

367 SAMPLE SYLLABUS

English 367.04

WRITING AND INTERROGATING STANDARD WRITTEN AMERICAN ENGLISH

The Ohio State University
Winter 2004

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Office hours:
Wed. 2:30-4
and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a sociolinguistic approach to studying writing. What ideas do we have about good writing, and where do these ideas come from? What is Standard Written American English (SWAE), where does it come from, how does it relate to other varieties of American English? At the same time that we will be learning the mechanics of SWAE, we will also be thinking about connections between language and various forms of social, political, and economic life. This course will enable you to develop both the writing skills and the sociolinguistic knowledge needed to make your own decisions about what kind of writing you want to do in and outside of the university.

Participation and Attendance

The learning you do in this class is meant to be an active process. You will engage the material through hands-on writing and analysis assignments, as well as participating in group discussions where you will be sharing ideas with your fellow classmates. There will be a fair amount of collaborative writing in this class, in order to prepare you for the collaborative writing projects that you are likely to encounter in any job involving writing.

Because participation is a critical element of this class, and because you have to be present in order to participate, attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of each class. **You will be allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. After that, for each absence one point will be deducted from your final grade. If you come to class after attendance is taken, you will receive a late mark; two lates equal one absence.**

IN KEEPING WITH ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICY, ANYONE WITH 5 OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES (including the two free ones) WILL FAIL THE CLASS.

Use your free absences for when you are sick. Missing class because you have the flu does not count as an excused absence; missing class because you're having your appendix out does.

If you need to be absent for legitimate reasons, notify me **in advance**. Absences will be excused after the fact only with written documentation from a doctor, court, clergy, or other appropriate authority. **Extensions on assignments will only be given in extreme circumstances, and only in advance and with proper documentation.**

Come to class on time and prepared to discuss assigned readings or other homework. Class meetings will start promptly at 3:30; any announcements about readings, schedule changes, etc., will be made at that time. This means that, if you can't avoid coming late, you are responsible for finding out what you missed at the beginning of class. Likewise, if you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and any handouts from a fellow student (not from me).

reading, but I do expect you to *do* all the reading, to look up in a decent dictionary any words you don't know (Webster's 3rd and the Oxford English Dictionary are good ones), and to come to class prepared to ask questions about the material. We'll work through the difficult parts of the readings in class, so don't stress if it seems hard at first. If you stick with it, you're sure to be rewarded with an enriched understanding and appreciation of the language you use and are surrounded by.

Course Schedule

Language Varieties

- 1/6 Introduction to the class
- 1/8 Electronic Reserves (ER): Students' Rights to their Own Language
Assignment: ask 5 different people what the differences are between written and spoken English. Bring in two copies of their responses.
- 1/13 ER: Smitherman, CCCC and Students' Right to their Own Language
Assignment: Summary of Smitherman and critical response
- 1/15 Milroy & Milroy ch.1, ch.2

Spoken and Written Norms

- 1/20 Milroy & Milroy, ch.3, ch.4
Assignment: choose 1 chapter, identify main points/thesis statements, evidence and argumentation structure
- 1/22 John Baugh Lecture, 7:30 – No 3:30 class

Standard English and Writing in the University

- 1/27 ER: Bartholomae, *Inventing the University*
ER: Elbow, *Reflections on Academic Discourse*
- 1/29 **Assignment:** ESSAY #1 on language variation and academic writing
We will be reading a selection of essays in class and workshopping them, so be prepared to share your work.

Communicative Competence and Language Attitudes

- 2/3 Milroy and Milroy ch.5, ch.6
- 2/5 Bonfiglio 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

Language and Race

- 2/10 Bonfiglio 2.5, 2.6, 2.7
- 2/12 Bonfiglio ch.3, Conclusion, Afterward
- 2/17 ER: Schmidt, *Racialization and Language Policy*
ER: Zentella, *The Hispanophobia of the Official English Movement in the US*
- 2/19 Walt Wolfram lecture, 7:30 – No 3:30 class **Use the time scheduled for class to meet with your group and develop ideas for your final project; prospectus is due on Tuesday.**
- 2/24 **Assignment:** ESSAY #2: Position paper to state legislature on bilingual education and developing a state language policy.
Assignment: 1-page prospectus for group final project