

## English 2030—Language in U.S. Society

Fall 2013

Prerequisite: English 1010

T/TH 10:00 – 11:15am

Tiffany Rousculp

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### COURSE READINGS:

- *Language, Society and Power, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.* Mooney, et. al. ISBN: 0415576598
- Additional Readings are posted on the course website under “Additional Readings.”

**RECORDING DEVICE:** You will need to purchase or gain access to a recording device for the Language Analysis assignments and the final project. A tape recorder, digital recorder, computer, video camera are fine.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Through a study of the patterns and functions of language in U.S. society, this course addresses how language establishes cultural identities and social allegiances, creates and disseminates knowledge, and develops and maintains power.

Language impacts everything we do: how we think, how we learn, how we view ourselves and interact with others. We will look carefully at the patterns and functions of language in U.S. society to gain a better sense of how language establishes our cultural identities and social allegiances, how language creates and disseminates knowledge, how it develops and maintains power. While we will look at the diversity in U.S. Englishes and language use, we will also examine language as a political tool in the maintenance and challenging of societal structures. During the course, you will be introduced to methods of studying language, and will apply them to both language-based readings and real-life language situations and communities.

### COURSE OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Identify how discourse creates and maintains power and authority
- Understand how discourse develops and disseminates knowledge, and how it shapes and is shaped by social groups
- Critically understand discourse through linguistic, structuralist, and post-structuralist theories
- Analyze the elements of written and spoken discourse: form, genre, syntax, diction.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Participation (20%):** The collaborative nature of this class necessitates that everyone be here (on time), be ready to participate with your assignments done, be willing to fully engage with the task at hand, and treat your classmates with respect by listening to them and sharing your ideas, insights, and questions. Participation consists of:

**Engaging with Each Other:** Much of our class is based on discussion, and it is essential that you do your best to participate in those discussions. Even if you are shy, or uncomfortable speaking out in class, you will draw more attention to yourself by not talking because this class examines how we use (or don't use) language! If you feel you have

opinions that others might not agree with, it is all the more important to put them out there because this is a diversity class, the purpose of which is to expose students to different ways of being.

**Engaging with the Readings:** We have a fair bit of reading in this class; some of it is fairly straightforward, some is more challenging. You may not understand it all the first time you encounter it, nor will you agree with all of it. But, you need to engage with it, which means finishing the reading assignments before we meet in class.

In addition to class participation, the main way for you to demonstrate that you are engaging with the readings as well is to post to **“Questions and Comments” (Qs and Cs)** on the website prior to each class. As you are working through the assigned readings, please make note of what you find interesting, what you find confusing, what you agree with, or what you disagree with. Then post what you think.

**“Qs and Cs”** is an informal space so these can be short posts or long posts. They can be a single question, or a manifesto, whatever you want. Then, before the class discussion, return to the site and read at least 10 posts. Feel free to comment on other posts as well.

Be sure to keep up with the Qs and Cs as you cannot make them up after we have discussed the readings in class. (If you miss a couple, don't worry about it. Just do them regularly.) They should help make our conversations more engaging because the class discussions will be built more around what you need and want--rather than what I may think you do.

**Attendance:** The English Department believes that attendance and active participation in class contribute to success. Therefore, department policy stipulates that at least 10% of your final grade will be based on your involvement in class, as the framework of the course demands that you participate. Therefore, more than 10% of unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one full letter grade. (We meet 30 times, so no more than 3 absences.)

**Written Assignments:** In addition to the informal “Questions and Comments,” there is a fair bit of writing in this class. Some of it is “middling” formal, and the rest is more formal papers that you will write based on research that you do. (Even so, I've not yet heard back from students that the writing in this class is too much. We spread it out over the semester.) Additionally, revision is encouraged in this class, so if you earn an evaluation that you are not satisfied with you can revise the assignment. (The final project is not revisable, but we have several drafts and opportunities for feedback prior to turning it in.)

**On-line Discussions (25%):** There will be ten (10) on-line discussion assignments throughout the semester. They are on the schedule and I will post reminders of them on the website. On-line discussion assignments will ask you to do some complex thinking and to share that thinking with me and the rest of the class. While these are not completely formal assignments, I expect them to show some in-depth consideration. There is not a length requirement for them, but I want to see you working with the questions/ideas. You can provide your opinions and reasoning, ask more questions, complicate the matter, or go in a different direction...anything that shows you working with the ideas.

**Data Collection and Presentation Assignment (10%):** This brief assignment will

introduce you to collecting and presenting data that you collect from talking to people about language. This is a “pass/fail” assignment.

**Language Analysis Assignment (20%):** This assignment will allow you to practice strategies for analyzing language in context. We will apply ethnographic and critical discourse analysis strategies to a particular speech/textual situation of your choice. This assignment will prepare you for the final project.

**Final Project Proposal (2%):** Write a short proposal about your plans for the final project. Describe the language community/practices you plan to observe and why you’ve made that choice. This is a pass/fail assignment.

**Final Project (28%):** Observe the language practices of a specific community, one of which you are not a participant. Once you have collected a good deal of material, you will write a report of your observations, characterizing the community and analyzing how discourse functions within it. The project should not only aim to understand the discourse practices of this specific community, but also provide insight into our larger understanding of how language functions within culture.

### **Course Policies and Procedures (in alphabetical order):**

**Accommodation for Disabilities:** Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring accommodations or services under ADA, must contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of these accommodations and services for the college. Please contact the DRC at the Student Center, Suite 244, Redwood Campus, 4600 So. Redwood Rd, 84123. Phone: (801) 957-4659, TTY: 957-4646, Fax: 957- 4947 or by email: [linda.bennett@slcc.edu](mailto:linda.bennett@slcc.edu)

**Communication:** You can reach me by email or phone (see contact information above). When I need to communicate with you outside of class, I will post messages to the whole class on the course website, so be sure to subscribe to it. I will use your BruinMail email address to communicate with you individually. Please be sure you have access to it and that you check it regularly. If you don’t, please forward your BruinMail to your regular email account. (If you send me something from another email address, I will respond to that one, and it may become my “default” address for you automatically through my Mail system.)

**Completion of Assignments:** To pass this course, you must complete all major requirements (those noted above).

**Late Work:** I don’t like late work, but would rather receive something late than something that you rushed through to a semblance of completion. However, I need to know before the due date that you are going to be turning in something late. If you don’t let me know prior to the due date, your evaluation will be reduced.

**Incompletes:** Students must be passing and have completed 80% of the course work in order to be granted an incomplete.

**Plagiarism:** Students intentionally or unintentionally commit plagiarism when they submit another author's work as their own. Plagiarism also includes the failure to attribute unique phrases, passages, or ideas to their original source. Plagiarism is a violation of the SLCC student code of conduct.

### **WRITING CENTER**

SLCC has a Writing Center at each campus. The Writing Center is a great place to get a peer review or talk with a writing tutor about how to overcome writer's block. At the Redwood Campus, the WC is located in AD 218. At the South City Campus, you can find writing advisors in the Learning Center (N308). Also, check SLCC's online Writing Center at [www.slcc.edu/swc](http://www.slcc.edu/swc).

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

Should we have to evacuate in an emergency, we will meet on the west side of the building below the steps. You must make sure that I have accounted for you, and you should not return to the building until I get approval from the appropriate authorities to do so.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The student is expected to follow the SLCC Student Code of Conduct found at <http://www.slcc.edu/policies/docs/stdtcode.pdf>

### **GENERAL EDUCATION STATEMENT**

This course fulfills the [category] requirement for the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning. General Education courses teach basic skills as well as broaden a student's knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Education is much more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information in meaningful ways in order to enrich one's life.

While the subject of each course is important and useful, we become truly educated through making connections of such varied information with the different methods of organizing human experience that are practiced by different disciplines. Therefore, this course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to develop broader perspectives and deeper understandings of your community and the world, as well as challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its inhabitants.

**This course fulfills two General Education\* categories: *Diversity and Humanities*.**

*Diversity* is the study of certain differences (race, ethnicity, social class, gender, ability, sexual orientation, age, religion, etc.) and how those differences translate throughout U.S. history into disparities of power, privilege, and access to opportunity. This course will identify and challenge your assumptions and encourage you to consider multiple perspectives so that you can become a more responsible and effective citizen in this multicultural society.

*Humanities* courses express the human spirit and celebrate our emotions and intelligence by making connections between the forces that shape reality in culture and society: language, history, beliefs, and philosophy. Students will recognize and appreciate the different cultural achievements and legacies of civilization. Students will learn to integrate moral, ethical and esthetic judgments in many contexts.

This course will invite engaged discussion and authentic personal reflection. Because we will often express contrasting views it will be essential to be respectful by listening and asking questions of those with whom we disagree.

### **General Education ePortfolio**

Each student in General Education courses at SLCC will maintain a General Education ePortfolio. Your ePortfolio will allow you to include your educational goals, describe your extracurricular activities, and post your resume. When you finish your time at SLCC, your ePortfolio will then be a multi-media showcase of your educational experience. Instructors in every Gen Ed course will ask you to put at least one assignment from the course into your ePortfolio, and accompany it with reflective writing.

In this class, you will receive extra credit if you submit a document produced in this class to your ePortfolio (along with a reflection statement about it). In order to receive this credit, you must send me a link to your ePortfolio, or provide me with an off-line version of it. (An off-line version is available to students who do not wish to put their materials on-line, contact David Hubert for this “waiver” at [david.hubert@slcc.edu](mailto:david.hubert@slcc.edu).) The extra credit will be the equivalent of a 1/3 increase in your final grade (i.e. a “B-“ will become a “B,” a “C” will become a “C+”).

For detailed information visit <http://www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio>. After you have picked an ePortfolio platform, go to the corresponding help site to watch the tutorials and look at the examples so you can get started on your own:

<http://slcceportfolio.yolasite.com>

<http://slcceportfolio.wordpress.com>

<http://slcceportfolio.weebly.com>

If you would like to start your ePortfolio in a computer lab with a person there to help you, sign up online for one of the free workshops at the Taylorsville-Redwood, South, and Jordan libraries:

<http://libweb.slcc.edu/refilt/forms/eportfolio>