

LANGUAGE, THOUGHT, AND CULTURE

ANT 2063.001

FALL 2012

MWF 2:00 - 2:50 P.M.

BB 2.01.10

WILLIAM ROBERTSON | WILLIAM.ROBERTSON@UTSA.EDU

OFFICE: MH 4.03.10 | OFFICE HOURS: MF 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Course Description

This course engages the relationship between language, thought, and culture by drawing upon fundamental linguistic and anthropological concepts to situate the condition of language within the context of everyday life. We will explore language from local and global contexts and discuss topics that include the nature and characteristics of human and animal communication systems; historical and descriptive linguistics; and nonverbal communication systems. Additionally, this course will seek to explain how and why languages change over time, and how language relates to issues involving gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and political and economic power dynamics.

Core Curriculum

This course satisfies one of the core requirements (3 credit hours) in the World Society and Issues domain of the core curriculum. It also fulfills one of the core degree requirements for anthropology majors.



Course Overview

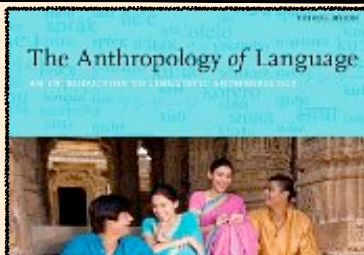
We will begin with a brief overview of linguistic anthropology and the relationship between language and culture. We will then examine theoretical linguistics and the structures of language systems before exploring these systems within various cultural contexts. The remaining coursework will consider language in its social and cultural contexts. This investigation will provide students with a basic understanding of historical and descriptive linguistics and the literature and concepts that inform the study of language from a sociocultural perspective.

Course Objectives

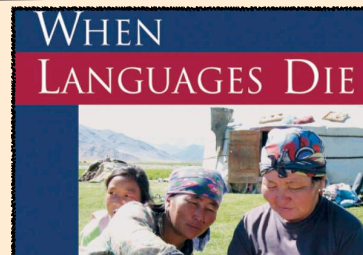
This course will provide students an opportunity to:

1. Articulate fundamental historical, descriptive, and social dimensions of language.
2. Identify the physiological and cultural conditions that make language possible.
3. Apply cross-cultural analysis to better understand the cultural dimensions of how language is used.
4. Discuss the interrelationship between language and culture.

Required Texts



*The Anthropology of Language:
An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*
Harriet Ottenheimer
Wadsworth Publishing, 2012. 3rd Edition.



*When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's
Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge*
K. David Harrison
Oxford University Press, 2008.

Articles will be made available on Blackboard. Please bring the texts to class on the days that we are discussing them. I may occasionally collect articles for extra credit points (see page two).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance/

Participation: 30%

3 Exams: 15% each
(45 % total)

Research Paper: 25%

Total: 100%

IMPORTANT:

Grading for this class is designed with a weighted scale based on attendance grades. **It is vital that you attend class to succeed in this course!**

NOTE:

Neither myself nor the Anthropology Department staff will report grades by telephone, fax, or e-mail.

Grading Scale

A+ = 97-100%

A = 93-96%

A- = 90-92%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C+ = 77-79%

C = 73-76%

C- = 70-72%

D+ = 67-69%

D = 63-66%

D- = 60-62%

F = 59% or lower

Your continued enrollment in this course is acknowledgement that you are aware of the course requirements.

COURSE READINGS (DUE DATES LISTED ON CALENDAR)

In order to leave no room for ambiguity about the course expectations, below is a very clear description of the reading load for the semester.

- Readings for this course follow **college-standard reading guidelines**. This means that required readings may consist of an *average* of **50 to 100 pages per week**.
- Reading is fundamental to success in this course. While a few classes will consist of mostly lecture, the majority of classes will require active participation in class discussion. This means that you should be fully prepared by having **completed the reading before coming to class**.
- I will attempt to make this course and the reading materials as interesting and insightful as possible, but I cannot do that alone. Active student participation is a key ingredient to making this course interesting and stimulating.
- Any readings that are not in the required texts will be provided via Blackboard at least one week before the reading is due.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION ("A&P")

Attendance will be taken randomly at the beginning of classes throughout the semester in the form of a reading quiz. You will need the pink PARSCORE quiz forms (#F-I4507-PAR-L) and a #2 pencil. Packets of PARSCOREs are available in the bookstore.

Students who arrive after the quiz is turned in will not receive credit.

Additionally, there will be in-class group discussions where students will divide into groups and answer some questions as a group. The answers will be turned in at the end of class and will be worth an attendance grade. **Be warned:** I reserve the right to both take attendance and do a group assignment in a single class, for two attendance grades in one class period.

I reserve the right to assign homework, which must be typed and turned in at the next class period, and you will be responsible for filling out a film guide for any films watched in class. Both homework and film guides count as A&P grades.

Up to **five zeros** may be dropped at the end of the semester; however, people who have five, four, three, two, one, or no zeros will receive all of the grades they earned as extra credit. For example, if we have 30 A&P grades at the end of the semester, it is possible to earn up to 300/250 (120%).

I will not share slides or lecture notes with students. It is your responsibility to obtain any missed class material from your peers.

EXAMS (DATES ON COURSE CALENDAR)

There will be **three non-cumulative exams** during the course. Study sheets will be made available at least one week prior to the exam. I urge you to study in small groups! Tests may consist of any combination of multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, short answers, and essay questions. You will need the long PARSCORE form (#X-I01864-PAR-L with 50 questions on each side) and a #2 pencil.

RESEARCH PAPER (DUE DATES LISTED ON COURSE CALENDAR)

The final paper is meant to engage students in the art of writing an **academic** paper. The final paper must be a *minimum* of five **full** pages and a *maximum* of ten full pages (12-point, Times New Roman, double-space, one-inch margins). Students should engage the ideas and themes of the course by writing on a specific topic related to the course. Students must submit a topic proposal **no later than week four**. If you need help or suggestions on any parts of the paper, come talk to me. The final paper will be graded for strength of argument, grammar, style, and formatting. A grading rubric will be made available via Blackboard. Specific guidelines will be provided and discussed during the first week of class.

EXTRA CREDIT

There are no individual extra credit opportunities in this course.

I reserve the right to assign course-wide extra credit assignments. In the event that this occurs, extra credit will be announced in class as well as on Blackboard.

*** I may choose to pick up articles that you've printed and brought to class that will count for 2 points extra credit points on the next exam. In order to receive credit, the article must be printed and contain substantial underlining/highlighting and marginalia (notations written in the margins of the text). **The marginalia must be relevant to the article.**

Course Policies

TECHNOLOGY

This course has a **no electronics** policy. All laptops, tablets, cell phones, and other similar electronic devices must be powered **OFF** or placed on SILENT (**NOT VIBRATE**). Students wishing to record audio of class lectures and discussions must get prior approval from the course instructor.

*If you have a situation that you need to keep your phone available, let me know **before** class begins.*

Students who are caught texting during class will be asked to leave class for the day. For each time afterwards that they are caught, they will be referred to Judicial Affairs for class disruption and will lose **two points from their final grade average for each infraction**.

BLACKBOARD

Blackboard is a tool for course-related communication. I use Blackboard to post readings, announcements, and grades. Students should check Blackboard regularly. The communication areas of Blackboard will remain closed for this course.

LATE WORK

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the beginning of class or they are late.

Attendance/Participation - Late work is not accepted for A&P grades.

Paper Components - For each calendar day (not class day) that the assignment is late, it will lose 10 points. After 5 days, you will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment.

Extra Credit - Any assigned extra credit must be turned in on the due date or you will not receive credit.

EXAM MAKE-UPS

There are no make-ups for the exams. If there is an emergency that causes you to miss an exam, you must contact me within four hours of the exam to discuss the problem. **You must have documentation of the emergency in order for me to consider a make-up exam.**

Students who miss class due to University-sanctioned travel will be allowed to make up missed work with the proper supporting documentation. Students who will miss class for the observance of a religious holy day must notify the instructor prior to absence.

Any make-up exams will **not** be the same as the one given in class. **It is completely my discretion whether or not I will accommodate student requests for exam make-ups.** If you miss the final exam due to a documented emergency and have contacted me within four hours, we can meet to discuss a grade of incomplete and make arrangements for completing the course.

DO NOT MISS THE EXAMS.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

DO NOT CHEAT OR PLAGIARIZE!

There is a **strict** zero-tolerance policy for scholastic dishonesty. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing work will be reported to the Department Chair and to Student Judicial Affairs for proper disciplinary action.

Scholastic dishonesty is defined by the University as including, but not limited to:

"cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

(<https://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html#sd>)

Scholastic dishonesty is harmful to yourself, your peers, and the University as a whole. **Do not engage in this reprehensible behavior!**

If you have any questions regarding how to be absolutely sure that you are avoiding plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who have registered with the Office of Disability Services and who may require additional support to facilitate their success in this course should get in touch with me *as soon as possible* to make arrangements and ensure compliance by the instructor, the University, and ODS.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students will strictly adhere to the University's Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policies (UTSA Handbook of Operating Procedures, Section 9.1).

We will be discussing topics and ideas in this course that are sensitive and deeply personal to many people. As anthropologically minded persons, we should strive to listen to others with an open mind. Hopefully we will all confront some of our biases during this course, and we should be able to discuss them freely and openly without fear of ridicule. I encourage all people to speak their minds in class, but do so with decorum and maturity.

I maintain an **extremely strict** zero-tolerance policy for any disruptive language or behavior, including but not limited to violent, belligerent, or insulting remarks; sexism; racism; homophobia; transphobia; ableism; anti-ethnic slurs; bigotry; and any other inflammatory language (spoken or written) founded on ignorance or hate. While I agree that you each have a right to your own views, you do not have the right to openly disrespect and/or intimidate people in this classroom. Any behavioral disruptions that interfere with the function of the classroom and the ability of students to learn will be reported to Judicial Affairs.

With this in mind, it is expected that all students will help maintain an open and respectful environment during class periods. In order to do this, please:

- Refrain from personal conversations.
- Be respectful during discussions--no personal attacks! If you disagree with someone's statement, explain why without attacking them personally.
- Wait until class is dismissed before packing up your belongings.

Any student who violates classroom behavior etiquette will be asked to leave class for the day and may be referred to Judicial Affairs. For every violation afterwards, students will lose **two points from their final grade point average**.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes will be announced in class and a revised syllabus will be posted on Blackboard.

The University of Texas at San Antonio

UTSA'S MISSION

The University of Texas at San Antonio is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through research and discovery, teaching and learning, community engagement and public service. As an institution of access and excellence, UTSA embraces multicultural traditions and serves as a center for intellectual and creative resources as well as a catalyst for socioeconomic development and the commercialization of intellectual property – for Texas, the nation and the world.

UTSA'S VISION

To be a premier public research university, providing access to educational excellence and preparing citizen leaders for the global environment.

UTSA'S CORE VALUES

We encourage an environment of dialogue and discovery, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration and innovation are fostered.



The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered.

As a Roadrunner,

I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;
- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;
- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and
- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!

COURSE CALENDAR

Ott. = Ottenheimer Text;

BB = Article on Blackboard;

KDH = Harrison Text

Week	Date	Topic	Assignments & Readings	
1	W: 8/29	Course Overview	None	
	F: 8/31	Research Paper Overview + What is Anthropology?	Ott. Ch. 1	
2	M: 9/3	LABOR DAY! NO CLASS!		
	W: 9/5	Linguistic Anthropology	BB:“On Alternating Sounds” (Franz Boas)	
	F: 9/7	Linguistic Anthropology	BB:“Shakespeare in the Bush” (Laura Bohannon)	
3	M: 9/10	Language & Culture	Ott. Ch. 2	
	W: 9/12	Language & Culture	Ott. Ch. 2	
	F: 9/14	Language & Culture	BB:“The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis: Worlds Shaped by Words” (David S. Thompson)	
4	M: 9/17	Language & Culture	BB:“Culture Blends” (Michael Agar) Ott. Ch. 10 (“Revealing Racist and Sexist Language” p. 337-342)	
	W: 9/19	Language & Culture	BB:“Why Katrina’s Victims Aren’t Refugees: Musings on a ‘Dirty’ Word” (Adeline Masquelier)	
	F: 9/21	Language & Culture	BB:“Why Katrina’s Victims Aren’t Refugees: Musings on a ‘Dirty’ Word” (Adeline Masquelier)	Paper Topic DUE!
5	M: 9/24	The Sounds of Language	Ott: Ch. 3	
	W: 9/26	The Sounds of Language	Ott: Ch. 3	
	F: 9/28	EXAM ONE		
6	M: 10/1	Nonverbal Communication	Ott: Ch. 5 (“Gestures and Nonverbal Communication” p. 130-149)	
	W: 10/3	Nonverbal Communication	BB:“Tā Moko: Culture, body modification, and the psychology of identity” (Ngahuia Te Awekotuku)	
	F: 10/5	Proxemics	BB:“Cowboy Proxemics” (Joseph V. Hickey and William E. Thompson)	
7	M: 10/8	Proxemics	BB:“The Edge and the Center” (Setha M. Low)	
	W: 10/10	Language in Action	Ott: Ch. 6	
	F: 10/12	Language in Action	Ott. Ch. 6	Paper Bibliography DUE!
8	M: 10/15	The Politics of Language	BB:“The English Language Amendment: A Case Study on Language and Politics” (Elliot L. Judd)	
	W: 10/17	Language & Power	BB:“Agency in Borderland Discourses: Examining Language Use in a Community Center with Black Queer Youth” (Mollie V. Blackburn)	
	F: 10/19	Language & Power	BB:“Agency in Borderland Discourses: Examining Language Use in a Community Center with Black Queer Youth” (Mollie V. Blackburn)	

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Week	Date	Topic	Assignments & Readings	
9	M: 10/22	Language and Gender	BB:“How to Build a Man” (Anne Fausto-Sterling)	
	W: 10/24	Language and Gender	BB:“The Egg and the Sperm” (Emily Martin)	
	F: 10/26	Language and Gender	BB:“Odd Girl Out:The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls” (Rachel Simmons)	
10	M: 10/29	Language and Sexuality	BB:“Who is Takatāpui? Māori Language, Sexuality, and Identity in Aotearoa/ New Zealand” (David A.B. Murray)	
	W: 10/31	Language and Sexuality	BB:“Representin’ in Cyberspace” (Carla E. Stokes)	
	F: 11/1	Language and Sexuality	BB:“Representin’ in Cyberspace” (Carla E. Stokes)	
11	M: 11/5	Catch up & Review	***PRINT AND BRING THE STUDY GUIDE TO CLASS***	
	W: 11/7	EXAM TWO		
	F: 11/9	How & When Language is Possible	Ott: Ch. 8	Paper Outline (with thesis) & Annotated Bibliography DUE!
12	M: 11/12	Sign Languages	Ott: Ch. 5 (“Sign Language” p. 114-129) BB:“Signing” (Leila Monaghan) BB:“Variation in Sign Languages” (Barbara LeMaster and Leila Monaghan)	
	W: 11/14	Deaf Culture	BB:“Signs of Their Times” (Richard Senghas and Leila Monaghan)	
	F: 11/16	Deaf Culture	BB:“Signs of Their Times” (Richard Senghas and Leila Monaghan)	
13	M: 11/19	Change and Choice	Ott: Ch. 9	
	W: 11/21	Change and Choice	Ott: Ch. 9	LAST CHANCE FOR ROUGH DRAFT!
	F: 11/23	Thanksgiving Break! (Begin Reading KDH!)		
14	M: 11/26	Endangered Languages	Ott. Ch. 10 + BB:“Endangered Languages” (LSA)	
	W: 11/28	Language Extinction	KDH: Preface & Ch. 1	
	F: 11/30	Language Extinction	KDH: Ch. 3	
15	M: 12/3	Language Extinction	KDH: Ch. 4	
	W: 12/5	Language Extinction	KDH: Ch. 5	
	F: 12/7	Language Extinction	KDH: Ch. 7	FINAL PAPER DRAFT DUE!

EXAM THREE: Friday, December 14 @ 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM