

322: The structure and meaning of words

GO TO: <http://webCT.arizona.edu> for assignments, reading material, grades and information.

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(also starring: T.A. Xu Xu

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Class:

Where: SSCI 206

When: Tues/Thurs 12:30-1:15

Web Page: <http://w3.arizona.edu/~ling/hh/322> (actually all new material will be on WebCT)

Prerequisites: There is no prerequisite for this class, except that you need to have an open-minded attitude and a willingness to think about a topic that may at first appear simplistically familiar to you (your knowledge of words) in new ways. A knowledge of the linguistic approach to the study of language (such as the material covered in INDV101 or LING201) is helpful but not necessary.

Goals: In this course, you will become familiar with the physical properties (phonology and morphology), meaning (lexical semantics) and history (etymology) of English words, as well as how words are learned (acquisition). These areas will be addressed from a linguistic perspective, and should be of interest to any word hound, poet, linguist, lexicographer, or future teacher of English.

Required books: A good English dictionary (at least 100,000 entries)

Required Reading: Textbook chapters, made available on the Web as the course progresses

Suggested Reading:

Pinker, Stephen. (1999). *Words and Rules*. New York: Basic Books

Katamba, Francis (1995). *English Words*.

Other items which will be made available as the class progresses.

Evaluation/Course Requirements:

20%: Word Diary ¹	Due: <u>Every</u> Tuesday
30%: 6 assignments ²	Due: The Thursday after they are handed out
5%: Class participation ³	
20%: Short (3-5 page) paper ⁴	Due: The last day of class
10%: Midterm	Thursday, March 6th
15%: Final	Finals week

¹ Each week, you will keep your eyes and ears open for new Words, in the readings, on the radio or TV, in other courses, wherever. When you hear a Word you don't know, or don't know very well, or find interesting for some reason, write it down in your Word Diary and look it up. If you can't find it in your dictionary, go to the library, or go online to look it up. Write down its definition, and, just like in grade school, make up a sentence using the word. (You'll also be asked to write down where you saw or heard it). You need to find two new words each week (although more is also fine, less is not). On Tuesdays, you will give your Word Diaries to Xu Xu, who will check off your two words and give you credit. As you probably suspect, this will be a very easy part of your grade to receive full credit on. See the Word Diary handout for format.

² Assignments will be handed out on Thursday and will be due the following Thursday. No late work will be accepted.

³ This is evaluated both with respect to attendance and participation in class discussion. Both of these are important. I will note each absence in my records. As for class discussion, please see the handout on Rules.

⁴ More details on this as the semester progresses. Basically, your paper will consist of a well-structured piece of writing that focusses on telling me everything there is to know about one of the words in your Word Diary.