

English 221: The English Language

Contact Information:

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135 Colson (West Virginia Dialect Project)

Office Hours: 2:30-3:30 Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and by appointment.

Course Specific Purpose: The purpose of this course is to direct students in rigorously studying language in general and the English language in particular.

Course Purposes:

- To develop respect for and understanding of human language;
- To explore the modern linguistic concepts of the English language;
- To develop respect for diachronic and synchronic language variation;
- To understand the role of social forces on language variation.

Course Specific Learning Objectives: As part of their work, students will:

- Display an understanding of human language;
- Recognize the difference between prescriptive and descriptive approaches to language;
- Describe the nature of language variation;
- Use linguistic concepts to solve language problems;
- Analyze natural language, predominantly English.

Overarching Goals: Upon completing a B.A. in English, a student should be able to:

- Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts.
 - Identify genre conventions and analyze their effects
 - Identify and analyze effects of complexity or ambiguity
 - Locate texts in social / economic / political / literary history
 - Connect texts to other literary or cultural texts
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of the social and structural aspects of the English language.
- Demonstrate a range of contextually effective writing strategies.

Text: *An Introduction to Language*. Kirk Hazen. Wiley-Blackwell. 2014.

(Distributed through eCampus).

Advice on class planning: To be prepared for class, I expect you read the assigned pages in the book before class. By “read”, I mean you should be able to explain what material you understand and what material you do not understand. When you come to class, you should then be proactive and ask questions about the material you do not understand. If you are not able to explain what material you do know and do not know before the class starts, then you are not prepared for class.

Attendance: Because this course depends on your active preparation for every class and your active involvement during every class period, regular (and on-time) attendance is critical to your success in this class. It is the easiest thing you can do to help yourself get a passing grade. The following paragraphs outline course policies and expectations.

Absences: Without attending class, you cannot perform your role as a student. Personal situations and required university events may arise that, on rare occasions, make it impossible for you to be in class. Remember, however, that is why a few absences are allowed; please reserve absences for such events.

- Each student is allowed up to three (3) absences from this Tuesday/Thursday class.
- Each additional absence will lower your final grade by a letter grade.

In addition, one other situation will count towards your absence total. If you are late to class, it will count as half an absence. This situation is a matter of respect for your peers and the instructor. I will not inform you of when you have been marked down for half an absence; you should be able to figure it out on your own.

If you must miss class, *you* are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class. Make sure you talk with me in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class. Please note: If you know you must miss more than three classes during the semester, I strongly advise you to take the class during another term.

Absences, tests, and quizzes: If you plan to miss a test, you must notify me before the test begins about the reason for your absence. If it is a valid excuse, you may make up the test during the semester. You may make up one (and only one) test during any given semester.

If you miss a quiz, you have missed the quiz. There are no make-up quizzes.

Advice:

If you feel lost or even the slightest bit confused, contact me or the teaching assistants. This is not a class you want to get behind in. Email us or come by during office hours. If you cannot make office hours, we can set up a time to talk. The quicker you get your questions straightened out, the better off you will be. Every semester we offer many office hours, but students rarely come by to talk about the class. Please help us help you: Come to office hours.

TA Office Hours: 10:00-11:00 AM Mondays; 3:00-4:00 Thursdays (135 Colson)

Grades:

In this class, there will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Each one will probably consist of identifications (i.e., define and give an example), short answers, and problems to solve. It should take

me two weeks to grade and return the exams. You are allowed to make up one, and only one, test you have missed because of an excused absence.

There will also be regular quizzes and homework. Most quizzes will be in class, but some will be take home. Most homework will be take home, but some will be in class.

Type	Percent of final grade	Date
Homework	20%	Throughout the semester
Quizzes	20%	Throughout the semester
Midterm Exam	30%	Thursday, February 28
Final Exam	30%	Friday, May 10, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

In this class I assign pluses and minuses. The official percentages:

A+	100-97
A	96-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59 and below

I only round up once: If you get a 69.5, it is a C-; if you get a 69.49, it is a D+.

Social Justice Policy:

WVU is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our university does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Class	Date	Topic	Reading
1	January 15	Introduction to language study	Preface & Chapter 1
2	January 17	Introduction to language study	Chapter 1
3	January 22	Introduction to language study	Chapter 1
4	January 22	Sounds	Chapter 2
5	January 24	Sounds	Chapter 2
6	January 29	Sounds, Patterns of sounds	Chapter 2 & 3
7	January 31	Patterns of sounds	Chapter 3
8	February 5	Patterns of sounds	Chapter 3
9	February 7	One-part words	Chapter 4
10	February 12	One-part words	Chapter 4
11	February 14	One-part words; Verbs, idioms, and slang	Chapter 4 & 5
12	February 19	Verbs, idioms, and slang	Chapter 5
13	February 21	Verbs, idioms, and slang	Chapter 5
14	February 26	Review	
15	February 28 Mid-Semester	Midterm	
16	March 5	Multipart words	Chapter 6
17	March 7	Multipart words	Chapter 6
18	March 12	Multipart words; Basic phrases	Chapters 6 & 7
19	March 14	Basic phrases	Chapter 7
20	March 19	Basic phrases	Chapter 7 & 8
21	March 21	Building bigger phrases	Chapter 8
	March 22	Friday: Last day to drop a class	
	March 23-31	Recess!!!!!!	
22	April 2	Building bigger phrases	Chapter 8
23	April 4	Building bigger phrases	Chapter 8

Class	Date	Topic	Reading
24	April 9	Flocks of phrases	Chapter 9
25	April 11	Flocks of phrases	Chapter 9
26	April 16	Flocks of phrases; English and education	Chapters 9 & 10
27	April 18	English and education	Chapter 10
28	April 23	Variation in English	Chapter 11
29	April 25	Variation in English	Chapter 11
30	April 30	End of semester assessment; Review; SEIs	
31	May 2	Review; Last day of class	
32	May 10	Final exam, Friday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM	