

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Courses submitted to the GSC between 2/1 and 4/30 if approved, will be effective the following Spring.

Courses submitted between 5/1 and 1/31 if approved, will be effective the following Fall.

(SUBMISSION VIA ADOBE.PDF FILES IS PREFERRED)

3/2/09							
ACADEMIC UNIT:	School	of Inter	national Le	etters and	Culture	es	
COURSE PROPOSED:	SLC 201	"Introd	uction to I	Language a	nd Lingu	uistics"	3.0
	(prefix)	(number)	(title)			•	er hours)
CONTACT PERSON:	Name: Da	an Devitt			Phon	7-009: e:	8
	Mail Code:	0202	E-Mail:	ddevitt@in	map3.asu.	edu	
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New Course

Course description: Examines the nature and diversity of world languages, linguistic structures and functions of language, language variation, pragmatics, and language acquisition.

Enrollment requirements: None

SLC 201

"Introduction to Language and Linguistics" Spring 2009

TTh 3:00PM - 4:15PM

Durham Languages & Literature 275

INSTRUCTOR: Dan Devitt

E-MAIL: ddevitt@imap3.asu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: MW 3:30 - 5:30,

OFFICE:

LL 649C

or by appointment

Course Description:

This course offers a broad overview of language and the social and psychological phenomena associated with its use. Our aim is to identify elements that are shared by all languages, as well as the range of devices and strategies that different languages use to perform the same function. We will examine the definitional characteristics of language and general aspects of its structure and organization. We will also delve into issues related to the use of language, including how language users construct conversations, why and how languages develop dialects, and how language is learned and organized in the brain.

This course is a requirement for all majors in the School of International Letters and Cultures.

Required Text:

Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics (10th Edition) by Department of Linguistics, the Ohio State University. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press.

The textbook is available at the ASU Bookstore.

Course Objectives:

Students in this course will:

- understand the definitional properties of language
- develop a critical awareness of explanations for language-related phenomena
- learn a vocabulary for talking about language and linguistic phenomena
- develop basic knowledge of procedures in linguistic analysis
- develop general academic skills in critical thinking, technological literacy and communication

Course Requirements:

The final grade in the course will be based on the student's performance in the following areas:

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Written Assignments	20%
Thematic quizzes	40%
Final Exam	20%

Attendance and Participation (10% each):

• Students are expected to come to class and to participate actively in the course. Therefore, this grade will be based on a general evaluation of students' participation in terms of (a) attendance and punctuality, and (b) class, group, and pair discussions.

Punctual attendance is required unless a student has a legitimate excuse (e.g., documentation of a medical or other type of emergency). Students who are absent or late are responsible for finding out what they have missed. Repeated unexcused absences or lateness will result in a significant deduction in the final total of points for attendance.

	Zero or one absence	10 points	
Students	Two absences	9 points	must come to class prepared to
critically	Three absences	8 points	engage in the material covered in the
assigned	Four absences	7 points	readings in small groups or with the
	Five absences	5 points	<u> </u>
	Six absences	3 points	•
	Seven or more absences	0 points	
class as a students sets, carry	Five absences Six absences	5 points 3 points	whole. Throughout the semester, will collaborate to solve problem out mini-projects and answer

discussion questions. For most major themes treated in the course, students will participate in a discussion on a topic related to the theme using the Discussion board function in Blackboard. Further guidelines will be distributed.

Written assignments (20%):

• Throughout the semester students will be expected to complete written assignments, which may take the form of responding to guiding questions from readings, applying new knowledge (e.g., problem-solving activities), making identifications or giving definitions, critically reviewing materials, writing essays or reflections on concepts discussed in class, and comparing/contrasting key concepts.

There are two main types of written assignments: exercises from the textbook and written projects. The exercises from Language Files listed in the course calendar are intended to expose you to data and concepts we discuss in class. Answers to these exercises should be written out and handed in. These assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The other assignment type is the written project. There will be three projects over the semester, and they will require you to collect and organize data and react to critical questions. Specific guidelines for each project will be made available on the dates indicated on the calendar. The projects will be evaluated on a five-point scale, based on effort (thoroughness of development of thoughts), completeness of assignment, evidence of critical thinking, organization, creativity, and use of academic English.

Students' punctual submission of assignments is required unless (a) a student makes prior arrangements with the instructor, or (b) a student has a legitimate excuse (e.g., documentation of a medical or other type of emergency). Unexcused missed deadlines will result in a deduction in the grade for the assignment.

Quizzes (40%)

• There will be quizzes given quarterly to test students' command of major concepts in the course content. Quizzes will be administered through Blackboard, and they will include questions in a variety of formats: multiple choice, fill-ins, matching, definitions, data analysis and/or essays.

Final Exam (20%)

• The final exam for this course will also be given online through Blackboard. The exam will be comprehensive, and the format will be similar to that of the quizzes.

Tentative Schedule of Topics

(subject to revision)

DATE	• TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENTS/ PROJECTS	TESTS & NOTES
WEEK 1	Introduction to the course; Some preliminaries about language: • what language is • what language isn't	LF 1.1 - 1.4		
	Animal communication vs. human language: How are they the same? How are they different?	LF 14.1- 14.3	LF 1.6 - Exercise #7, 9, 12, 20	
WEEK 2	 Language diversity: Why are there different languages? Why are we losing languages? What is lost when a language dies? What should the response to language loss be? 	LF 12.2; 11.6	PROJECT #1 handed out	
WEEK 3	Language Structure: Phonetics – the science of speech sounds • Making human sounds • "Exotic" noises – sample sounds from other languages • Pitch, tone and intonation	LF 2.1 - 2.4	LF 2.8 – Exercise # 8 (a-d), 18, 19(b-i), 20 (b-f)	QUIZ #1 deployed on Blackboard
WEEK 4	Language Structure: Phonology – the psychology of sound systems The notion of "phoneme" Determining the status of sounds in a language you don't know Common phonological processes The structure of syllables: onsets rhymes and codas	LF 3.1; 3.3	PROJECT #1 due	
WEEK 5	Language Structure: Morphology- what's in a word? • The variability of words cross- linguistically • The notion of "morpheme" • Code-breaking: Analyzing words in a language you don't know • Common processes of word- building	LF 4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.5	LF 4.6 – Exercise # 4 (a-d), 6, 30	

WEEK 6	Language Structure: Syntax- the structure of sentences The independence of syntactic structure Lexical classes as universal categories Parameters of syntactic description: word order and case marking Grammatical roles and cross- linguistic variability	LF 5.1 – 5.6	LF 5.7 – Exercise # 1, 10, 16 (a-b), 21	QUIZ #2 deployed on Blackboard
WEEK 7	Language Structure: Semantics- what do you mean by that? • The nature of linguistic meaning • How to describe meaning • Lexical semantics and sense relations • Propositional semantics and "fuzzy" meaning • The interpretation of metaphor	LF 6.1; 6.2; 9.5	LF 6.6 – Exercise #3, 7, 12, 13, 19 PROJECT #2 handed out	
WEEK 8	Writing systems: giving speech permanence Written language vs. spoken language The nature of writing Types of writing Pragmatics: Meaning in Its Communicative Context Speaker meaning vs. literal meaning The description of speech acts	LF 13.4 LF 7.1 – 7.3	PROJECT #2 due	
WEEK 9	Intercultural (Mis)Communication The rules of conducting a conversation Discourse routines and genres How to apologize in English, Russian and Hebrew The linguistic expression of politeness Cultural stereotypes through discourse patterns	LF 7.4 – 7.5	LF 7.6 – Exercise #3, 7, 14, 34, 40	QUIZ #3 deployed on Blackboard
WEEK 10	Language Variation: dialects and standards How is a dialect different from a language? How and why do dialects develop? Who determines the standard variety?	LF 10.1 –10.4	LF 10.5 – Exercise #4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 23	
WEEK 11	Bilingualism, multilingualism and language contact • 6000 languages ÷ 200 countries: the ubiquity of multilingualism • Is multilingualism a problem or an	LF 11.1 – 11.4, 13.1	PROJECT #3 handed out	

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WEEK 12	 The status of individual languages within multilingual communities: the phenomenon of diglossia Contact situations: the evolution and status of pidgin and creole languages What is Spanglish? Bad Spanish, bad English, or contact language? Language, Culture and Thought 	LF 13.3		QUIZ #4
	 The relation between language and culture: Does the language you speak determine your view of the world? Linguistic relativity/the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis Some potential examples of grammaticalized cultural values Experimental investigations into linguistic relativity: time, space, shape and color 			deployed on Blackboard
WEEK 13	Language and the brain: neurolinguistics and psycholinguistics • What part(s) of the brain are involved in language? • The impact of experience: monolingualism vs. bilingualism • Figuring out language processing through psychological testing • What slips of the tongue reveal about language processing	LF 9.1 - 9.3	LF 9.8 – Exercise #2, 4, 8, 9, 13	
WEEK 14	First Language Acquisition Nature vs. nurture: how do babies learn language? The Innatist view of first language acquisition Milestones in child language development The significance of children's linguistic inventions	LF 8.1 - 8.3	PROJECT #3 due	
WEEK 15	Second Language Acquisition Why is it harder for older learners to acquire proficiency? Is second language acquisition different from first language acquisition? Methods of language teaching Minority language rights and language policy Bilingual education, heritage languages and language maintenance	LF 8.5	LF 8.6 – Exercise #1, 3, 6, 8, 16, 22	

Examples of past projects assigned in SLC 201

SLC 201 "Introduction to Language and Linguistics" FIRST PROJECT – The Loss of Linguistic Diversity

In class we talked about the difficulties of getting an exact count of languages in the world, and one of the more reasons why it is difficult to get an accurate count is the rate at which languages are disappearing. For this first project you will be looking into language loss and reacting to your findings.

The primary resource you will consult for this project is *Ethnologue*, an encyclopedic collection of information about languages, their genetic affiliation and their speakers. A web-based version of *Ethnologue* can be found at http://www.ethnologue.com/web.asp.

- 1. For the first part of the project you are going to collect some basic numerical information and summarize it in a table.
 - a. To get a general sense of the range of diversity and language spread, go to the Statistical Summaries (right side of the page under "Table of Contents") and click on the summary "by World Region." Which region of the world has the largest number of languages? Which region has the smallest number? Record this information in the first column of a table arranged from the highest to the lowest.
 - b. Go back to the Table of Contents and click on "Nearly Extinct Languages." In the second column of the table, record the values for each of the regions in the appropriate row.
 - c. One might argue that it is possible to compare regions on their rates of language extinction. In a third column, figure out the rate of extinction as a simple ratio of the number of nearly extinct languages divided by the number of living languages.
 - d. Go down the list of nearly extinct languages and for each region (i.e. Asia, Africa, etc.) identify the endangered language that has the largest number of remaining speakers. Record this information in a fourth column in the table. (For purposes of this exercise, only use confirmed speaker numbers. Ignore figures given for "ethnic population" since this typically means that, although the people can be identified as ethnically distinct, most of them no longer use their heritage language.)
- 2. Some scholars suggest that the numbers of speakers that *Ethnologue* indicates as marking "nearly extinct" languages are misleadingly low, and that languages with much larger populations of speakers can still be considered endangered. For the second part of the project we'll focus on one particular sub-region: North America (Canada, US, and Mexico). Create a second table in which you summarize the following information: (All of this information is available in the individual entries for each of the countries.)
 - a. How many living languages are spoken in each country?
 - b. How many of those living languages have 10,000 or more speakers?
 - c. How many of those living languages have 100,000 or more speakers? (for this category, also record the names of the individual languages)
 - d. How many of the languages listed are extinct?
- 3. Write a brief essay reflecting on the issue of language endangerment and your impressions from sifting through the data available in *Ethnologue*. In your essay, you are free to comment on anything relevant to the issue of language death and linguistic diversity, but you should make a point of saying which of the three approaches to language endangerment discussed in class Conservationist, Preservationist, or Evolutionist you would consider to best reflect your attitude and why, and how (or whether) your ideas about language diversity have changed over the course of looking into this issue.

The project should typewritten. It can be submitted wither in hard form in class or in digital form through email. It is due by February 20th.

SLC 201 – "Introduction to Language and Linguistics" PROJECT 3 - Sociolinguistics

Do ONE of the following:

Option 1

Investigate Spanglish. There seems to be a difference of opinion among linguists as to what the linguistic status of Spanglish is. Is it a dialect of Spanish? A dialect of English? A pidgin? A creole? Ask several Spanish-English bilinguals their opinion of Spanglish. (Try to get a range of respondents—different ages, different backgrounds) What do they think it is? Do they have a positive opinion of it, a negative opinion, or a neutral opinion? What is their impression as to who uses Spanglish? What is the function of Spanglish? In your reflective essay, report the general trends that you noted from your interviews. Do the answers help you make a decision as to what the status of Spanglish is?

Option 2

Watch two hours of television (I told you that linguistic data is everywhere), changing the channel every half hour. For each half hour segment, make notes about the different dialects you hear. Try to identify one example of from each of the levels of dialect variation we talked about in class (accent, lexicon, sentence structure). Summarize your findings in a table, and write a reflective essay reacting to the exercise. In your reflective essay, address the following points:

- do the dialect features seem authentic? (e.g., do the people who are supposed to be about your age talk like you, use the slang terms you use, etc. We also talked about some features of African-American vernacular. Do African-American characters seem to be using those features as they've been described by linguists?)
- are dialects used to convey information about characters (e.g. in class we mentioned the commonly observed correlation between the Southern accent and implied lack of intelligence), and if so, what correlations can you note.
- what do you feel is the purpose of any dialect features used in the examples you viewed? are they there for comic effect? do they add authenticity to the dialogue? would the program, have been effective without the dialect features? explain why or why not.

Option 3

Investigate attitudes about dialects. Ask ten to twelve people to identify the regions of the U.S. where the people speak the best English and the worst English. (This recreates a research project done by Professor Dennis Preston in a clip we saw from *Do You Speak American?* You can download materials at the shows website: http://www.pbs.org/speak/speech/mapping/map.pdf.) I compiling data, be sure to collect background information about your respondents (i.e., age, native region (where did they grow up), language background). You should also ask respondents to describe the characteristics of the regional dialects that they consider to be the best and the worst. Also ask respondents to evaluate their own language: do they speak standard English? Finally, ask respondents whether it's important to speak standard English and why/ why not, and whether dialects have any function. Summarize the responses in a table and write a reflective essay on the results. Your essay should address the following points:

- Is there an identifiable trend in people's attitudes about different dialects of American English? (is there a particular region all or most people associate with incorrect usage or correct usage? Does it relate to the respondents' native region?)
- What are the ramifications of the responses you get? What does a negative attitude about the dialect of a particular region imply? If respondents' don't evaluate their own dialect highly, what does that mean? How might such negative attitudes play out in real life?
- Are the attitudes linguistically valid? Do respondents' answers seem to accurately describe actual features of the regions they identify, or are they stereotypes? Do respondents maintain that there are people who always speak standard English?

SLC 201 - Introduction to Language and Linguistics Project #3 - Slang

As has been mentioned, dialect differences may be noted in all levels of language—vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Of these three major components of variation, the vocabulary, or *lexical variation*, is probably the area in which people note these differences most readily. Slang is an example of this kind of lexical variation. The variation often goes along with other divisions that occur within speech communities, i.e. they occur along regional, social, ethnic or generational lines.

Another point we made is that most slang terms aren't usually around long enough to enter the mainstream; therefore, you can't look them up in dictionaries or usage guides. Despite that fact, people do develop usage patterns that suggest they have an awareness of constraints on usage. In this project, you'll examine contemporary slang and attempt to do a basic lexicographic description of them.

- 1. Think of at least five slang terms that you use yourself or that you observe your peers using. For each term, offer a preliminary definition in your own words. (Also as you do this, think of what makes these examples of slang. How do you know that they are slang?)
- 2. Ask five of your peers what the term means, i.e. have them define the word for you in other words. In addition, have them use the word in a sentence (or if at all possible, recall an actual use of the term.)
- 3. Try to uncover the connotations of each term. Do people think of it as having positive connotations (Do you use it to praise people or show admiration?), negative connotations (Do you use it to insult people?) or neutral connotations?
- 4. Try to uncover the register of each term. As slang terms, all are going to be considered informal, but see if you can get people to differentiate between them in terms of whether they are *polite* (acceptable in use with acquaintances), *familiar*(only used with intimate friends) or *vulgar* (cannot be used, e.g. with members of the opposite gender or members of the older generation).
- 5. Compile your findings into a mini-dictionary. (Remember: dictionaries are *descriptive* grammar.) For each entry, indicate part of speech, a generalized sense (based on what seems to be common to all the definitions you collected), an example of the term in use, and descriptive notes of its connotations and register.
- 6. Ask three older people what the five terms mean and collect their responses. Ask them for two terms they think of as slang.
- 7. Write a reflective essay reacting to the process and what it tells you about slang. You can comment on any aspect that impresses you, but you should be sure to include some discussion on the following points:
 - what is slang?
 - how much variation did you find in definitions offered by your peers for the slang terms? was there general agreement or wide variation? what does that tell you about lexical knowledge in a speech community?
 - how does slang relate across generations? were older speakers aware of your generation's slang? did you know the slang terms the older respondents offered up? are they, in your opinion, slang? if someone uses those slang terms, does it sound funny? what does that suggest about the life cycle of slang terms?

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]

Rationale and Objectives

Human organizations and relationships have evolved from being family and village centered to modern global interdependence. The greatest challenge in the nuclear age is developing and maintaining a global perspective which fosters international cooperation. While the modern world is comprised of politically independent states, people must transcend nationalism and recognize the significant interdependence among peoples of the world. The exposure of students to different cultural systems provides the background of thought necessary to developing a global perspective.

Cultural learning is present in many disciplines. Exposure to perspectives on art, business, engineering, music, and the natural and social sciences that lead to an understanding of the contemporary world supports the view that intercultural interaction has become a daily necessity. The complexity of American society forces people to balance regional and national goals with global concerns. Many of the most serious problems are world issues and require solutions which exhibit mutuality and reciprocity. No longer are hunger, ecology, health care delivery, language planning, information exchanges, economic and social developments, law, technology transfer, philosophy, and the arts solely national concerns; they affect all the people of the world. Survival may be dependent on the ability to generate global solutions to some of the most pressing problems.

The word university, from universitas, implies that knowledge comes from many sources and is not restricted to local, regional, or national perspectives. The Global Awareness Area recognizes the need for an understanding of the values, elements, and social processes of cultures other than the culture of the United States. Learning which recognizes the nature of others cultures and the relationship of America's cultural system to generic human goals and welfare will help create the multicultural and global perspective necessary for effective interaction in the human community.

Courses which meet the requirement in global awareness are of one or more of the following types: (1) indepth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region of the world, country, or culture group, (2) the study of contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component, (3) comparative cultural studies with an emphasis on non-U.S. areas, and (4) in-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

	ASU[G] CRITERIA GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]				
YES	МО		Identify Documentation Submitted		
		1. Studies must be composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside the U.S.	Syllabus		
		2. Course must be one or more of following types (check all which may apply):			
	\boxtimes	a. In-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region, country or culture group. The area or culture studied must be non-U.S. and the study must contribute to an understanding of the contemporary world.			
	\boxtimes	b. Contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component.			
X		c. Comparative cultural studies in which most, i.e., more than half, of the material is devoted to non-U.S. areas.	Syllabus		
\boxtimes		d. In-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope, such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war. Most, i.e., more than half, of the material must be devoted to non-U.S.	Syllabus, Sample Projects		

Global Awareness [G] Page 3

Page 3 of 5

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
SLC	201	Introduction to Language and Linguistics	G

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
Studies are composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside of the U.S.	The course focuses on the diversity that can be found in languages to help students develop a critical awareness of the range of potential formal and functional differences that can be found in the languages of the world. In addition, students consider social and political issues related to language that are often uncharacteristic of the sociolinguistic situation in the	Through lectures, readings and assignments, students are exposed to a broad array of data from languages other than English and are forced to confront the diversity of languages in terms of their structure (WEEKS 2-7) and their communicative practices (WEEK 9).
Course must emphasize comparative cultural studies in which most, i.e. more than half, of the material is devoted to non-US areas.	U.S. Throughout the course, students confront data from languages other than English and sociolinguistic situations that are generally unfamiliar in the American context.	Knowledge of English forms the basis for comparison in the class. While knowledge of other languages is not assumed, all students in the class are required to examine data from other languages to gain a greater awareness of the range of possibility in languages of the world. Most of the first half of the course is devoted to understanding the structural properties of language and how to describe them. Students look at language structure at all levels: sound (WEEKS 3 & 4), words (WEEK 5), sentences (WEEK 6), meaning (WEEK7), writing (WEEK 8), and discourse (WEEKS 8 & 9). At each level, students are asked to

		consider what things are universal, common to all or most languages, and what is the full range of possibilities that can be found in the the languages of the world.
In-depth studies of non-US	Students are required to think	In addition to a thorough-
centered cultural	critically about issues of	going examination of the
interrelationships of global	language diversity; the impact of	range of structural
scope.	the spread of international	characteristics to be found in
	languages like English, Spanish	the world's languages,
	and French; the alternative	students consider the rate of
	policy stands on multilingualism	endangerment within the
	and their consequences; and	population of the world's
	the response to language death.	languages, the global
		situation that has led to the
		current state, and alternative
		responses to the loss of
		languages (WEEK 2 &
		Sample Project). In this
		connection, students also
		consider the consequences of
		language loss and the
		interrelation between
		language and culture
		(WEEK12). In addition,
		students develop an
		awareness of the
		sociolinguistic situations that
		are typical in other regions of
		the world, such as societal
		multilingualism and policies
		relevant to it, language
		contact in the context of
***************************************		globalization (WEEK 11) ,
		and questions of language
		minority rights, language as

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	an identity symbol, and language maintenance (WEEK 15)

Language Files



Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics

Tenth Edition

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