



Department of English – Graduate Division

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Fall 2017 Graduate Course Descriptions

(Rev. 3/29/2017)

English 314 Sec. 001: Structure of English

Anja Wanner

TR, 11:00AM - 12:15PM, 1217 Humanities

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) In this mixed grad/undergrad course we will discuss the fundamentals of the syntactic structure of English sentences. Our approach is that grammar is not something scary "out there" -- it's part of every speaker's intuitive knowledge of language and we aim at making this knowledge visible through linguistic analysis. This course will provide you with basic tools of sentence analysis and will enable you to describe and analyze English sentences on your own. You will learn to classify words (nouns, verbs, determiners, adverbs etc.) and phrases (Noun Phrases, Verb Phrases etc.) and to give visual representations of the structure of clauses (so-called "tree diagrams"). You will learn about functions in the clause (subjects, objects, predicates, etc.) and about syntactic operations that target specific functions (e.g., passivization, question formation, focalization). One of the main points will be to develop an understanding of the relationship between word order, structure, and meaning in English. In a group project of your choice you will have the opportunity to explore a common myth about language, such as the belief that babies acquire language by imitation or that English spelling is "kattastroffik". The methods of analysis you acquire in this class will be applicable in a variety of ways in your study of literature, creative writing, English education, English as a second language, and further studies in Linguistics. Assessments for this class include two in-class exams, two homework assignments, and an in-class presentation in which you compare the syntactic characteristics from two texts from different genres (e.g., an op-ed and a scientific article on the same subject).

English 315: English Phonology,

Eric Raimy

MWF, 11:00AM to 11:50 AM, 394 Van Hise

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) This course offers an introduction to the sound system of English, including phonetics and elementary phonology. Topics include articulatory phonetic descriptions of consonants and vowels, classical phonemic theory, the nature of phonological processes, linguistic change and the acquisition of phonological systems. By the end of the course, students should be able to describe and transcribe speech sounds of English, recognize and describe phonemic and phono tactic patterns and account for basic phonological processes.

Note: English 315 (or consent of the instructor) is a prerequisite for English 709 (Advanced English Phonology)

English 316: English Language Variation in the U.S.

Thomas Purnell

MWF, 1:20PM to 2:10PM, 4208 HC White Hall

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) This course offers an overview of English language variation in the United States from a current sociolinguistic perspective. Social, regional, ethnic, gender, and stylistic variation are examined, along with models for describing, explaining, and applying sociolinguistic knowledge. Students are exposed to a wide range of data on language variation focused on vernacular varieties of American English in general. English 316 is designed to introduce students to the variation found in American English. The course introduces students to the linguistic, historic and social bases of American English variation along with the descriptive parameters of the observed variation.

Class Structure and Assignments. In an effort to reveal stereotypes about speakers of dialect and relate stereotypes that are prevalent in society (based on media and what people say about others), the class is centered on how US dialects are represented in movies and comparing those representations with audio recordings of actual speakers. We begin each topic section watching relevant movie clips and making observations about the language depicted in the clips. Then we compare those observations to what sociolinguists know about language in the domain we are exploring. You will write a research paper that addresses the question of how standard or nonstandard any one speaker of American English can be by transcribing a recording of an American English speaker, recorded as part of the Dictionary of American English audio recordings. Students transcribing speakers from a specific geographic region form groups for in and out of class discussions. All writing assignments are expected to be consistent with UW-Madison English Department common core values for writing, the expectations of the course is that all written work.

English 416: English in Society

Richard Young

TR, 9:30AM to 10:45AM, 2637 Humanities

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) This course provides a general introduction to the area of linguistics—broadly known as “sociolinguistics”—that is primarily concerned with the interrelationships between language and society. We will explore the body of research that investigates how various social variables—such as age, gender, region, social class, and race—interact with linguistic variables—such as the substitution of [n] for [ŋ], the use of habitual be, and the recent innovation of “creaky voice” among (just?) young women. We’ll also investigate how more local factors—e.g., identity construction, audience—complicate the picture just painted. We’ll then turn to language and interaction, examining how culturally situated language practices can reveal (and in fact construct) social structure. Finally, we will investigate societal attitudes toward different varieties of English (e.g. regional, social, and racial/ethnic dialects) and ask critical questions about the material consequences of such attitudes at both the individual and institutional level.

Our goal is not simply to assemble a catalog of facts about language and society. Although we will at times seek to make generalizations accounting for the linguistic variation we see in various communities (e.g. women tend to use fewer stigmatized forms than men of the same socio-economic class), we are more interested in exploring—and indeed critiquing— methods of sociolinguistic inquiry and the assumptions underlying these methods (e.g. that men and women are socially relevant categories that can unproblematically be treated as binary).

English 420, Pragmatics

Richard Young

TR, 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM, Rm 2637 Humanities

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) This is an introduction to pragmatics for undergraduates in the English department, students pursuing the M.A. in Applied English Linguistics, the Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics, the Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition, and interested students from other departments.

Pragmatics is the study of the relationship between the meaning of an utterance and the context in which the utterance is produced. We normally think of people using language to produce utterances, though the act of production involves words and grammar but also vocal prosody, gesture, gaze, and bodily stance. The context of production is also much grander than the time and place of utterance and it includes the physical, spatial, temporal, social, interactional, institutional, political, and historical circumstances in which a person produces an utterance. By ‘utterance’ and ‘context’ we name systems of interconnection among very many features, and the study of the relationship between utterance and context is not to be undertaken lightly. Nonetheless it is a study that for centuries has been of great interest to philosophers, linguists, semioticians, and psychologists. And even if you don’t want to focus on pragmatics as a field of academic study, it’s worth considering a few questions that we will ask and try to answer in this course:

- I know the kind of actions I can perform with my body and with tools I use, but what kind of actions can I perform with my words?
- Sometimes, I am in conversation with somebody and, although we both know exactly the meaning of every word, I still don’t get what the other person is driving at. What am I missing?
- I know some people who are forever saying please and thank you, just like my mother taught me when I was a child. And then there are some other people I know who rarely say please or thank you, and I know my mother would say they are not being polite, but nobody else seems to bother. Why is that?
- Why did the defense attorney object when the prosecutor asked the defendant when he had stopped abusing his daughter?
- Say “It’s cold in here” and mean “It’s warm in here”. Can you do it? — And what are you doing as you do it? And is there only one way of doing it?

That last question was asked by a philosopher. Asking and answering questions like these is not just what we should do as students and scholars; it is also a matter of practical communication—especially communication among people from different social and cultural backgrounds. If you decide to take this course, I hope it will not only be one more step on the road to an academic qualification, but it should also be a means to make us all better communicators.

Required materials

Archer, D., Aijmer, K., & Wichmann, A. (2012). *Pragmatics: An advanced resource book for students*. Routledge.

Thirty-four supplementary readings are available for download from Box.

English 520: Old English

Martin Foys

TR, 1:00PM – 2:15PM, Rm L151 Education

[Literary Studies/English Language and Linguistics/Medieval] This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the language, literature, and culture of England before the Norman Conquest of 1066. Because the English language has changed so much since 1100, Old English must be learned as a foreign language. In the first half of the class, we will cover basic pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, while doing short translation exercises. In the second half of the semester, we will put the skills you've learned to work, tackling major works of Old English poetry and prose. Because this is a language class, no papers will be required. Instead, there will be regular translation exercises, quizzes, and exams.

No previous experience with Old English is required.

English 700: Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric

Kate Vieira

W, 10:00 am to 12:30 pm, 7105 HC White Hall

[Composition & Rhetoric] This overview course will introduce students to composition and rhetoric at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, which houses one of the most innovative and interdisciplinary programs in the country. We will survey the work of faculty, staff, and alums, and dig into the intellectual roots of this work. Additionally, we will explore opportunities to research composition and rhetoric in Madison. In light of this legacy, and in light of the affordances of Madison as a research site, we will ask (and answer): How might we most productively create knowledge about writing and rhetoric moving forward? With an understanding of how composition and rhetoric has been practiced here, students will develop their own research agendas in writing studies for the ensuing years.

English 701: Writing and Learning: Introduction to Assessment, Curriculum, and Writing Program Administration

Morris Young

F, 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM, 7105 HC White Hall

[Composition & Rhetoric] This seminar will serve as an introduction to the work done by writing program administrators including assessment of student achievement (both small-scale and large-scale), curriculum design, and the development of programs. We will read broadly to build a foundation in understanding how writing works and how to assess the teaching and learning of writing. We will also focus on what it means to create a writing program, develop a philosophy of administration, and cultivate a culture of writing.

Readings may include work by Linda Adler-Kassner and Peggy O'Neil, Chris Anson, William Condon, Norbert Eliot, Asao Inoue and Mya Poe, Rita Malenczyk, and others.

Work will include weekly reading responses, facilitating seminar discussion, designing a writing curriculum, and preparing an assessment study.

English 790: Proseminar-Teaching of Writing

Morris Young

This one-credit course introduces graduate student instructors to the fundamentals of teaching writing. We will discuss the goals of the introductory composition course and best practices in teaching (including syllabus construction, assignment design, class discussion and group work, peer review, the revision process, and evaluation and grading). This is a required course for instructors teaching English 100 for the first time at UW-Madison.

English 795: Intro Lit Pedagogy Seminar

David Zimmerman

R, 8:00AM to 9:15AM, 7109 HC White Hall

This 8-week proseminar trains new Intro. Lit. TAs to become successful classroom instructors. Participants will learn effective practices and principles of Intro. Lit. teaching. Our focus will be on designing and leading effective lessons, teaching critical reading and writing skills, and designing and implementing an effective writing curriculum. While some of these aims overlap with English 100 training, all of our meetings will be tailored to Intro. Lit. instruction. Participants who formally enroll in English 795 will receive one credit for this course.

English 803: Books, Birds, and Betrayal: Chaucer's Early Works

Lisa H. Cooper

M, 10:15AM to 12:45PM, 7105 HC White Hall

[Literary Studies] This course is an introduction to the poetry of Geoffrey Chaucer, the most famous and influential English poet of the later Middle Ages. Starting with some of Chaucer's shortest and (mostly, or at least believed to be) earliest poems, we will trace the poet's movement through the forms of complaint and dream vision (*The Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, *The House of Fame*) before pursuing an extended engagement with his *Troilus and Criseyde*, an historical romance set against the background of the Trojan War. Along the way, we will consider such topics as the import of the emergence of the English vernacular in the fourteenth century as a language for poetry and other discourses; the changing meaning of "authorship" within manuscript culture and an age of (predominantly) literary anonymity; the nature of court culture and the phenomenon known as "courtly love"; and, last but not least, Chaucer's wry, self-conscious manipulation of the established genres of complaint, vision, allegory, confession, satire, and romance. Each week of the seminar will also have a distinct theoretical focus, drawing upon recent (and some less recent) criticism that speaks to current concerns in literary scholarship more broadly, including material culture, science, new formalism, cognition, animals, the posthuman, trauma, and more. It should therefore be of use not only to medievalists and early modernists (Shakespeare, after all, knew Chaucer's *Troilus* well), but also to all those curious about the origins of some of our current, pressing questions about the place of literature

(and ourselves) in the world, and the exciting conversations going on in medieval studies about those very questions. Members of the seminar will be expected to read the primary text(s) alongside 1-2 (sometimes 3) articles or book chapters of secondary work each week, and to do at least one, and probably two, short presentations over the course of the semester; one of these may become the basis for the final paper for the course.

Note: No previous knowledge of Middle English is required, but we will be reading all of Chaucer's works in their original language. Chaucer's Middle English is actually quite easy to read, but guidance in doing so more easily will also be provided.

English 806: Romantic Polity

Theresa Kelley

W, 1:00PM to 3:30PM, 7105 HC White Hall

This seminar works with questions that address a long standing set of oppositions said to distinguish the Romantic and Victorian era. Briefly sketched, it has been argued that Victorian literature takes up, and thinks through, what the social is—its institutions, its networks, its sense of nation and world.

Romanticism, by contrast, is said to be more concerned with individuality and the individual as an expressive, speaking being who, in some version, is alone, singular and sublime. This broad characterization prompts several questions which this seminar will consider: is the status of the individual as poet, as subject, as citizen, or as autonomous being in Romantic literature? How do Romantic writers think about what we call polity—the study of political association and its role in social life, citizenship and law? What bearing does the critique of possessive individualism have in considerations of Romanticism?

The seminar is a thought experiment which considers what might be discoverable if we understand Romanticism as the site of a conflicted but recurrent preoccupation with the relation between individuals, others, the nation state, and the world. So understood, Romantic polity names not an outcome but a point of inquiry.

Likely Readings:

Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, The Social Contract*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, Valperga*, perhaps *The Last Man*

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Book 4.

Immanuel Kant, political essays

Percy Shelley, *The Cenci*, "The Masque of Anarchy"; prose essays

Samuel Coleridge, *Statesman's Manual*

Anna Barbauld. 1811, selected essays

William Hazlitt, from his periodical criticism

William Blake, *The Book of Urizen*.

Charlotte Smith. *Beachy Head*.

Selections from:

GWF Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

Jacques Rancière. *Hatred of Democracy*

Sayla Benhabib. *Democracy and Difference*

English 817: Islands, Oceans, and Archipelagic American Studies

Cherene Sherrard-Johnson

T, 1:00PM to 3:30PM, 7109 HC White Hall

How does thinking with islands and oceans as opposed to continents shift our view of national boundaries, citizenship and geography? This course seeks to acquaint students with the critical frameworks, key texts and conceptual conversations surrounding the cultural theorization of island and ocean-space, primarily, though not exclusively, in the circum-Caribbean African diaspora. Following Edouard Glissant's invitation that "each island is an opening," this course seeks to explore the emergent field of Archipelagic American studies as a way of addressing the potential and pitfalls of transnational approaches to literary and cultural analysis. We will read an array of texts and examine other forms of cultural production in conjunction with the field-defining critical anthology: *Archipelagic American Studies* (Forthcoming Duke 2017) to explore a range of topics including but not limited to the place of islands and oceans in the anthropocene, circulation of artifacts, mythology, and spiritual/cultural practices throughout the colonial and neo-colonial Atlantic world, mapping and cartographic vocabulary, and linguistic diversity (Creoles/Creolization).

Primary texts may include: Derek Walcott's *Omeros*, Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince*, Leonara Sansay's *The Secret History*, Jamaica Kincaid's *The Autobiography of my Mother*, Jean Rhys Davies, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and Junot Diaz's, *The Brief Life of Oscar Wao*.

With additional readings from theorists and critics: Hester Blum, Wai Chee Dimock, Françoise Lionnet, Edouard Glissant, Antonio Benitez-Rojo, Sylvia Wynter, Sara Juliet Lauro, Michelle Ann Stephens, and Elizabeth DeLoughrey, as well as those featured in *Archipelagic American Studies*.

English 879: Publication Seminar

Russ Castronovo

T, 9:00AM to 11:30AM, 7109 HC White Hall

This seminar is designed to turn promising seminar papers from previous years into successful publications. Our reading list will be one another's work with an emphasis placed on bold, fearless revision. We will operate as a workshop. Special attention will be given to framing an essay as a publishable article and to situating your research as an intervention in the field. We will also discuss the nuts-and-bolts of the publication process involving journal submissions, special issues, and edited collections. Selected readings, many of them to be provided by the seminar participants, will serve as examples and models. The seminar is open to students whose work is in any area or time period.
