

History of the English Language – EN 4820 – Spring 2016 – TR 2:00-3:15p – Clark 208

Instructor: Benjamin Torbert, Associate Professor of Linguistics, UM-Saint Louis English
Contact: btorbert@gmail.com, (314) 236-1259, FaceBook, G-chat, NOT my office landline
Office: 420 Lucas Hall, office hours TR 1-2, 3:30-4:30 (you are encouraged to visit)

TEXTBOOKS: C. M. Millward, *A Biography of the English Language*, 3rd edition. (2011)
Walt Wolfram and Natalie Schilling, *American English: Dialects & Variation*, 3rd edition (2016)

COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of the class, students should be able (a) to recognize basic linguistic terminology, (b) to know about and understand the origins of the English language, (c) to understand English's relationship to other languages, (d) to understand some of the major changes the language has undergone, and (e) to understand the consequences of variation & change for English spoken today. Major trajectories of change that we will trace will include the infusions of Italic language family influence into this West Germanic language that we speak, and English's gradual movement from a more [inflectionally-rich] synthetic language to a more isolating/analytic language. We will also examine how regional variation in England and diverse language backgrounds helped to influence present-day variation in English dialects.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: You are allowed two absences, period. I do not generally distinguish between excused and unexcused absences because two should cover your needs in all but the direst of circumstances. For every additional absence after two, one percentage point will be subtracted from the final grade. Exceptions will be made only for serious life crises. Speak to me if you experience such a situation.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS: There will not be any graded homework as you often see in a 1000- or 2000-level course; however, the instructor will give out exercises to be done at home that will prefigure items on tests, for practice, which we will go over in class afterwards.

READING ASSIGNMENTS: Reading assignments are listed on the syllabus. The reading assignment should be completed by the day on which the assignment appears on the syllabus. In other words, have it read before the class period in which we are discussing it.

GRADE: 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 test day, notify me in advance so that alternate arrangements can be made. The final will be cumulative only insofar as concepts discussed in the first three parts of the course contribute to understanding in the fourth part.

Three hour tests @ 20% each, Final @ 30%, Participation @ 10%

GRADUATE STUDENTS: Grad students will have to complete an additional 1000-word response paper on a seminal article in the field.

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 positive environment for learning. Our classroom must be an intellectually safe space. Refrain from using your cell phones in any fashion during class. We also need you to display respect for your fellow students. 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 accessibility of disability needs.

EARLY ALERT: UMSL uses an early alert system to notify students who are struggling academically.

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

Schedule rather subject to change – “M” = Millward; WWNS = Wolfram/Schilling

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
T 1/19	Introduction	buy book / read syllabus
<i>Preliminaries</i>		
R 1/21	Introductions, Basic Concepts	M 1-22
T 1/26	Why Variation Exists	WWNS chapter 2
R 1/28	Some more about that	
T 2/2	Intro to English Phonetics/Phonology in two days	M 23-33
R 2/4	More of the same	
T 2/9	no class – instructor family medical leave	
R 2/11	Writing systems, morphology, contact	M 35-
T 2/16	Organisms, speciation, and the 19thC, Language families	-64
R 2/18	Test I	
<i>Proto-Germanic and Old English</i>		
T 2/23	Morphosyntactic changes from IE to Germanic	M 65-77
R 2/25	Old English History and Phonology	M 79-93
T 3/1	OE Graphics and Morphosyntax	M 93-126
R 3/3	OE Lexicon, Semantics, and Dialects	M 126-42
T 3/8	Test II	
<i>Middle English and Early Modern English</i>		
R 3/10	Middle English History	M 143-48
T 3/15	ME Phonology and Graphics	M 148-64
R 3/17	ME Morphosyntax	M 165-202
T 3/22	Early Modern English History	M 219-44
R 3/24	EME Phonology and Graphics	M 244-58
T 3/29	Spring Break – NO CLASS	
R 3/31	Spring Break – NO CLASS	
T 4/5	EME Morphosyntax	M 258-77
R 4/7	Test III	
<i>Present-Day English</i>		
T 4/12	PDE History	M 295-309
R 4/14	Dialects, Standards, and Vernaculars	WWNS chapter 1
	Levels of Dialect	WWNS chapter 3
T 4/19	Regional Varieties of English, mostly in North America	WWNS chapters 4 & 5
R 4/21	Ethnicity	WWNS chapters 6 & 7
T 4/26	African American English	WWNS chapter 8
R 4/28	Language and Gender	WWNS chapter 9
T 5/3	Style	WWNS chapter 10
R 5/5	Applications of Dialect Study	WWNS chapter 11
T 5/10	Final exam – 12:30-2:30 PM	

Other dates:

M 1/25	Last day to add a course
M 2/15	Last day to withdraw with no grade
M 4/19	Last day to withdraw with EX grade