Learn Estonian for Both Credit and Enjoyment!

After another successful year and with growing popularity, the University of Toronto is again offering an Estonian language course as part of its curriculum. Students from all Toronto area universities (Toronto, York and Ryerson) have the opportunity to take the course for credit. If the course just sounds interesting and too good to pass up, you can also consider auditing the course for personal fulfillment.

The course offered will depend on the number of students enrolled, and the language proficiency of those enrolled. Thus the course may be offered at the elementary (EST 100H1F and EST101H1S) and intermediate (EST 200H1F and EST 201H1S). The course which has sufficient enrolment will be the one offered. The course will focus on essential Estonian vocabulary, basic grammar and develop elementary conversational competence. Popular songs, poetry, and structured dialogue are among the various tools for achieving these objectives. This will evolve to themed sessions using language for travel in Estonia, savouring the language of Estonian cuisine, and the lyrics of popular, folk and classical Estonian music.

If you have ties to the Estonian heritage and culture and have wanted to strengthen these bonds, this is a great opportunity to get a better appreciation of all things Estonian by enhancing your knowledge of the Estonian language. If you know of people who are held back from a stronger bond with their Estonian heritage by their language skills, why not recommend this course to them?

Estonian is an interesting language for its own sake. Estonian is different from most spoken languages in Europe. It belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family, which also includes Finnish and Hungarian. The role of vowels in Estonian is among the greatest in any European language, whereby a string of vowels can form meaningful words around the frame of few consonants. It also has the additional vowels õ, ä, ö, ü. If you have trouble with the following tongue twisters, then this course is for you. Jäääär (edge of the ice), Õueala (courtyard), Kõueöö (night of the thunder), Puuõõnsus (hollow of the tree), Töö-öö (working night).

The instructor for this course is Marju Toomsalu. Marju is a passionate advocate for language and welcomes the opportunity to combine her love of language with teaching. She inspires her students to discover the nuances of understanding that language variations hide and offer, and also enjoy selected aspects of comparative linguistics using simple everyday terms.

If you are interested in taking this course please call or email Marju at 416 979 5000 x 554196, (mtoomsal@ryerson.ca) or look the courses up in the University of Toronto’s course calendar, http://sites.utoronto.ca/slavic/undergraduate/undergrad_current.html

Lectures will take place at the University of Toronto’s downtown campus (AH 304). The course offered in the 2020 Winter term will be a continuation of the one offered in the 2019 Fall term, at an increased level of language proficiency. Information for auditors can be found here: http://sites.utoronto.ca/slavic/courses/auditing.html. Classes begin on September 5 and end on December 5, 2019 with a Reading Week break Nov. 4-8, and will run on Mondays and Thursdays from 7 pm to 9 pm.

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community.