

Ling/Engl 322 Syllabus

The Structure and Meaning of Words

Instructor: Prof. Heidi Harley

Teaching Assistant: Catherine Huang

When: Tues/Thurs 5-6:15

Where: Chavez (Economics) 110

Texts:

- *English Words: A Linguistic Introduction*, by Heidi Harley. Wiley-Blackwell.
- *A good English dictionary*, with at least 100,000 entries, and etymological detail. The OED, accessible online through the UA's library's website, is sufficient.
- Materials on D2L site

Course Description: In this course, you will become familiar with the formal 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. It should be of interest to any word hound, poet, linguist, lexicographer or future teacher of English.

Course Objectives: Successful students will by the end of the semester be able to:

- Use and correctly explain the International Phonetic Alphabet as it relates to English.
- Understand some of the basic phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of English words.
- Explain some of the ways in which English words are structurally different from words in other, unrelated languages.
- Know the basics of the history of English, especially as it relates to the discrepancies between spelling and pronunciation of words, their morphological structures, and the kinds of shifts in meaning they have undergone through the years.
- Impress your family and friends with your erudition about words, and English, and English words.
- Write a nonsense poem, create puns, come up with 'Tom Swifties' and other kinds of word-play that every competent speaker of English should be able to use on a regular basis!

Grading: Grades are earned by a simple accumulation of points. Points are earned by successfully completing assignments, taking exams, and participating in class activities, as follows:

10 homeworks: 600 points

Word diaries: 100 points

Paper assignment: 300 points

Total: 1000 points

900-1000 = A; 800-899=B;

700-799=C, 600-699=D

Requirements: Successful students will attend class regularly, and will complete all assignments and submit them on time, in the proper format, following all assignment instruction sheets. Students who wish to earn an 'A' must demonstrate superior mastery of course concepts throughout their work this semester. Students who do not demonstrate comprehensive understanding of course concepts should not expect to earn a passing grade. Students who violate our code of conduct, or the code of academic integrity, or any other course policies will not earn a passing grade in this course.

- Word Diaries (100 points, due every Friday)
During the semester, you will create a word diary, and upload two new entries to it every week except the first and last weeks of semester. You will keep your eyes and ears open for new (to you) and/or interesting (to you) words every week. Your job in your word diary is to list the word, enter its pronunciation in IPA (after we have provided you basic instruction in the IPA), provide its dictionary definition, provide the context in which you found it (e.g. a sentence from a newspaper, a line from a song or a conversation), and briefly describe what made you notice this word — what was interesting to you about it. 12 of the 13 word diary entries will count toward your final grade, worth 83.33 points each. **One word diary score will be dropped from final grade calculations.**
- Biweekly Homeworks (600 points)
You will be assigned 6 (nearly) biweekly homework assignments this semester, each scored out of 120 points. Each of the homeworks will include a d2l quiz component worth 60 points, and a hard copy component worth 60 points. The d2l quiz component of each homework will cover required readings and lecture, while the hard copy component will involve analysis of some kind of creative language use or wordplay. **The homework with the lowest score at the end of the term will be dropped from final grade calculations.**
- Squib (300 points (100 for draft, 200 for final))
You will write a short paper (4-5 pages), based on a single English word. You will expand that homework into a discussion of the relevant course concepts and you bring scholarly research to bear on the topic. You will hand in a draft of your squib (worth 100 points) on **Thursday, March 29**, and a revised final version, worth 200 points, on **Tuesday, May 1**. You may use any recognized referencing and citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc), as long as you use it correctly and consistently.

Testing out of the Phonetics Lectures: Students who have already mastered the International Phonetic Alphabet, and who understand the basics of articulatory phonetics (perhaps because they have taken LING201, 314 or similar courses) may test out of the January 17, 19 and 24 lectures by taking a brief phonetics quiz online before 5pm tomorrow.

Students excused from phonetics classes will complete a short phonetics enrichment assignment instead of attending class on those days.