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ENGL402 Syllabus

ENGL402 Wordplay: A Biography of the English Language

Length of Course: 8 Weeks

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description

Mysterious ancient runes carved into a sword hilt, fierce Germanic kingdoms, and Viking marauders—the history of our language is rooted in artifacts of breathtaking power and the spirit of warriors who came to the British Isles. Civilized by the French courts, seeking adventure along the Silk Road, and embracing democracy in the Americas, English would eventually reign in the world’s corridors of power. Now, a sophisticated tool in the hands of wordcrafters, English is a language of strength, beauty, and caprice. Game on.

Course Scope

Over the course of the semester, you will learn how English emerged as a distinct language from a mix of various Germanic forms with later influences from a wide variety of language groups. We will touch on the development of the lexicon, pronunciation, spelling, and grammar from Old English to the various dialects that span the globe today. Particular attention will be given to gender differentiation, social variation, and regional variation in preparation for the final essay.

Learning Objectives

Building on the university objectives, which include communication, lifelong learning, and academic integrity, by the end of the term, students should demonstrate the ability to do the following tasks:

- 1. Distinguish oral elements in Old English texts (in translation) as a means to understanding the oral roots of English Literature.
- 2. Explain why English was considered a low-prestige language and the process by which it gained credibility in England and on the world stage.
- 3. Assess how key historic figures, events, and artifacts impacted the development of the English language.
- 4. Differentiate between syntax and vocabulary in Standard English, and that in older forms of English and world dialects.
- 5. Apply theories in social variation, gender differentiation, and geographical variation to the linguistic analysis of texts in various genres and from various time periods in the history of our language.

Assessment Components

| Grade Instrument | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|
|------------------|------------|

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|--|-------------|
| 5 Forums at 4% each | 20% |
| 8 Quizzes at 5.5% each 1 Quiz @ 11% | 55% |
| 1 Essay (6-8 pages) | 15% |
| Take-Home Exam | 10% |
| Total | 100% |

Course Materials

The lessons in this course are substantive, and reviewing the lessons will be an integral part of this course.

Short Readings: "The Battle of Brunanburh" from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in [modern translation](#) and [Tennyson's version](#):

URL: <http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/litresources/brun/brun2.html#modtext>

URL: <http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/litresources/brun/brun3.html#tennyson>

Website: Domesday Book National Archives

URL: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/>

Short Readings: Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Franklin's Tale" in Middle English and Modern English

URL: <https://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/teachslf/frkt-par.htm>

Video: Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Franklin's Tale" in Middle English

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8fgbzf8NtQ>

Short Readings: Queen Elizabeth I's "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury"

URL: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1588elizabeth.asp>

Short Readings: William Shakespeare's "St Crispin Day Speech" from *King Henry V*

URL: <http://poetry.about.com/library/weekly/blshakespearewar.htm>

Website: IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive

URL: <http://www.dialectsarchive.com/dialects-accents>

Short Readings: Thomas Wolfe's "Only the Dead Know Brooklyn"

URL: <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1935/06/15/only-the-dead-know-brooklyn>

Short Readings: Ross, Alan S.C. "[Linguistic Class-Indicators in Present-day English](#)." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* vol. 55, 1954, pp. 20 -56.

Additional Course Materials

Website: Etymological Dictionary

URL: <http://www.etymonline.com/>

Website: Dictionary

URL: <http://oxforddictionaries.com/>

Sounds of the International Phonetic Alphabet

URL: <http://web.uvic.ca/ling/resources/ipa/charts/IPAlab/IPAlab.htm>

Citation and Reference Style

All work should be submitted in MLA format (8th Edition), which includes using parenthetical citations for quoted and paraphrased information. You will predominantly use the lessons, and should cite the lesson title in your parenthetical citation. This is how you would cite the first lesson: ("Our Heroic Roots"). For poetry, we cite the line numbers. (See the [Online Library](#))

Late Policy

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

Please note that quizzes will close automatically at 11:30 pm ET on the due date. I would strongly encourage you to give yourself plenty of time to work on them and post your responses before the quizzes close each week.

Work posted or submitted after the assignment due date will be reduced by 10% of the potential total score possible for each day late up to a total of five days, including forum posts/replies and assignments. Beginning on the sixth day late through the end of the course, late work, including forum posts/replies and assignments, will be accepted with a grade reduction of 50% of the potential total score earned.

Disability Accommodation

Students are encouraged email dsa@apus.edu to discuss potential academic accommodations and begin the review process.

Week by Week Review of Readings and Assignments

Week 1 – Our Heroic Roots

Readings and Resources:

None

Activities and Assessments:

WK 1 Discussion Forum – Introductions

WK 1 Discussion Forum – Post Book Choice for Essay

Week 1 Quiz – Tribal Roots of English – Multiple Choice

Week 2 – Old English

Readings and Resources:

Short Readings: "The Battle of Brunanburh" from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in [modern translation](#) and [Tennyson's version](#):

URL: <http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/litresources/brun/brun2.html#modtext>

URL: <http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/litresources/brun/brun3.html#tennyson>

Activities and Assessments:

Week 2 Quiz – Old English – Written Response

Week 3 – Middle English

Readings and Resources:

Domesday Book National Archives

URL: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/>

Short Readings: Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Franklin's Tale" in Middle English and Modern English

URL: <http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/teachslf/frkt-par.htm>

When you quote from the tale, retype rather than cutting and pasting, and be sure to cite line numbers.

Activities and Assessments:

WK 3 Discussion Forum – How We Speak

Week 3 Quiz – Middle English – Multiple Choice

Week 3 2nd Quiz – Middle English – Written Response

Week 4 – Early Modern English

Readings and Resources:

Short Readings: Queen Elizabeth's "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury"

URL: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1588elizabeth.asp>

Short Readings: William Shakespeare's "St Crispin Day Speech" from *King Henry V*

URL: <http://poetry.about.com/library/weekly/blshakespearewar.htm>

Sounds of the International Phonetic Alphabet

URL: <http://web.uvic.ca/ling/resources/ipa/charts/IPA1ab/IPA1ab.htm>

Activities and Assessments:

WK 4 Discussion – Language and Linguistics (Optional and Ungraded)

Week 4 Quiz – Early Modern English – Multiple Choice

Week 4 2nd Quiz – Early Modern English – Written Response

Week 5 – Modern English

Readings and Resources:

None

Activities and Assessments:

Week 5 Quiz – Modern English – Written Response

Week 6 – World Dialects of English

Readings and Resources:

Website: IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive

URL: <http://www.dialectsarchive.com/dialects-accents>

Short Readings: Thomas Wolfe's "Only the Dead Know Brooklyn" *New Yorker*, June 15, 1935.

URL: <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1935/06/15/only-the-dead-know-brooklyn>

Activities and Assessments:

WK 6 Discussion – Social Variation

Week 6 Quiz – Regional Variation – Written Response

Week 7 – Variations Across Society

Readings and Resources:

Short Readings: Ross, Alan S.C. "[Linguistic Class-Indicators in Present-day English](#)." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* vol. 55, 1954, pp. 20 -56.

Activities and Assessments:

WK 7 Discussion – Introduction and Thesis Statement

Week 7 Quiz – Variations Across Society – Written Response

Week 8: Apply your Knowledge

Readings and Resources:

Reading:

Review your notes, class lectures, forum posts, and your novel.

Make sure that the sources you use for your Take-Home Exam are scholarly, reliable sources.

Don't forget that you can also find general resources on the program guide. If you would like additional help with your research projects, or with learning how to use library resources, email the [library](#).

Activities and Assessments:

WK 8 Discussion – Bringing it All Together

Week 8 – Final Essay

Week 8 – Take-Home Exam