How People Talk: The Structure and Organization of Spoken German

The focus of this class is the structure or grammar of spoken German in various contexts. Students will learn how to analyze systematically the structure of spoken German by working with transcripts of recorded conversations. We will learn about the regional and social aspects, structural differences between written and spoken discourse, everyday and institutional talk (e.g. interviews), and non-verbal behavior (intonation and gesture). For example, through examining spoken language, students recognize how German speakers formulate requests and compliments, in other words, how speakers do things with words, grammar, and intonation in various contexts.

Learning Goals and Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will have the knowledge and skills to:

• transcribe spoken German language
• analyze the linguistic differences between spoken and written German with regard to syntax, lexis and semantics
• improve and fine-tune students’ German speaking skill and develop interactional competence in German.

Assessment
Class participation 10%  Midterm 20%
2 Transcription tasks, 10% Paper 30%
Homework/data analysis 15% Paper presentation 15%