

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus.

The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Language, Race, and Ethnicity in the U.S.
Linguistics 3601
Wednesday and Friday, 12:45-2:05pm
Campbell Hall 209

Instructor:XXX
E-mail: XXX
Office: Ohio Stadium East
Office Hours: XXX

TA Coordinator: Dr. Hope Dawson
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Reading materials:

Fought, Carmen. 2006. *Language and ethnicity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

You can buy a hard or an electronic version [here](#) on Amazon for a reasonable price. Amazon also has options to rent the book. If you don't have a Kindle, you can download the app from Amazon for free at this [link](#).

Additional articles and book chapters will be made available on Carmen. See the attached course schedule to see when each reading is due.

Course Description:

This course examines the relationship between language and social constructs such as race and ethnicity, with particular emphasis on race relations in the United States. It is concerned with the ways in which language serves as a basis for inter-ethnic conflict, discrimination and lack of social opportunity. The main focus of the course will be the varieties of English used by members of minority ethnic and racial groups in the United States, and the general relationship between their languages and their place in American society.

The U.S. is a melting pot not only culturally, but also linguistically. During this course we will explore how racial and ethnic identity are expressed through the use of particular dialects or languages. We will also discuss how language is related to issues of equality, social opportunity, and discrimination in the U.S. The following are just a few of the types of questions we will address:

- Who gets labeled as “ethnic” and who gets labeled as “white” in the U.S.?
- What are the linguistic features of the various English dialects spoken by minority groups? How did these dialects form?
- What are the social advantages and disadvantages of speaking different English dialects?
- What other languages are spoken in the U.S.?
- Is English losing ground to Spanish or other minority languages?
- Should the U.S. have an official language?
- Is there such thing as linguistic discrimination?
- What is the status of minority dialects or languages in the school system?

The goals of this course are to stimulate discussion about these types of issues and to introduce ways of examining them in an objective manner.

GEs covered by this course:*Cultures and Ideas*

Goals:

Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment, and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture and expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

This course meets these outcomes through the social and linguistic analysis of literature, film, and other media, including discussion about how ideologies about language, race, and ethnicity are formed and reinforced.

Diversity: Social Diversity in the US

Goals:

Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Social Diversity in the United States

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students describe and evaluate the roles of such categories as race, gender, and sexuality, disability, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

This course meets these outcomes through the discussion of how racial and ethnic identity are linguistically expressed in the U.S. at the individual, group, and institutional levels

Special accommodations:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs.

The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Course Requirements:

1. *Reading discussion questions:* Students must read each chapter/article before class on the date listed on the syllabus. Discussion of these readings is the main focus of this course, so

coming to class prepared is extremely important. The class will be much more informative and enjoyable if everyone arrives having read and ready to discuss the topics of the day. To facilitate discussion, you are required to post 2 discussion questions on the Carmen forum for each assigned reading. This is worth 5% of your grade. Your discussion questions must be posted 1 hour before class (11:45am) the day each reading is due.

2. *Class participation*: In a class like this one, each person's insights, questions, and thoughts are extremely valuable. Students are expected to attend class every day, consistently contribute to class discussion, and be actively involved in all class activities. Students are expected not to be involved in any non-classroom related activities (i.e. texting, facebooking, knitting, sleeping, etc.). Participation is worth 10% of your grade.
3. *Homework assignments*: There will be 5 homework assignments, spread evenly throughout the semester. These assignments are a chance to apply what we've learned in class and think critically about various topics on language and ethnicity. Each homework will be assigned 1 to 2 weeks before it is due. Here is list of the homework topics:

Homework 1 – reaction to The N-Word documentary

Homework 2 – analysis of African-American English features in music

Homework 3 – analysis of minority dialects and codeswitching in literature

Homework 4 – analysis of the use of minority languages/dialects on a TV show or movie

Homework 5 – analysis of a bill proposing English as the official U.S. language

I'll provide you with a handout of more specific instructions for each one. See the schedule for due dates. The homeworks are worth 35% of your grade.

4. *Quizzes*: There will be 5 quizzes, spread evenly throughout the semester. They will consist mainly of 2-3 short answer (one paragraph) questions and some linguistic analysis. The quizzes are to be taken online on Carmen so that everyone can work at their own pace. These focus on the readings and in-class discussions. You may consult your notes and readings, but you may not consult any of your classmates. See the schedule for the dates that the quizzes will be available on Carmen. They will be posted on Fridays right after class (2:05pm) and will close on Wednesdays right before class (12:45pm). Since the quizzes are online, there is no excuse for missing them. Make up quizzes are given only if you have a documented emergency, and only if you contact me before the quiz closes on Carmen. Don't forget about the quizzes! They are worth 35% of your grade. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
5. *Final paper*: Each student will write a 5–7 page final paper on any topic related to language, race, and ethnicity in the U.S. I will give you a handout with more specific instructions and a list of topic ideas to consider. To make sure that everyone makes timely progress on their projects, you will be required to choose your topic and send me a progress report by the dates listed on the course schedule. The final paper is worth 15% of your grade.

Attendance policy:

Attendance makes up part of your participation grade. Regular attendance is essential for you to do well on the quizzes, understand the homework assignments, and participate in class

discussions. If you have an illness or other serious reason for missing class, please let me know as soon as you can and provide a doctor's note if applicable.

Turn-in policy:

Guidelines and Due dates for assignments are listed on the course schedule. You may hand in hard copies during class or submit them on Carmen. Be aware that the Carmen dropboxes are set up to close right when class starts. All take home assignments should be typed up with 12-point font, Times New Roman, double spaced, 1 inch margins. I accept files in .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats. I prefer Word formats so I can use the commenting tools, but if you have compatibility issues (i.e. Open Office, Linux, really old versions of Word – especially for Mac), then please send a pdf.

Group work policy:

I encourage you to study together if you want to. Linguists often collaborate on research projects, and knowing how to work with other people is a good skill for everyone to have. However, each student is required to write their assignments individually. This includes the homeworks, the quizzes, and the final paper – all written work must be your own. You may not consult your classmates about the quizzes after they are available on Carmen.

Late assignments:

Late homework is accepted. It is subject to deduction by one letter grade per day late (up to a 50% deduction), unless accompanied by a valid and documented excuse. Late quizzes, reading discussion questions, and final papers are not accepted.

Grading:

Reading discussion questions	5%
Participation	10%
Homework	35%
Quizzes	35%
Final Project	15%

Grading Scale:

93-100 (A)	87-89.9 (B+)	77-79.9 (C+)	67-69.9 (D+)
90-92.9 (A-)	83-86.9 (B)	73-76.9 (C)	60-66.9 (D)
	80-82.9 (B-)	70-72.9 (C-)	59.9 or below (E)

Classroom etiquette:

Please arrive on time and prepared for class by reading the assignments beforehand. The use of cell phones or other electronic devices during class is not acceptable. The only exceptions are laptops (for taking notes only) and e-readers (for referring to assigned readings only).

Some of the topics discussed in this class can be personally or politically sensitive issues. You may at times disagree with others during class, but please respect their right to their opinions and beliefs as you would also like to have yours respected. If you feel very strongly about a particular point or issue, please let this stimulate productive discussion and do not resort to interrupting people, dominating the floor, raising your voice, insulting others, etc.

This class makes heavy use of media, which may include controversial content (e.g. examples of racism in cartoons, people using ethnic slurs, etc.). We will discuss these examples maturely, from an objective point of view, in order to analyze their social context and linguistic content.

Academic misconduct:

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are not tolerated. Although group discussion and studying together is encouraged, all work that you turn in must be your own. If I even suspect that someone is cheating, I am obligated to report them to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. Some examples of academic misconduct include: violation of course rules as outlined in the course syllabus, providing or receiving information during quizzes and examinations, submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement, and alteration of grades by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit.

Course Schedule:

Note: Assignments, readings, and discussion questions are all due before class (12:45pm).

Week	Date	Topics	Readings & Assignments
Week 1	8/26 (W)	Course basics	Syllabus
	8/28 (F)	Introductory topics	Fought Ch. 1: “What is ethnicity?”
Week 2	9/2 (W)	Standard language, mainstream dialects	Fought Ch. 2: “Language and the construction of ethnic identity”
	9/4 (F)	Standard language, mainstream dialects continued	
Week 3	9/9 (W)	Ethnic slurs, The N-Word documentary	Roediger 2005: “Popular language, social practice, and the messiness of race” Assignment due: Quiz 1
	9/11 (F)	The N-Word continued	
Week 4	9/16 (W)	African-American English	Fought Ch. 3: “African-American groups” Assignment due: Homework 1
	9/18 (F)	African-American English continued	
Week 5	9/23 (W)	African-American written/oral literature	Rickford & Rickford 2000: “Writers” Assignment due: Final paper topic
	9/25 (F)	African-American written/oral literature continued	Rickford & Rickford 2000: “Singers, Toasters, and Rappers”
Week 6	9/30 (W)	Latino dialects	Fought Ch. 4: “Latino groups” Assignment due: Quiz 2
	10/2 (F)	Latino dialects, intro to codeswitching	
	10/7 (W)	Codeswitching continued	Bailey 2000: “Language and negotiation of ethnic/racial identity among Dominican
Week 7	10/7 (W)	Codeswitching continued	Bailey 2000: “Language and negotiation of ethnic/racial identity among Dominican Americans” Assignment due: Homework 2

	10/9 (F)	Cajun, ethnic southern dialects	Fought Ch. 7: “Dialect contact”
Week 8	10/14 (W)	Italian, Jewish dialects; whiteness	Fought Ch. 6: “Whiteness” Assignment due: Quiz 3
	10/16 (F)	NO CLASS—AUTUMN BREAK	
Week 9	10/21 (W)	Native American issues	Wolfram 2004: “Lumbee English” Assignment due: Homework 3
	10/23 (F)	Native Americans continued; Asian Americans	TBA
Week 10	10/28 (W)	Asian American issues continued	Hinton 2009: “Trading Tongues” Assignment due: Final paper progress report
	10/30 (F)	Media representation	Lippi-Green 2012: “Language ideology and the language subordination model”
Week 11	11/4 (W)	Mock language, ethnic humor	Hill 1999: “Language, race, and white public space” Assignment due: Quiz 4
	11/6 (F)	Mock language continued, intro to crossing	Fought Ch. 10: “Crossing” (sections 10.0-10.4 only!)
Week 12	11/11 (W)	NO CLASS—VETERANS DAY	
	11/13 (F)	Crossing, appropriation	Bucholtz 2011: “Pretty fly for a white guy” Assignment due: Homework 4
Week 13	11/18 (W)	Linguistic discrimination, legal issues	Baugh 2003: “Linguistic profiling”
	11/20 (F)	Language and legal issues continued	Wiley 2004: “Language planning, language policy, and the English-only Movement” Assignment due: Quiz 5
Week 14	11/25 (W)	NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING	
	11/27 (F)		
Week 15	12/2 (W)	Language and education; pragmatic differences	Fought Ch. 9: “Language prejudice”
	12/4 (F)	Language and education; official policies	Rickford 1999: “Using the vernacular to teach the standard” Assignment due: Homework 5
Week 16	12/9 (W)	Education continued, class wrap up	
Final paper due Friday, December 14 by midnight sharp. No final exam! Enjoy winter break!			