

University of Houston-Downtown

Course Prefix, Number, and Title: LANG 1303: Language and Society

Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours: 3/3/0

Foundational Component Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Prerequisites: Credit or Enrollment in ENG 1301

Co-requisites: None

Course Description: An introduction to the scientific study of language and language use in society. The student will explore linguistic behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining impacts on the individual, society, and culture. Special emphasis is placed on critical thinking skills and social responsibility.

TCCNS Number: N/A

Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:

Assigned Core Objective	Learning outcome Students will be able to:	Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome	Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated
Critical Thinking	Evaluate assumptions and develop defensible conclusions based on interpretation and analysis of information relevant to course content.	Through readings, lectures and group discussions, students will be challenged to evaluate assumptions about language, linguistic diversity, speech communities, and power. Through small group work and preparation for individual presentations, students will further evaluate assumptions and develop defensible conclusions based on interpretation and analysis of material.	Students will demonstrate their ability to evaluate assumptions and develop defensible conclusions based on interpretation and analysis through the following: i. Class discussions ii. Signature Assignment 1 (Presentation 1) iii. Signature Assignment 2 (Presentation 2) iv. Exam questions
Critical Thinking Communication	Synthesize and deliver organized and well-constructed arguments about course content	Through class discussions and individual presentations using	Students will demonstrate their ability to synthesize and deliver organized

	using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats) to include the use of technology.	PowerPoint or Panapto, students will synthesize and deliver well-constructed arguments about the linguistic landscape and the implications thereof.	and well-constructed arguments through the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Class discussion ii. Signature Assignment 1 (Presentation 1) iii. Signature Assignment 2 (Presentation 2)
Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	Analyze or interpret empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions.	In preparation for their own presentations and discussing those of their peers, students will analyze data (linguistic tokens), interpret and empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions.	Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze or interpret empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions during class discussions and in the conclusions students provide within their own presentations (Signature Assignments 1 & 2). This outcome will also be evaluated on essay exams.
Critical Thinking Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	Apply theory or findings from empirical research to a contemporary social problem.	Through readings and discussions, students will be introduced to sociolinguistic and ecolinguistic theories that explore social problems such as linguistic prejudice and discrimination. Discussion of theory applied to social problems cultivates intercultural awareness and the potential for civic responsibility and	Students will demonstrate their ability to apply theory or findings from empirical research to a contemporary social problem through the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Exam questions (Exam I) ii. Class discussions iii. Signature Assignments 1 & 2

		engagement. In addition to readings, and discussion, students will further explore applications of theory and findings to social problems (linguistic prejudice, cultural and linguistic hegemony) in presentations.	(Presentations 1 & 2)
Social Responsibility	Identify the interplay among individuals, groups, institutions, and events within the context of society and culture.	Through readings, discussions, and preparation for individual presentations students will identify examples and implications of linguistic and cultural hegemony in civic institutions and practices. During class discussions and preparation for presentations, students will examine how language dominance can shape social, cultural, civic, and political dynamics. Through class discussion students will identify ways to apply sociolinguistic awareness to civic engagement and identity.	Students will demonstrate their ability to identify the interplay among individual language speakers, linguistic communities and institutions through the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Class discussion ii. Signature Assignments 1 & 2 (Presentations 1 & 2) iii. Linguistic portrait assignments

Additional Course Outcomes:

- Identify and discuss linguistic diversities in the US and transnational contexts.
- Identify and discuss connections between linguistic variation and social perspectives on identity and power.
- Identify and analyze language use in social, educational, and professional domains.
- Investigate and discuss the social and civic implications of linguistic landscapes.
- Identify ways to apply sociolinguistic awareness to civic engagement and identity.

Course Outline: List of major reading and discussion topics:

1. Course Introduction and Key Terminology
2. Data and Research Design in Sociolinguistics
3. Language, Dialects (Social & Regional), Styles & Registers
4. Speech Communities (Speech Community Theory), Language & Identity (Social Identity Theory)
5. Languages and Social Structures (Critical Discourse Analysis)
6. Beliefs about Language and Social Groups
7. Preparing for Presentation (Gathering sources, analyzing and synthesizing information, presenting arguments, drawing conclusions)
8. Languages in Contact, Multilingualism as a Societal Phenomenon
9. Linguistic Landscapes, Language Attitudes in Multilingual Settings
10. Language Policy, & Planning: Social and Civic Implications

(See syllabus for full detail)

Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives: The grading scale is as follows: 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; 59-0% = F.

Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, and Assignments

Active Participation in Discussions	15% of final grade
Exams (Exam 1 15%, Exam 2 15%)	30% of final grade
Presentation 1 (Signature Assignment 1)	20% of final grade
Linguistic Portraits (3)	15% of final grade
Presentation 2 (Signature Assignment 2)	20% of final grade