

# History & Structure of the English Language

## ENGL 4360 (CRN 25338) — Spring 2018

### MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m. in Irby 201

**Professor:** Dr. Katherine E.C. Willis  
**Office:** Irby 317D  
**Office hours:** MWF 10-11 am and 12-1 pm  
W 2-3 pm  
Other times by appt only  
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## COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

The English language has a long and rich history, spanning from the Old English period to the present day. During those centuries, it has undergone a great deal of change itself and also played a role in changing speech around the world. For example, the original language of *Beowulf* is unreadable to most native English speakers today; it looks more like something from Scandinavia than from *The New York Times*.

In this class, we will trace out the history of the English language from the very beginning to the present day. We will try to understand not just what the changes were but *why* they happened. By the end of the semester, you will be able to start your own stories with *Hwæt!* and explain why Shakespeare is most definitely *not* written in “ye olde English.” Our methods will be more practical than theoretical as we dive in head-first to the primary texts themselves to learn our own language from its roots.

### Objectives: By the end of the course, you will understand:

- that for a language to be alive, it must be changing through everyday use by ordinary people
- the purpose and scope of historical linguistics
- how the English language relates to other languages in the Indo-European family
- the major periods in the history of the English language
- the major historical events that contributed to its development
- the key shifts in structure that took place over its development
- the role English plays in the modern world and the changes it is currently undergoing
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### Objectives: By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- comfortably read Old English (with a trot), Middle English, and Early Modern English
- pronounce the original texts with some degree of facility
- appreciate the complexities and subtleties of translation
- evaluate translations of Old and Middle English texts
- evaluate various prescriptive approaches to language use
- work with dictionaries for research purposes

# COURSE SCHEDULE

- Readings and assignments must be completed before the start of class on the day on which they are listed.
- Graded work that is due is identified in boldface below.
- I reserve the right to change the schedule below if it will help the class. I will announce any changes in class and via email.

- Jan. 12 Syllabus, introductions, and first day matters.
- Jan. 15 *Martin Luther King, Jr. day — no classes*
- Jan. 17 Intro to historical linguistics and how languages change. Overview of the Indo-European language family. Bring printout of IE FAMILY TREE.
- Jan. 19 The place of English in the Indo-European language family. Bring printout of IE PUZZLE (we will complete together in class for credit).
- Jan. 22 Overview of the history of the English language and its major periods. Bring printouts of MAP SET 1 and TIMELINE OF MAJOR DATES AND EVENTS.
- Jan. 24 Old English pronunciation. Bring printout of OE PRONUNCIATION GUIDE.
- Jan. 26 Old English declension. Bring printout of OE NOMINAL PARADIGMS.
- Jan. 29 Old English conjugation. Bring printout of OE WEAK VERB PARADIGMS.
- Jan. 31 Old English conjugation. Bring printout of OE STRONG VERB PARADIGMS
- Feb. 2 Old English parsing practice. Bring all OE grammar handouts and printout of OE GRAMMAR DRILL.
- Feb. 5 Old English parsing practice, cont. Bring all OE grammar handouts and printout of OE GRAMMAR DRILL.
- Feb. 7 Bring all OE grammar handouts as well as printouts of PSALM 23 PACKET and **PSALM 23 OE PARSING CHART**.
- Feb. 9 OE grammar, continued. Bring all materials from last class again.
- Feb. 12 EXAM 1**
- Feb. 14 *Beowulf* ll. 710-738. Bring all OE grammar handouts, BEOWULF OE, BEOWULF TROT. **DUE: PARSING CHART B710-738.**
- Feb. 16 *Beowulf* ll. 739-769. Bring all OE grammar handouts, BEOWULF OE, BEOWULF TROT. **DUE: PARSING CHART B739-769.**
- Feb. 19 *Beowulf* ll. 770-808. Bring all OE grammar handouts, BEOWULF OE, BEOWULF TROT. **DUE: PARSING CHART B770-808.**

- Feb. 21 *Beowulf* ll. 809-836. Bring all OE grammar handouts, BEOWULF OE, BEOWULF TROT.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART B809-836.**
- Feb. 23 *Beowulf*, cont. Bring all relevant materials again.
- Feb. 26 *Beowulf*, cont. Bring all relevant materials again.
- Feb. 28 Translation theory. Read BEOWULF (TOLKIEN) and BEOWULF (HEANEY) and bring printouts. Come prepared to discuss your preference among the 3 translations and 1 specific reason why.
- March 2 Old English translation, continued.
- March 5 EXAM 2**
- March 7 Historical contexts for Middle English. Bring TIMELINE OF MAJOR DATES AND EVENTS (from earlier this semester) and printout of MAP SET 2.
- March 9 Changes between Old and Middle English. ME pronunciation. Bring PSALM 23 PACKET again.
- March 12 ME grammar.
- March 14 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* ll. 1709-1780.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART ST1709-1780.**
- March 16 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* ll. 1781-1893.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART ST1781-1983.**
- March 19-23 — no class — spring break**
- March 26 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* ll. 1894-2016.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART ST1894-2016**
- March 28 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* ll. 2089-2199.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART ST2089-2199**
- March 30 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* ll. 2200-2294.  
**DUE: PARSING CHART ST2200-2294**
- April 2 Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, continued.
- April 4 Dialects of ME.
- April 6 EXAM 3**
- April 9 Historical contexts for Early Modern English. Bring TIMELINE OF MAJOR DATES AND EVENTS (from earlier this semester).
- April 11 Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall* (1604) and Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755).

- April 13      The Oxford English Dictionary. Bring a laptop/tablet/smart phone and the ETYMOLOGY EXERCISE.
- April 16      Robert Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762).  
**DUE: WORKSHEET FOR EARLY MODERN PRESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR**
- April 18      "Preface" to Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).
- April 20      What is the future of the English language? Read, print, and bring to class THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH and MOVE OVER SHAKESPEARE.
- April 23      Review/catch-up day
- April 25      Study day

**Final Exam on Monday April 30 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

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**REQUIRED MATERIALS: You are *not* required to purchase/rent textbooks. However, you must use the following:**

Required through library reserve:

- *The Origins and Development of the English Language*, 7th edition, by John Algeo (ISBN 1133307272)
- *Workbook for Algeo/Pyle's The Origins and Development of the English Language*, by John Algeo (ISBN 0155070533)

Posted online:

- handouts/charts/maps/etc. printed out and brought to class

This means two things:

1. You **must** plan ahead to access the library reserve books in order to complete readings and assignments on time. For the readings in *The Origins and Development of the English Language* you should take active, detailed notes. For the assignments from the Workbook, you should either copy the pages or scan and print them. Most smartphones can be used as a scanner with free or cheap apps (such as TurboScan). You are responsible for managing your access to these reserves on time throughout the semester.
2. You **must** have daily access to a computer with internet and printing. Printing out and bringing with you the appropriate materials is essential to your success in this course. Without the materials, you will struggle to track with class and may fall behind in the semester. Treat the printouts as your textbook. Keep up with the list of required items day by day in the course schedule. I recommend keeping everything in a folder as we go and bringing all of it every day.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

The total course grade will be calculated with a weighted system. Below is an overview of the grade components for this course and the weight assigned to each. The descriptions for each category are only a summary; any further requirements/information about grading will be distributed separately in assignment sheets. Be sure to save all of your work during the semester.

- 10%**     **Participation & Preparation:** Participation means being prepared (you read the material and brought it with you), being active, and being vocal on a regular basis. Preparation means you've read any assigned materials, brought the appropriate materials to class, completed any assignments, and (if applicable) prepared a rough translation of the text for the day. See the rubric on available on Blackboard for more details.
- 15%**     **Parsing charts:** To parse a word or phrase is to break down each dimension of its grammatical form. Each chart will ask you to parse particular nouns, pronouns, and/or verbs from a selected reading. The charts will be graded on completion, and you are responsible for correcting your work. We will complete one to two parsing charts together as a class before you submit your work. Parsing charts must be completed individually (no group/partner work).
- 10%**     **Exercises:** Some of the exercises will be assigned from the *Workbook for Algeo/Pyle's The Origins and Development of the English Language*. Other exercises will be distributed through Blackboard or in class as handouts. The exercises are meant to help you learn and apply the concepts. Exercises will be graded on completion and correctness.
- 15%**     **Exam 1:** Expect a combination of multiple choice, matching, true/false, short answer, and parsing. The exam may cover historical information (including dates), key terms and concepts, grammar knowledge, parsing ability, translation facility, and other topics covered in class. All exam content will be drawn from lectures, readings, materials posted online, and class activities.
- 15%**     **Exam 2:** Same format as exam 1.
- 15%**     **Exam 3:** Same format as exams 1 and 2.
- 20%**     **Final exam:** Same format as exams 1-3, but expect a cumulative portion.

## MY POLICIES FOR THIS COURSE

### EMAIL ETIQUETTE:

I will respond to your email within 12 hours (if you do not hear from me in that time window, contact me again). That means you should not email last minute concerns. In addition, I only respond to emails that follow basic etiquette. That includes the following:

1. Salutation line with my name
2. Decent grammar and spelling
3. Signature line with your name

### OFFICE HOURS:

My door is open for you during the office hours listed above, so you do not need an appointment to see me then. If you cannot make those times, however, just ask to set up an appointment.

### STUDENT CONDUCT:

You are solely responsible for your conduct. I expect you to conduct yourself professionally and courteously in the classroom and in my office. That includes engaging respectfully with the material, with me, and with your peers. If your behavior disrupts or negatively affects my ability to teach or the learning experience of other students, you may be asked to leave the classroom and/or the course.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Readings and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day on which they are listed. Some days may specify other materials you are required to bring. *Note: I reserve the right to change the schedule below if it will help the class. I will announce any changes in class and via email.*

### **GRADING POLICIES:**

- If you are unable to submit work on time due to an excused reason, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to document your reason and to make timely alternative arrangements. As the Student Handbook specifies in the section on Attendance, "Make-up examinations and assignments are required only for valid absences as determined by the faculty member. Students who miss an examination or assignment without a valid excuse may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment."
- **Excused reasons** include (but are not limited to): official university-sanctioned athletic or organizational events (requires appropriate documentation), severe illness, death of a family member, court appearances, jury duty. For such excused reasons, late work will be accepted for full credit. However, be aware that some in-class activities may not be possible to make up.
- **Unexcused reasons** include (but are not limited to): computer/printer malfunctions, traffic problems, family vacations/travel, or forgetfulness. For such unexcused reasons, I might accept late work for partial credit, but you must discuss it with me first. For example, after you discuss it with me, I might accept a late paper for a letter grade off per day late.
- *In all circumstances of unexcused reasons, acceptance of late work and the loss of credit is ultimately at my discretion on a case by case basis.*

### **ATTENDANCE AND DROP POLICY:**

- Participation is part of your course grade, but in a larger sense, all of our other assignments and activities will require you to build on what happens in class. In other words, irregular attendance will affect not just participation but will also hinder your ability to complete major assignments and activities.
- If you are absent or late for any reason, it is your responsibility to let me know in a timely manner, acquire notes from a classmate, and then come see me with questions and concerns.
- I reserve the right to drop students for non-attendance by the date specified in the UCA academic calendar.
- Your attendance at each class meeting throughout the semester is the foundation of your grade in this course. As the Attendance section of the Student Handbook explains, "A student's official program is regarded as his or her obligation to the institution, full performance of which requires regular and punctual class attendance and active participation. A student is responsible for coming to class prepared, completing any missed work, and knowing the dates and places of required course examinations."

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

*In all cases, it is your responsibility as a student to be familiar with all policies and requirements outlined in the Student Handbook. The Sexual Harassment Policy and the Academic Policies are particularly important. The policies below are ones that are most pertinent to our course.*

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board

Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:**

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Disability Resource Center, 450-3613.

**BUILDING EMERGENCY PLANS:**

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

**TITLE IX DISCLOSURE:**

If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs, and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on the specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. \*Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:**

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the thirteenth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button in the top right.