

English 331 English Language Variation in the US
WHITE 4208, 8:50 - 9:40 AM, MWF

General Information

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Office Hours

I will have informal office hours directly after class and official office hours on Tuesday mornings 9am to 10:30am and Thursday afternoons 2pm to 3:30pm. If neither of these times work for you please email or talk to me about setting up a time that works.

Textbooks

- Chambers, J. K. *Sociolinguistic Theory, 2nd ed.* Blackwell Publishing
- Wolfram, Walt and Natalie Shilling-Estes. *American English, 2nd ed.* Blackwell Publishing

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

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

Homework Assignments 30%

There will be 6 homework assignments during the semester. The homework assignment will be based on current topics of discussion and will consist of a short paper no longer than 4 pages of double spaced text (times, 12pt). ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED AND HANDED IN 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. Homework assignments will be posted to the Learn@UW course site so please make sure that you can log into Learn@UW.

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 March 9th to be returned on March 16th. The second exam will be handed out on April 27th to be returned on May 4th. Each exam will focus on one half of the course and the second exam is not cumulative.

Group Research Project 20%

The group research project will consist of a short research paper (12 pages double spaced) due on the last day of class (May 11th), presentation of the research paper to the class (during the last two weeks of class), an abstract for the project due on March 2nd and a group evaluation by each member. This project should reflect some aspect of the different 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.

Research groups should consist of between 2 and 4 students with the work involved in the project distributed in an equitable manner. Each member of the group will write a short (1 page single space) summary and evaluation of the other members contribution to the project. The spirit of this evaluation is to encourage as much equity of work in the project as possible and the evaluations will be used by me to determine aspects of the group project grade. The usual case is that there is equal amount of work by each member thus everyone in the group will receive the same grade. If the evaluations point to a situation where particular members contribute more or less to the project than other members then I will adjust the grades accordingly.

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/conduct/uws14.htm>

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 **Jan. 22-26** *Introduction and Administrative Issues*

Week 2 **Jan. 29-Feb 2** *Language Dialect and Standards*

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

Fri 2/2 HOMEWORK #1 DUE

Week 3 **Feb 5-9** *How and Why of Dialects*

READ: W Ch 2-3 pp28-102

Week 4 **Feb 12-16** *American Dialects*

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

Fri 2/16 HOMEWORK #2 DUE

Week 5 **Feb 19-23** *Variation in Language*

READ: C Ch 1 pp 1-38

Week 6 **Feb 26-Mar 2** *Classic Sociolinguistics*

READ: C Ch 2 pp 39-115

Fri 3/2 Group Research Project Abstract DUE

Week 7 **Mar 5-9** *Classic Sociolinguistics (cont.)*

Fri 3/9 HOMEWORK #3 DUE

EXAM #1 HANDED OUT

Week 8 **Mar 12-16** *Language and Gender*

READ: W Ch 8 pp 234-265

Fri 3/16 EXAM #1 DUE

Week 9 **Mar 19-23** *Language and Gender (cont.)*

READ: C Ch 3 pp 116-162

Fri 3/23 HOMEWORK #4 DUE

Week 10 **Mar 26-30** *African American English*

READ: W Ch 6-7 pp 190-233

Week 11 **Apr 2-6** **SPRING BREAK**

Week 12 **Apr 9-13** *Using Dialect Knowledge*
READ: W Ch 10-11 pp 294-360
Fri 4/13 HOMEWORK #5 DUE

Week 13 **Apr 16-20** *Language and Age*
READ: C Ch 4 pp 163-225

Week 14 **Apr 23-27** *Diversity in Language*
READ: C Ch 5 pp 226-278
Fri 4/27 HOMEWORK #6 DUE
EXAM #2 Handed Out

Week 15 **Apr 30- May 4**
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Fri 5/4 EXAM #2 Due

Week 16 **May 7-11**
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Fri 5/11 Research Paper Due