

Deuparth gwaith yw ei ddechrau / "Starting the work is two thirds of it"

Why Welsh?

Come on a trip to the land of the Red Dragon (*y ddraig goch*) and learn to speak the language of heaven (*iaith y nefoedd*)!

Welsh (*Cymraeg*) is a minoritized Celtic language spoken in the principate of Wales (*Cymru*) in the United Kingdom -- where it is spoken by roughly 20% of population -- as well as in some small parts of England, and in *Y Wladfa* in Patagonia, Argentina. Wales boasts a literary tradition hearkening back to the Saxons' arrival in Britain and continuing to the present day when, after centuries of decline and oppression, it is as vibrant as ever as it is embraced by more and more young people. Testament to this is the enduring popularity of the Welsh-language *Eisteddfodd* literary and cultural festival -- one of the largest cultural festivals in Europe! For many speakers, Welsh is the language of family and community, but it is also the language of divinely-inspired poetry, of political protest, of soap operas, of novels and dramas, of academic thought, of music, and (*wrth gwrs*) of rugby!

With such a wealth of culture, you'll be able to tell the haters *pam lai Cymraeg* ("Why not Welsh?")!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43Fag8ZQcz4> ("Yma o Hyd" gan Dafydd Iwan)

For those interested in the Welsh of the Middle Ages, be sure to check out Prof. McKenna's [Welsh 225a](#), also on offer this Fall! Two Welsh Courses are better than one...

Course Goals

Students will acquire a solid foundation in the vocabulary and basic grammatical constructions of Modern Welsh and all four language skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening) will be developed and assessed. Speaking is the best way to solidify new concepts in a foreign language and, accordingly, participation is an important focus in this course. By the end of Welsh 128, students can expect to hold basic conversations, read a variety of material, and write simple compositions in colloquial Welsh. Students will be able to use the past and present tenses, describe people's appearances and personalities, ask simple questions, discuss family, hobbies, weather, health, possessions, and everyday activities, give commands and opinions, and express necessities and needs.

Welsh 128 will also give students opportunity to develop language-learning skills and theory that can be easily transferred to the study of any other language, and, simply by analogy, the study of Welsh grammar will lead to a better understanding of English grammar and the grammar of other Celtic and Indo-European languages.

Course format:

Class work is participatory and includes conversational role play and games as well as grammar study and drills. Audio and audiovisual resources reinforce pronunciation and aural comprehension.

Typical enrollees:

This course is designed for undergraduate and graduate students interested in learning the Welsh language with little or no prior experience.

When is this course typically offered?

This course is offered based on student interest and the presence of a graduate student able to serve as instructor. If you are not able to take this course in the Fall 2024 term but are still interested, it may or may not be offered again before your graduation.

My Teaching Style

I am an enthusiastic lover of Welsh language and culture: one of my primary goals is to share my enthusiasm with students. I am a responsive and adaptive teacher and have some flexibility baked in to the syllabus in order to create space to incorporate students' personal goals into the course.

Evaluation

Coursework (50%)

20% **Class participation & Homework**

A large part of learning a language comes from speaking it regularly. As such students will be expected to participate in class conversation. Students will also be given a small number of sentences for homework each day which will be corrected in class. This work will not be graded so full completion of the homework each day and regular participation in class will result in a full twenty per cent at the end of the semester.

30% **Assessed exercises** (5% each)

Due dates:

Uned 1 â€” 9/20

Uned 2 â€” 10/4

Uned 3 â€” 10/21

Uned 4 â€” 11/1

Uned 5 â€” 11/15

Uned 6 â€” 12/6

Formal assessment (50%)

10% **Vocabulary quizzes**

Every week from week 2 on

15% **Midterm** (1 hr. in class)

10/17

25% **Final**

The final will be a formal three-hour exam organized by the registrar. It is very unlikely that all three hours will be needed, rather the exam will be around one hour and a half. More details on this will be given closer to the time of the final.

Course Materials

(Required) *Cwrs Cymraeg iâ€™r Brifysgol, Harvard University*. (Provided on the first day of class)

(Suggested) Gareth King, â€”*Modern Welsh: A Comprehensive Grammar, 2nd ed.*â€”

Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru at: welsh-dictionary.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html (Welsh to English) available as a smartphone app.

Geiriadur yr Academi at: geiriaduracademi.org/ (English to Welsh)

Class Policies

Attendance

Attendance for all classes is mandatory and students must have a valid excuse for absences and should provide prior notice.

Late Work

Any assessments must be handed in on time, unless you have arranged an extension with me prior, and quizzes, midterms, and finals must take place on the dates scheduled. Make-up assessments, quizzes, or midterms will only be administered in extenuating circumstances at the instructorâ€™s discretion.

Use of Online Translation Services (Including AI)

Minoritized languages like Welsh are not especially a priority for Large Language Models like ChatGPT (nor, for that matter, for Google Translate), and so you will find that their usefulness is limited. There is a

time and a place for using an online translation service to help you with a thorny problem, however, using an online translation service (including ChatGPT) for a graded assignment is cheating and *will be obvious* and, as in accordance with the Harvard College Honor Code (see below), any assignment that contains evidence of cheating will receive a 0.

The Harvard College Honor Code

"Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing, or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs."

Electronics

Laptops, tablets, and phones may be used in class to consult online dictionaries and the use of electronics is not permitted during quizzes and tests.

Office Hours

Two hours of office hours will be offered (Time and Location TBD) and students are encouraged to come along for any answers to questions or issues, help with homework or assessments, or even just extra speaking practice.

Syllabus

Week 1 (No Class on September 2, Labor Day)

Introductions, Orthography

Week 2

Greetings & Introducing Yourself (Vocab Quiz 1 on 9/12)

Week 3

Talking About the Weather (Vocab Quiz 2 on 9/19; Assessed Exercises 1 due 9/20)

Week 4

Numerals 1-10, Days of the Week (Vocab Quiz 3 on 9/26)

Week 5

Talking About Where We Live, Talking About University, Answering Questions (Vocab Quiz 4 on 10/3; Assessed Exercises 2 due 10/4)

Week 6

The Definite Article, Talking About Likes & Dislikes

Week 7 (Indigenous Peoples' Day, 10/14 -- No class)

How to Express "Have," Asking Questions with "Have," Talking About Interests (Midterm 10/17)

Week 8

Simple Past of Irregular Verbs (Assessed Exercises 3 due 10/21; Vocab Quiz 5 on 10/24)

Week 9

Gwneud & Mynd as Auxiliaries, Asking & Answering Questions (Vocab Quiz 6 on 10/31; Assessed Exercises 4 due 11/1)

Week 10

Simple Past of Regular Verbs, Talking about Family & Friends (Vocab Quiz 7 on 11/7)

Week 11

Numbers up to 100, Talking about Age (Vocab Quiz 8 on 11/14; Assessed Exercises 5 due 11/15)

Week 12

The Past Progressive, Conjugation of the Past Progressive (Vocab Quiz 9 on 11/21)

Week 13 (Thanksgiving Break 11/29 -- No class)

Talking About the Winter Holidays

Week 14 (Reading Period begins 12/5 -- No class)

Talking About the Future (Assessed Exercises 6 due 12/6)