

LING 2371-001: Language in Multicultural USA

Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:20 p.m.

Trimble Hall 119

Instructor: Darcey Browning

Office: Trimble Hall 217E

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.; by appointment

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Prerequisites: A desire (or need) to learn about language diversity in America.

Description of Course Content: This multiculturalism course examines the relationship of language in the U.S.A. to race, ethnicity, class, religion and gender. Topics covered include:

- Race: African American English ('Ebonics'), Native American languages, Asian Americans;
- Ethnicity: European immigrant language communities, Hispanic Americans, Cajuns, 'Whites';
- Class: regional dialects, Jocks and Burnouts;
- Religion: Jewish languages, Pennsylvania German, and West Texas and religion;
- Gender: "women's language", masculinity, gay and lesbian speech (aka 'Queer Linguistics')
- American Sign Language and the Deaf Community: Deaf culture and language

Learning Goals / Objectives: Students who successfully complete LING 2371 should be able to do the following:

- Develop awareness, appreciation and respect for the multitude of cultures in the U.S.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and terms used in analyzing language and social variation
- Differentiate between descriptive and prescriptive approaches and attitudes toward language
- Collect linguistic phenomena for description and analysis (conduct basic research)
- Reflect on different experiences of diversity and multiculturalism

Required Text: Language in the USA: Themes for the Twenty-first Century. Edited by Edward Finegan and John R. Rickford. 2004. Cambridge University Press.

Grading: The following is the grading scale used to determine the letter grade earned:

A 90-100%	B 80-89 %	C 70-79 %	D 60-69 %	F 59% or lower
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Additional note about grading: Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

Descriptions of Assignments, Examinations, and other graded materials

1. Attendance/Participation

10%

Daily attendance will be recorded; one earns full credit for attending that day by showing up on time, participating in the lecture and activities, and leaving only after being dismissed at the end of the hour. Late arrival/early departure will result in the student only earning **up to** half credit for that day. If you need to leave early for an emergency, please speak to me before class begins; students who leave without doing so may will be counted as absent. Students with no more than 3 absences will be positively rewarded for good attendance. Students who are within 2% of a higher grade and have 3 absences or fewer (**with all assignments turned in**) will automatically be bumped up to the higher grade. For example, if a student has an 88% (normally a B), has turned in all assignments and has 3 absences, his/her grade will be raised to a 90% (receiving an A).

2. Assignments

10%

There will be thirteen (13) assignments, worth 10 points each, throughout the semester.

These assignments are **due at the beginning of the class period**, and no late submissions will be allowed. See below for formatting.

Your goal for these assignments is to think critically about language and different dialects. These usually involve language that you may hear every day. Assignments must be original and the observations personal (information reported secondhand will not be accepted). Each assignment will consist of two parts: Notes and Essay.

- The **notes** section will be different for each assignment, but following instructions will be essential. For this section, your notes need not be typed, nor in essay format.
- The **essay** portion will be your formal write-up on the ideas that you want to present as your answer. In this section, be sure to use concrete examples, and make some generalizations or predictions concerning your observation. As a formal write up, you must have this section with an original title, your header, and cohesive essay style structure. In this section, you must also have at least 400 words or more on the topic (failure to do so will result in your earning a zero for that individual assignment).

Note: There are no makeup assignments in this class, so late arrival or absence on the due date of an assignment will result in a zero.

3. Quizzes

5%

Throughout the semester, there will periodically be quizzes on the material. It could potentially occur at the end of class covering ideas discussed in that day's lecture. It could also potentially occur at the very beginning of class and cover the reading assignment or the material covered the last class period. There are no makeup quizzes in this class.

4. Midterm Exams

(2 x 20%) 40%

There will be two (2) midterm exams. The exam format will be announced one class period prior to each test; formats may change from one exam to the next. (Please see below for information about exam make-ups.)

5. Final Exam

25%

There will be an accumulative final exam on May 6, from 2:00-4:30 PM. The exam format will be announced on the last day of classes. The formats may change from one exam to the next. (Please see below for information about exam make-ups.)

6. Final Project

10%

For your final project, you will be researching **a dialect or language spoken in the United States**. You may choose any dialect or language that interests you, including ones that have already been discussed (or will be discussed) in class. If you choose a dialect or language covered in this class, you will be expected to go into more depth than what we have discussed. If you choose a dialect or language not covered in this class, you should be sure to research background information about the group that speaks it.

Your final project will consist of three parts:

1. Annotated Bibliography (due March 6)
2. Handout, with citations and sources (due April 22)
3. Presentation (April 22, 24, & 29)

Your final project should include the following information:

- BRIEF background of speech community
 - o History, geography, ethnicity, etc. that led to the formation of this speech community
 - o Who speaks it? When do they speak it? Where do they speak it? etc.
- BRIEF discussion of any non-linguistic features that are relevant
- Linguistic features:
 - o Phonological features: How is the pronunciation different from Standard English?
 - o Syntactic features: How is the sentence structure different from Standard English?
 - o Morphological features: How are words formed differently than Standard English?
 - o Lexical features: How is the vocabulary different from Standard English?
 - o Pragmatic features: How are things like politeness, respect, speech acts accomplished differently from Standard English?

You do not have to include ALL linguistic features in your project. However, you must include at least 2 types of linguistic features. Be sure to give examples with REAL language. In other words, don't just talk about the fact that the dialect/language is different from English. Give language examples to support your claim.

Your Final Project will be presented to the class on April 22, 24, and 29. You may choose to present your project as you see fit, such as PowerPoint, conference-style poster, video, etc. You must have a handout. You must cite your sources & include them in your final presentation. See assignment sheet for details and expectations.

An Annotated Bibliography on the sources you are using for the final project is due March 6. See assignment sheet for details.

Librarian to Contact: Our librarian for linguistics, Jody Bailey, is your friend. She can help you find the best scholarly, authoritative materials you'll need for your research project. Find her at Room 312, Central Library, or contact her at jbailey@uta.edu or 817.272.7516.

Course Policies

Attendance.

Class attendance is **required**. Students are responsible for all information and assignments given out in class during the semester. Missing class does not absolve a student of this responsibility. Students should try to exchange email or telephone information with several classmates to have a resource in case of an absence. Failure to hear back on a request for information does not absolve a student from his or her responsibility for assignments or quizzes. Excused absences include official university activities, military service, and/or religious holidays. Students must inform the instructor in writing at least one week in advance of an excused absence.

Exams.

If you miss an exam, you will be allowed to take a make-up only if you can provide written documentation of an extreme and reasonably unforeseeable circumstance (e.g. sudden serious illness, major family crisis, etc.). Should you find yourself in such a predicament, you must contact the instructor by e-mail before 8:00 PM of the exam date to request a make-up. Students who miss an exam but do not notify the instructor as specified herein will receive a grade of zero (0%). Make up exams may not be in the same format as the original exam.

Extra Credit work.

There will be various extra credit opportunities throughout the semester.

Make-up assignments and quizzes.

There are **no** make up quizzes or assignments allowed.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study.

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 6-7 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

Classroom behavior.

Class sessions require your full attention. All electronic devices, including (but not limited to) cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, laptops, and other electronic devices should be turned off and put away when entering the classroom; all earpieces should be removed. Store homework from other classes, newspapers, crosswords, magazines, bulky bags, and other distractions so that you can concentrate on the readings and discussions each day. Note: I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom if you are being disruptive.

According to Student Conduct and Discipline, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks" (UTA Handbook or Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202). Students who do not respect the guidelines listed above or who disrupt other students' learning may be asked to leave class and/or referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

And a further note on civility in the classroom: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class. Appropriate student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the telephone) creates a better environment for learning and teaching.

Because this class involves topics of multiculturalism and diversity, the professor requests that students choose their language with caution. It is very easy to become emotional in discussing these topics. Do not call names, use an abusive tone, call someone stupid or otherwise insult another person. Slurs or epithets in particular should be avoided whenever possible. Linguistic behavior is one way that members of different social groups express attitudes; be aware of this at all times in personal conduct. Disruptive or abusive behavior will not be tolerated.

Blackboard.

This course will utilize Blackboard this semester. Handouts and other materials will be available via Blackboard, and students will also be using it to submit assignments. Once this course becomes available to students, it can be accessed by logging into the Blackboard website: <http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/>. Within the first week of class look for an email from your instructor letting you know that you can now access this class on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are able to access Blackboard.

Electronic Communication Policy.

All students must have access to a computer with internet capabilities. Students should check email daily for course information and updates. All communication will take place either through MyMav and/or BlackBoard.

I check my email periodically during the school week and occasionally on the weekend. I do not monitor my email 24 hours a day; however, I do try to respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them. If you don't have a response from me by email within 24 hours of sending it, please come see me in class or resend your email as there may be a chance it was lost in cyberspace. [Also, please make sure that you use your MavMail address—not your hotmail, gmail, yahoo, etc. addresses—when emailing me.]

The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

Important Academic and Administrative Policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364. As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Safe Assign: By taking this course, students agree that all assignments are subject to submission to Safe Assign, an online plagiarism prevention and detection service provided through Bb. Specifically, this service compares the student's paper with Internet web pages, articles in databases, and all papers previously submitted. In cases of detected plagiarism, the paper and supporting evidence will be handled in compliance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall

not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Auditors: The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. However, with instructor permission, Department of Linguistics and TESOL faculty, staff, and students enrolled in a linguistics/TESOL program may be able to sit in on a course. These courses cannot be used to satisfy any degree or program requirements/electives, nor will any credit (including retroactive credit) be granted.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, [which is located \[\]](#). When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

Syllabus and Schedule Changes.

Instructors try to make their syllabuses as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester they may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. Instructors reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. Students will be informed of any changes in writing.

PROJECTED COURSE SCHEDULE

It is my intention to stick to the schedule found below as much as possible; however, as the instructor I reserve the right to adjust it at any time.

	Class Topic	Assignments and Readings Due
Week 1		
1/14	Course Overview	Download Syllabus from Blackboard or research profile.
1/16	Introduction to Linguistics	
Week 2		
1/21	Standard and Non-standard Language	Read: Chapter 15 (Language ideology and language prejudice) Due: Assignment 1
1/23	Social Class	Read: Chapter 4 (Social varieties of American English)
Week 3		
1/28	Adolescent language	Read: Chapter 19 (Adolescent language) Due: Assignment 2
2/30	Gender and language	Read: Chapter 22 (Language, gender, and sexuality)
Week 4		
2/4	LGBT language	Read: TBA Due: Assignment 3
2/6	American Sign Language (ASL) & the Deaf	Read: Chapter 12 (American Sign Language)
Week 5		
2/11	Review	Bring in questions Due: Assignment 4
2/13	Exam 1	Study all material covered up until this point
Week 6		
2/18	Regional Dialects	Read: Chapter 3 (Regional dialects) and 26 (Language attitudes to speech) Due: Assignment 5
2/20	English in Texas	
Week 7		
2/25	English in Texas	Due: Assignment 6
2/27	Attend UTASCILT	
Week 8		
3/4	Cajuns	Read: Chapters 7 (Multilingualism and non-English mother tongues) and 14 (Linguistic diversity and English language acquisition) Due: Assignment 7
3/6	Cajuns, continued PA German, Jewish Americans	Annotated Bibliography for Final Project due
3/11 & 3/13	SPRING BREAK!!!	

Week 9		
3/18	African Americans and language	Read: Chapters 5 (African American English), 16 (Ebonics and its controversy), and 21 (Hip Hop Nation Language) Due: Assignment 8
3/20	African Americans and language	
Week 10		
3/25	Review	Bring in questions Due: Assignment 9
3/27	Exam 2	Study all material covered up until this point
Week 11		
4/1	Latinos & language	Read: Chapter 10 (Spanish in the Northeast) & Chapter 11 (Spanish in the Southwest) Due: Assignment 10
4/3	Asian Americans	Read: Chapter 13 (Asian American voices: language in the Asian American community)
Week 12		
4/8	Creoles Indigenous Languages	Read: Chapter 8 (Creole languages: forging new identities) & Chapter 9 (Native American languages) Due: Assignment 11
4/10	Indigenous Languages	Review: Chapter 9 (Native American languages)
Week 13		
4/15	White	Due: Assignment 12
4/17	Digitally mediated language	
Week 14		
4/22	Final Projects	Handout due, on Bb.
4/24	Final Projects	
Week 15		
4/29	Final Projects	
5/2	Review	Due: Assignment 13
Final Exam	Tuesday, May 6, 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.	

Other dates: January 29th - Census date;
March 28th - Last day to drop

Overview of Grade Components	Weighted Percentage	Dates
Exam 1	20%	February 13
Exam 2	20%	March 27
Exam 3 (Final Exam)	25%	May 6
Assignments	10%	See calendar above for dates
Final Project	10%	April 22, 24, 29
Quizzes	5%	TBA
Participation	10%	daily