

English 221: The English Language

Spring 2016

(Guidelines subject to change)

Instructor: John Black
Classroom: Zinzendorf 103
Class schedule: MW 11:45-12:55
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Office: Zinzendorf 303
Office Phone: 861-1390
Office Hours: W 1:00-2:00, Th 10:30-11:30, and
by appointment

Blackboard (Bb) url: <http://blackboard.moravian.edu> **Bb enrollment code for course:** ENGL221SP16

Required text: Millward, C. M. and Mary Hayes, *A Biography of the English Language*. 3rd ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2012. Print. (On syllabus as "BEL.")

Other course materials: (Various locations, as noted.)

The Adventure of English: 500 A.D. to 2000 A.D. 8 parts. Narrated by Melvyn Bragg. Princeton, N.J.: Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 2004. DVD. (Streaming video on Bb; "AOE" on syllabus.)

American Tongues. Dir. by Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker. New York: Center for New American Media, 1986. Web. CNAM YouTube Channel

(<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6089621A87373FBE>)

"Constant Change: The Diversification and Spread of Language." *Speaking in Tongues: The History of Language*, Vol. 2. Dir. by Christine Brown. Princeton: Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 2007. DVD. (Streaming video on Bb.)

"Let There Be Words: The Origin of Human Language." *Speaking in Tongues: The History of Language*, Vol. 1. Dir. by Christine Brown. Princeton: Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 2007. DVD. (Streaming video on Bb.)

The Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: Clarendon, 1989-. Print. (20 vols. in Reeves Reference; referred to as "OED.")

The Oxford English Dictionary Online. December 2013. Oxford: Oxford UP. Web. (access via Reeves online catalog or <http://www.oed.com/>)

Course Description, Objectives, and Format:

Welcome to English 221: The English Language! Language seems a fairly basic aspect of our experience, and one that we often take for granted, but its development and use nonetheless raise many questions: how/why does language change? what are some of the controversies about the history and current usage of the English language? why is language sometimes controversial? To begin to address these and other questions, this course engages students in tracing the evolution of the English language from its origins in the fifth century to the present day. After briefly considering the origins and expression of language in general, we will examine the development of English from the Old English period, through the Middle English and Early Modern English periods, up to Present-Day English or 'Englishes'. In our journey through the chronology and biography of English, we will examine both the 'outer' and 'inner' histories of the language, looking at how social, historical, political, and intellectual contexts have influenced the development of the language in its phonology, graphics, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics. The examination of changes and forces involved in the development of the language will help us not only to understand and appreciate more fully the richness and vigor of English in its many forms and uses, but also to gain insights into contemporary issues regarding the language. For our study of the history and use of the language, we'll rely on a mix of readings, short lectures, audio-visual aids, presentations, and, most importantly, discussion: *your preparation and participation are, therefore, essential to the success of the class and to your success in it.* Our class Blackboard (Bb) site (see information at top of this page) is an important component of the course, given that it serves as a repository for course documents (e.g., this description and syllabus), assignments, and streaming videos used in the course.

Assignments:

*****For English majors: In preparation for creating an English Major Portfolio in your senior capstone seminar, please save both digital and hard copies of your work for this class, including drafts with peer and instructor comments.**

You will have two essays based on our chronological study of the development of the language and one essay narrating the 'life' of a word. As part of a group, you will make two presentations, based on the videos we view and discuss for the class. In addition, you will complete several other shorter exercises and projects, some of which will be collected into an end-of-semester portfolio. For most weeks, you will complete terms and questions (posted to Bb) for the assigned readings. Keep a copy for your use in class and in reviewing for assignments and print a copy to hand in to me at the beginning of class. Specific requirements for the assignments will be discussed in advance of each assignment. Assignments are due in class on the due dates noted on the syllabus. **I do not accept or read late assignments, except under very unusual circumstances.**

Extra Credit: Learning takes place both in and outside the classroom. To encourage further exploration of the connections in learning between English 221 and the community, students may earn extra credit through confirmed participation (usually in the form of a brief write-up) in various activities related to language, literature, and writing. Up to a total of three points of extra credit can be added at the end of the semester to a student's lowest assignment grade. One hundred points is the maximum total for the course. Some examples of eligible activities are: attending a College or area theater production or poetry/fiction reading, submitting creative work to *The Manuscript*, or a meeting with a Writing Center tutor. Other, similar activities may also be eligible; please confer with me. In April, Moravian hosts its annual Student Scholarship and Creative Endeavors Day (SSCED); a student who presents a paper at SSCED will earn three points. A student who assists with or attends SSCED will earn one point.

Attendance and Participation:

Be here - I will take roll regularly. You are expected to attend each day. **Be prompt** - Class begins at 11:45 am sharp. **Be prepared** - Your first responsibility is to read carefully, re-read, and be prepared to discuss, both orally and in writing, all assignments. You should expect to devote several hours to preparing for each class. (A general rule of thumb for college courses is 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour in class.) **Participate** - Classes become more meaningful the more you engage yourself in them. All of our readings should raise many questions for you. You are expected to make comments or ask questions on the readings and topics each day. If you have no questions or comments about our work, then I'm left to assume that you did not do the readings or the work. I will not hesitate to call on you if you are not contributing. Class time allotted for group work, group discussion, draft feedback, review, etc. is valuable learning time, not 'break' time; you are expected to remain focused on the assigned activity for all of the allotted time.

If you know you will be absent from class, please talk to me beforehand. If you are sick, please notify me as soon as possible. *Your absence from more than three classes may affect your final grade. Every three times you come to class late or leave early without notifying me first will also count as an unexcused absence. Missing more than five classes may result in your failing the course. If you are absent, it is wholly your responsibility to determine what was covered in class and what revisions, if any, were made to the syllabus in your absence.*

Other notes:

- One of the qualities I expect and appreciate most in students is **personal integrity**. Students who exhibit this quality are ethical and honest, are engaged in class, turn in thoughtful assignments, are responsive to the world beyond themselves, meet deadlines, and keep me informed of any difficulties or successes they have while in my class.
- *Please arrange to go to the restroom before or after class.*
- *Please silence and put away all cell phones, etc. before coming into the classroom.*

- *Using your laptop or smartphone during class for purposes not related to the course is unacceptable: it seriously undermines your credibility as a student and it distracts others from their focus.*

Office Hours:

Students are always welcome in my office. My office hours are times that I have set aside specifically to talk with you – not only about class and assignments, but also about life at Moravian, about something fun and exciting you've done, or whatever. Make use of them. I realize that it may be difficult for you to meet during my posted office hours, so I'm also readily available by appointment: jblack@moravian.edu.

Other Resources:

- With your work on written assignments, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the help available through appointment at the Writing Center (2nd fl, Zinzendorf). For more information, visit its website at: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/eng/writingCenter/appointments.htm> The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you have mobility impairments and need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.
- Similarly, the librarians in Reeves are very resourceful. Make it a habit of consulting with them when research questions arise. The library webpage (<http://home.moravian.edu/public/reeves>) is an excellent resource, offering live online help and research guides.
- The Academic Support Center (lower level of Monocacy Hall, 610-861-1401) provides many services to help you achieve academic success: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/learning/>
- Another important resource that provides help with the demands of college life is The Counseling Center (1307 Main St., 861-1510): <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/counseling/>
- Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic Support Center (lower level of Monocacy Hall, 610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism, representing someone else's work as your own, is a serious breach of personal integrity and a violation of the College's Academic Honesty Policy: consult the *Student Handbook* <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic/academic2.html> **Read this policy in its entirety.** I take the provisions of the Academic Honesty Policy very seriously and am obliged to report any suspected cases of plagiarism, the consequences of which may be failure, suspension, or dismissal from the College. If you plagiarize, you will receive a 'zero' on the plagiarized assignment, which will very likely result in your failure for the course. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism will not be accepted as an excuse. If at any time you have any questions about documenting sources properly (MLA style) or as to whether or not the aid you are receiving is authorized, don't hesitate to ask me. The Reeves Library online research tutorial also addresses the issue:

<http://home.moravian.edu/public/reeves/research/tutorials/tutorialsindex.htm>

Related to academic honesty is the issue of copyright; please protect yourself by being familiar with and following copyright laws.

Evaluation:

(The instructor will apply both quantitative and qualitative assessments in determining grades for assignments and for the course. Final grades calculated on 10-pt. scale: 90=A-, 80=B-, etc.)

Essay on Old English and Middle English	25%
Essay on Early Modern and Present-Day English.....	25%
"Life" of a Word Essay.....	10%
Group Presentations (10pts each).....	20%
Terms and Questions, portfolio and minor projects.....	10%
Attendance and class participation.....	10%

You must complete all these requirements in order to be eligible to pass the course.

English 221

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(Syllabus subject to change)

Jan.	18	M	Introduction to course; policies; syllabus; informal writing/discussion on language
	20	W	View (in class) and discuss <i>American Tongues</i> excerpts
	25	M	Introduction: <i>BEL</i> Chapter 1; terms; exercises
	27	W	Phonology and Writing: <i>BEL</i> Chpts. 2 & 3; terms; exercises
Feb.	1	M	"Let There Be Words: The Origin of Human Language" (video) - group presentation
	3	W	Review presentation from last class; Language Families and Indo-European: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 4; terms; exercises
	8	M	Review <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 4; "Constant Change: The Diversification and Spread of Language" (video) - group presentation
	10	W	Review presentation from last class; Old English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 5, part I (pp. 79-111); terms; exercises
	15	M	AOE 1 - "Birth of a Language" (video) - group presentation
	17	W	Review presentation from last class; Old English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 5, part II (pp. 112-142); terms; Old English exercises
	22	M	Middle English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 6, part I (pp. 143-180); terms; exercises; discuss writing assignments for course
	24	W	AOE 2 - "English Goes Underground" (video) - group presentation
	29	M	Review presentation from last class; Middle English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 6, part II (pp. 180-218); terms; Middle English exercises
Mar.	2	W	AOE 3 - "Battle for the Language of the Bible" (video) - group presentation
	7	M	No class - Spring Break
	9	W	No class - Spring Break
	14	M	Review presentation from last class; draft workshop for Essay 1 ; resources for the study of the English language; exercises
	16	W	Essay 1 due - Old and Middle English ; resources for the study of the English language (cont.); exercises
	21	M	Early Modern English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 7, part I (pp. 219-258); terms; exercises
	23	W	AOE 4 - "This Earth, This Realm, This England" (video) - group presentation

Mar.	28	M	Review presentation from last class; Early Modern English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 7, part II (pp. 258-293); terms; exercises
	30	W	<i>AOE</i> 5 – “English in America” (video) – group presentation
Apr.	4	M	Review presentation from last class; Present Day English: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 8; terms; exercises
	6	W	<i>AOE</i> 6 – “Speaking Proper” (video) – group presentation
	11	M	Review presentation from last class; English Around the World: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 9, part I (pp. 341-376); terms; exercises
	13	W	<i>AOE</i> 7 – “The Language of Empire” (video) – group presentation
	18	M	Review presentation from last class; English Around the World: <i>BEL</i> Chpt. 9, part II (pp. 376-407); terms; exercises
	20	W	<i>AOE</i> 8 – “Many Tongues Called English – One World Language” (video) – group presentation (**opportunity for extra credit: Student Scholarship and Creative Endeavors Day)
	25	M	Review presentation from last class; draft workshop for Essay 2 ; review use of <i>OED</i> for final essay
	27	W	Essay 2 due – Early Modern and Present Day English ; review course goals; course evaluation

Final Essay (“Life” of a Word) and portfolio due Tuesday, May 3 by 5:00 pm. Plan accordingly.