

English 331 English Language Variation in the US

WHITE 4208, 12:05-12:55 PM, MWF

General Information

Eric Raimy

White 7123

263-6870

raimy#at#wisc.edu

Office Hours

Informal office hours are directly after class and official office hours are Tues. 9am to 10:00am and Thurs. 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm. If these times do not work for you please email or talk to me.

Textbooks

We'll be using two textbooks for this class:

Chambers, J. K. *Sociolinguistic Theory, 2nd ed.* Blackwell Publishing

Wolfram, Walt and Natalie Schilling-Estes. *American English, 2nd ed.* Blackwell Publishing

Both books are required and available from the UW Bookstore.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the variation found in English in the United States. As part of this students will:

- learn about specific grammatical variants of spoken English in the US
- learn about the social/cultural factors of different varieties of English
- learn about methods to document and investigate particular varieties of spoken English
- learn about what is unique and what is universal about the variation of English within the US

Evaluation

There are three components to the grade for this course: homework assignments, exams and a group research paper.

Homework	30%
Exams (2)	50% (25% each)
<u>Group Research Project</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%

Homework Assignments 30%

There will be 6 homework assignments during the semester. Homework assignments will be posted to the Learn@UW course site so please make sure that you can log into Learn@UW.

There are two different kinds of homework assignments for this class. Homeworks #1, #2 and #6 are essay questions and should consist of about 3 pages of double spaced text. Homeworks #3, #4, and #5 are based on WISCO labs and will be on line. In addition to the online questions for these homeworks, a single double spaced critique of the WISCO assignment is also required. ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED AND SUBMITTED ON TIME. NO HANDWRITTEN OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. We will discuss the homework in class on the day that it is due so we can make sure everyone understood the assignment.

Exams 50% total (25% each)

There will be two take home exams. One mid-term and one end-term. The first exam will be handed out on Oct. 17th to be returned on Oct. 24th. The second exam will be handed out on Nov. 21st to be returned on Dec. 5th.

Group Research Project 20%

The group research project will consist of a short research paper (at least 12 pages double spaced) due on the last day of class (Dec. 12th), presentation of the research paper to the class (during the last two weeks of class) and an abstract for the project due on Friday Oct. 10th. The project should reflect some aspect of the varieties of English present in the US. Investigation of a particular variety of English, grammatical aspects of a variety, social aspects of a variety, social justice involved with varieties of English are all welcomed projects in addition topics related to the class that you may envision.

There are three components that will determine each individual's grade for this group project. The first two components are based on the presentation and the final version of the written paper. These two components will set the base grade for each person in the group. The third component is a blind peer review where each member of the group will briefly grade every other member in the group. The possible grades are: ABOVE, BELOW and SAME and should be assigned based on whether the person contributed more than everyone else, less than everyone else or the same as everyone else in the group. These grades and any additional comments will be anonymous. Research groups should consist a roughly equal number of students of the total class enrollment divided into six groups.

Academic Misconduct

Please make sure that you are familiar with UW's Academic Misconduct Policy which you can read at: <http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html>
NO ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT WILL BE TOLERATED.

Class Attendance

Regular class attendance is assumed to be the standard behavior. IF YOU DO NOT ATTEND CLASS YOU WILL NOT DO WELL. Please inform me as soon as possible about missing any classes so arrangements can be made for you to make up any missed materials.

Learn@UW

Additional materials will be posted to the Learn@UW course site for this course. Make sure you are able to log into Learn@UW to get these extra materials. This is your responsibility.

Course Schedule

Topics of lectures, reading and homework assignments are listed below on the date they are DUE.

C = Chambers and W = Wolfram and Shilling-Estes

Week 1 Sept. 2-5

Wed Introduction and Administrative Issues

Fri Movie: American Tongues

Week 2 Sept. 8-12

Language Dialect and Standards

READ: C Ch 1 pp. 1-10, W Ch 1 pp. 1-27

Fri 9/12 HOMEWORK #1 DUE

Week 3 Sept. 15-19

How and Why of Dialects

READ: W Ch 2-3 pp. 28-102

Week 4 Sept. 22-26

American Dialects

READ: W Ch 4-5 pp. 103-166

Fri 9/26 HOMEWORK #2 DUE

Week 5 Sept. 29-Oct. 3

Variation in Language

READ: C Ch 1 pp. 1-38

Week 6 Oct. 6-10

Classic Sociolinguistics

READ: C Ch 2 pp. 39-115

Fri 10/10 Group Research Project Abstract DUE

WISCO LAB

Week 7 Oct. 13-17

Classic Sociolinguistics (cont.)

Fri 10/17 EXAM #1 HANDED OUT

WISCO LAB, HOMEWORK #3 DUE

Week 8 Oct. 20-24

Language and Gender

READ: W Ch 8 pp 234-265

Fri 10/24 EXAM #1 DUE

WISCO LAB

- Week 9** **Oct. 27-31**
Language and Gender (cont.)
READ: C Ch 3 pp 116-162
Fri 10/31 HOMEWORK #4 DUE
- Week 10** **Nov. 3-7**
African American English
READ: W Ch 6-7 pp 190-233
- Week 11** **Nov. 10-14**
Using Dialect Knowledge
READ: W Ch 10-11 pp 294-360
Fri 11/14 HOMEWORK #5 DUE
- Week 12** **Nov. 17-21**
Language and Age
READ: C Ch 4 pp 163-225
Fri 11/21 HOMEWORK #6 DUE
EXAM #2 Handed Out
- Week 13** **Nov. 24-28**
Diversity in Language
READ: C Ch 5 pp 226-278
Wed: Movie: TBA
Fri: Thanksgiving Break
- Week 14** **Dec. 1-5**
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Fri 12/5 EXAM #2 Due
- Week 15** **Dec. 8-12**
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Fri 12/12 Research Paper Due