

[Descriptive] English Grammar – EN 4810 – Fall 2016 – TR 2:00-3:15 – Clark 309

Instructor: **Benjamin Torbert**, University of Missouri-Saint Louis

Contact: torbertb@umsl.edu, (314) 236-1259, Facebook, Google chat

Office: **420 Lucas**, office hours TR 12:30-1:30, 3:30-4:30, by appt (you are encouraged to visit)

TEXTBOOKS: *English Grammar* (LeTourneau) ISBN 0-15-507825-9 (on MGW)

Artful Sentences: Syntax as Style (Tufte), ISBN 0-961-39218-5

COURSE OBJECTIVES: (a) To understand the workings of morphosyntax (grammar) in both standard and nonstandard English, from a descriptive perspective. (b) To be able to apply these concepts in the analysis of language. (c) To be able to apply your understanding of syntax to the study of literature. The course does not assume that you have any knowledge of a foreign language; however, those who have taken foreign languages will be well served by that experience, and the instructor will use many examples from foreign languages to explain linguistic concepts in English. EN 2810/*Traditional Grammar*, is a pre-req; students may place out of 2810 by passing the traditional grammar placement exam.

ATTENDANCE: You are allowed two unexcused absences. One point will be deducted from your final grade for each unexcused absence beginning with the third. The difference between excused and unexcused will be determined by the judgment of the instructor alone. Religious holidays are obviously excused. For any missed classes, students will be expected to obtain reliable notes from someone else in the class.

READING ASSIGNMENTS: Reading assignments are listed on the syllabus and you should complete them **before** the class during which the assignment appears on the syllabus.

TESTS: There will be three tests and a final exam. Make-ups will only be given in the case of a documented emergency. If a test must be missed on a scheduled exam day, notify me well in advance so that alternate arrangements can be made at the testing center.

GRADING: Participation 10%; 3 tests 20% per; takehome final 30%. Ten point scale. 0-2 -, 7-9 +

ACADEMIC HONESTY: As in all classes at UMSL, students must adhere to University policies about cheating and plagiarism—see http://umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode.htm

CIVILITY: UMSL lists university policies about our shared responsibilities as teachers and as students for creating a learning environment. We need you to display respect for your fellow students. Please refrain from cell phone use. See http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/positive.htm.

ACCESS/DISABILITY: Students who have special needs must meet with the campus access office in MSC 144. If you require special accommodations, please meet with me to discuss your needs.

EARLY ALERT: UMSL uses an early alert system to notify students who are struggling academically. I will refer students who make a D or an F on either of the first two tests to the Center for Student Success.

MYGATEWAY: I will place supplemental materials on MyGateway throughout the semester.

Date	Topic	Assignment
T 8/23	Preliminaries, survey of syllabus, introductions	buy the books
R 8/25	Overview of Morphosyntax (Grammar)	LeT i-xiii, 1-19
<i>Lexical-level grammar</i>		
T 8/30	Nouns & adjectives	LeT 25-34, 45-47
R 9/1	Verbs: tense, mood, aspect, and voice	LeT 34-56
T 9/6	Verbs & adverbs continued, epistemic tense	LeT 214-222
R 9/8	Pronouns, prepositions, determiners & conjunctions	LeT 63-84
T 9/13	Test I	
<i>Phrase-level grammar</i>		
R 9/15	Constituency	LeT 89-107
T 9/20	Intro to Diagramming Subjects & predicates	LeT 107-111, 115-127
R 9/22	Verb complements	LeT 127-152
T 9/27	Other types of complements Grammatical transformations	LeT 152-175
R 9/29	Intro to phrase structure Noun phrases	LeT 180-202
T 10/4	Verb phrases	LeT 202-214
R 10/6	Adjective phrases, prepositional phrases & adverb phrases	LeT 222-242
T 10/11	Test II	
<i>Clause-level grammar</i>		
R 10/13	Intro to clauses & coordinate clauses	LeT 243-269
T 10/18	Adverb clauses & noun clauses	LeT 270-302
R 10/20	Relative clauses	LeT 302-342
T 10/25	instructor at conference – no class	online
R 10/27	Nonfinite clauses	LeT 343-375
T 11/1	Nonfinite clauses continued	LeT 375-404
R 11/3	Test III	
<i>Applications – Syntax and Literary Art</i>		
T 11/8	Verbal aspect and poetry	skim LeT 502-542 (^ read explication of poems)
R 11/10	Clause-level grammar in Shakespeare's Sonnets	poems in class
T 11/15	Parataxis & hiptotaxis – MLK, Hamer, Giovanni, Faulkner	Tufte Chapters. 6-7
R 11/17	Double Consciousness – WEBD, Komunyakaa	Tufte Chapters 8 & 9
	11/22-24 Thanksgiving Break – No Class	
T 11/29	How does Toni Morrison do it?	TM excerpts
R 12/1	We interrupt this program to explain how genre works	Sergio Leone
T 12/6	Parallelism & cohesion – Kanye West, Ben Jonson	Tufte Chapters 12 Poems/songs in class
R 12/8	Syntactic symbolism – TR Hummer	Tufte Chapter 14
T 12/13	Take-home Final Due, at EOB; no help from other students is allowed.	