ENGLISH 219: Contemporary Usage

Instructor: Marilyn Mathews
Office:

Course Objectives:

The aim of this course is to stimulate awareness of our own language as we use it today. In studying grammar, we will not be attempting to prescribe a set of rules; rather we will be examining rules that do exist and trying to discover why. Beyond grammar and syntax, we will also look at language in the rhetorical sense; that is, the use of words to accomplish specific purposes. Our discussions and writing will be based not only on the required texts and other assigned readings, but also on the uses of language that occur around us daily—even in the English 219 classroom.

Required Texts:


Course Requirements:

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Short Written Assignments</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Course Outline

**NOTE** A more detailed list of reading and writing assignments will be distributed during the course Introduction on May 7th.

May 7 Course Introduction
May 9 Reading: SW: Section 6*
             Dictionaries

May 14 CWH: I (pp. 4-30)
           Sentence types
May 16 Workshop on writing style

May 21 Holiday
May 23 Reading to be assigned
           Word Games and humour

May 28 CWH: II (pp. 31-57)
           Nouns/Pronouns
May 30 SW: Section 3
           Gender issues

June 4 CWH: II (pp. 58-91)
          Verbs
June 6 SW: Section 1
          Standard English?

June 9 CWH: II (pp. 92-121)
            Adjectives, Adverbs, Verbals
June 13 Reading to be assigned
            A Workshop on Evaluating Student Writing

June 18 CWH: II (pp. 122-136)
           Prepositions, Conjunctions, Interjections
June 20 SW: Section 2
           Sticks and stones; obscenity

June 25 CWH: VII
           Slang, Idiom, Cliche
June 27 SW: Section 5
           Advertising; Loaded Language

July 2 Holiday
July 4 SW: Section 4
           Double speak

July 9 CWH: VII
           Wordiness, Euphemism, Metaphor
July 11 Guest Speaker

July 16 CWH: V
           Literary writing conventions
July 18       Editing Workshop
July 23       The Language of Politics
July 25       Usage Workshop
July 30       Final Quiz

Each Monday class will begin with a quiz on the grammatical material covered to that point.

Five short (500-750 words) written assignments will be completed during the term. These will be staggered so that approximately one half of the class will be submitting an assignment every second week.

The term paper is to be about 2500 words long, on an appropriate topic approved by your instructor. In addition to the written paper, you will make an oral presentation of about 7-10 minutes in which you will share with the class some of your discoveries and ideas about your topic.

Much of the value of this class will come from your participation as you evaluate, agree or disagree with, and comment on the uses of language that we discuss. Attendance and adequate preparation, therefore, are expected.

PLEASE BRING YOUR DICTIONARY TO CLASS.