm PST***
Thu Oct 1	**EXPLORATION 7** Bildung und Studium **EXPLORATION 8** Menchenrechte	**PRACTICE Test 1,** ***MON, Sept 28, 9:00 PM, due Tues, Sept 29, 9:00 PM*** ***Exploration 5-8, THU, OCT 1, 11:59 pm PST***
Thu Oct 8	**TEST 1, (1-7) THU, OCT 8, during class time in LockDown Browser**	
Thu Oct 15	**EXPLORATION 9** Europa und die Europäische Union **EXPLORATION 10** Weltsprache Musik **EXPLORATION 11** Einstein und die Verantwortung der Wissenschaft	
Thu Oct 22	**EXPLORATION 12** Gebrüder Grimm – Rotkäppchen **EXPLORATION 13** Entwicklung der Massenmedien	***Exploration 9-12, THU, OCT 22, 11:59 pm PST***
Thu Oct 29	**EXPLORATION 14** Martin Luther und die deutsche Sprache	
Thu Nov 5	**EXPLORATION 15** Ein originales Rezept **EXPLORATION 16** Friedrich Schiller- Wilhelm Tell, summary	***Exploration 13 – 16, DUE THU, NOV 5, 11:59 pm PST***
Thu Nov 12	**TEST 2, (8-16) THU, NOV 12, during class time in LockDown Browser**	**PRACTICE Test 2,** ***MON, NOV 9, 9:00 PM and due TUES, NOV 10, 9:00 PM***

Thu Nov 19	**EXPLORATION 17** Immanuel Kant: Sesshafter Weltbürger und Aufklärer, summary **EXPLORATION 18** Digitales Lesen, summary	
Thu Nov 26	**EXPLORATION 19** Emotionen: Auf der Suche nach dem Gefühl **EXPLORATION 20** Deutsche Hochschulen - Das Studieren **---- REVIEW---**	***Exploration 17 -20, DUE THU NOV 26, 11:59 p.m. PST***
Last class: Thursday, Dec 3	**The Final Reading Assignment** will be available **during class time (6:00 – 9:00 PM) in LockDown Browser on the last day of class**	

GERN 304 COURSE POLICIES

Tests, Exams, and Make-Up Exams

Tests, quizzes, and exams must be taken on the date set by your instructor, the program coordinator, or the General Faculties Council. If a student misses a scheduled assessment, it is their responsibility to contact and inform the instructor immediately, i.e., no later than 12 hours after the scheduled time, in order to reschedule a date and time.
In accordance with UBC policy, students who wish to observe a religious holiday must notify their instructor at least two weeks in advance of the holiday.

For further details, refer to:

- CENES Course Policies
- UBC Campus-wide Policies and Regulations

Use of Electronic Devices

Computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices may only be used for instruction and study-related activities.
During online tests or exams in the German Reading Program, students are **only permitted to consult a conventional hardcopy German-English dictionary**. The use of any other electronic aids or devices or consultation of other persons or electronic platforms is not allowed.

UNIVERSITY COURSE POLICIES & STUDENT RESOURCES

Attendance

In accordance with UBC Policies and Regulations, students are expected to attend class regularly please see https://vancouver.calendar.ubc.ca/campus-wide-policies-and-regulations/attendance.

Concessions for Absence

Students who are absent from scheduled classes should inform their instructor **immediately** via email and have the reason reported by way of the **Academic Advising Services** of the Faculty of Arts, in particular in the case of an extended absence.
Academic Concession Request Form

Academic Honesty and Standards

Academic honesty is fundamental to UBC's mission as an institution of higher learning and research. Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity.
Violations of these expectations or failure to follow university policies may result in disciplinary action.
More info: UBC Academic Integrity Policy

Learning Commons – Academic Integrity

Learn more about how to avoid plagiarism: UBC Learning Commons – Avoiding Plagiarism

Student Resources

On the GERM 304-925 homepage, you'll find helpful links under **Student Resources**, including:

- UBC Learning Commons Tech Support
- UBC Canvas Student Guide
- UBC Keep Learning Site
- UBC Get Support Site

The grading criteria are consistent with the criteria established by the Faculty of Arts.
Please see: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,42,96,0

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Recording of classes is not permitted.