Dr Ken Hirschkop  
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Office Hours:  Tuesdays 1:30-2:15 and Thursdays, 4:00-4:30, or by appointment.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course we explore the intersection between language and politics. By this I mean the way in which political conflicts and political structures shape the language of a society and the way in which linguistic structures and practices shape political conflict and political life. In particular we are interested in how language can aid and embody the exercise of political power in a society and in how an apparently common language can in fact be divided in significant ways. Three kinds of political conflict are explored in depth: conflict between social classes, conflict between genders, and conflicts between and within nations. The topics are explored almost exclusively with reference to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and we explore them by reading significant critical and theoretical texts (and one significant play).

**AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
The aims of this course are:

- to examine in depth the principal issues at stake in the intersection of language and politics
- to provide students with a good grounding in the most important critical and theoretical texts dealing with these issues
- to show students how the sphere once covered by rhetoric – analysis of and training in the political use of language – is treated in modern linguistic thought.

By the end of this course you will:

- understand the most important debates and issues in the study of the political dimension of language
- be acquainted with a wide range of seminal critical works dealing with language and politics
- be prepared to pursue independent research in this area

**ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF CLASSES:**
The class will be conducted in a seminar format. You are expected to read the text carefully and to be able to discuss it critically in the class.

**COURSE TEXTS AND READINGS**
Readings will be available in electronic form on the LEARN site. The one exception is the play *Translations* by Brian Friel, which you should purchase.
**ASSESSMENT:** Assessment is on the basis of the following pieces of work:

- Class attendance and participation: 20%
- Reading responses: 30%
- Midterm examination: 20%
- Final essay:
  - Outline and bibliography: 5%
  - Final essay: 25%

**Attendance and class participation:**
*Form:* You are expected to attend every class and to participate in class discussion.
*Submission methods and dates:* Attendance will be taken for every class and class participation noted. If you have an excuse for missing a class, please leave email me or leave me a note. You can miss classes for medical reasons and for unforeseeable personal difficulties. Every excused absence must be documented.
*Grading criteria:* If you attend every class but say absolutely nothing, you will receive a 50 for this part of the assessment; if you speak occasionally, a 70, if you speak frequently and brilliantly, a 90, etc., etc. If you have more than three unexcused absences, you lose 20% from this part of your grade; more than six classes, 40%, and so on (which means 3% off your cumulative mark for the course for 4 absences, 6% for 7 absences, and so on). Class participation is graded on how well and how often you contribute. Contributions to discussion should demonstrate that you have read the material carefully and will be assessed on their relevance, interest, and originality.

**Reading responses:**
*Form:* You will submit reading responses over the course of the term. Each response will be 400-500 words – it will say what you find interesting, significant or debatable in the text or texts we are discussing for a particular class. Note: there are 10 possible responses; you **must complete 7 of these;** you will be graded on the highest 5. If you wish to complete more than 7, you may, of course.
*Submission methods and dates:* Responses are due the night before class, at 8:00 pm, to be submitted in the appropriate dropbox (if we have two texts that session, you can discuss just one of them).
*Grading criteria:* Thoughtfulness of the response. Responses should **not** be summaries, but critical evaluations and discussions of the material.

**Midterm:**
*Form:* The midterm will ask you to define a few terms and write two short essay-type answers on issues covered in the first half of the course.
*Date:* Thursday, March 5, in class
*Grading criteria:* Accuracy, knowledge of material covered in course, ability to think critically about the material and synthesize it.

**Final essay: Outline and Bibliography:**
*Form:* The essay outline should state the critical argument you wish to make and should show how you will make your case in detail. The essay outline is not ‘binding’: if, in writing out the essay, you end up doing something different than what you had planned, that is fine. The essay outline should be 2-3 double-spaced pages. It should include a provisional bibliography.
Submission and dates: The final essay outline is to be submitted electronically, in the appropriate dropbox on the LEARN website, on Monday, April 6th, at 5 pm.

Grading criteria: Coherence of argument, detail of outline, the degree to which you use tools we have acquired on the course.

Final essay:
Form: A discussion of one of the topics covered in the course, based on the course reading and some additional research (3-4 articles or a single book). The final essay should be 3500-4000 words long (including bibliography and/or notes).
Submission method and dates: The final essay is to be submitted electronically, in the appropriate dropbox on the LEARN website, on Monday, April 20th, at 5 pm.
Grading criteria: The sophistication, inventiveness and persuasiveness of the analysis; the lucidity and elegance of the writing; the organization and presentation of the argument.

Penalties for lateness: Essay: 3% for the first day and 1% each day following.
Responses: A 0 for a missed response. I have, however, given you 10 response deadlines, which means you can ‘skip’ two of them (if you submit all I’ll take the 8 best marks).

WEEK-BY-WEEK

Week 1: January 7, 9
Tuesday: Introduction
Thursday: how can language be political?

Week 2: January 14, 16
Tuesday: Languages, states, and nations 1
Response 1 due (night before)

Thursday: Languages, states, and nations 2: the idea of a standard language
- Website: ‘Views of Standard English’: http://lagb-education.org/standard-english; read the papers by Peter Trudgill and Richard Hogg

Week 3: January 21, 23
Tuesday: Languages, states, and nations 3: language planning (the state)
Response 2 due (night before)

Thursday: Languages, states, and nations 4: language formation in civil society

**Week 4: January 28, 30**  
**Tuesday: Languages and nations 5: minority speech (‘Oh, Canada!’)**  
**Response 3 due (night before)**  

**Thursday: Languages and Nations 6: Code-meshing and code-switching**  
• James McWhorter, ‘But They Can’t Talk that Way in a Job Interview!’, in *Talking Back, Talking Black: Truths about America’s Lingua Franca* (New York: Bellevue Literary Press, 2017), 90-118

**Week 5: February 4, 6**  
**Tuesday: Language and nations 6; Code-meshing and code-switching 2**  
**Response 4 due (night before)**  
• Vershawn A. Young, “‘Nah, we straight’: an argument against code-switching’. *JAC* 21: 1-2 (2009), 49-76

**Thursday: Who owns language?**  

**Week 6: February 11, 13**  
**Tuesday: Debate!: linguistic crossing or cultural appropriation?**  
**Response 5 due (night before: comment on the debate, using some combination of Hutton, Holliday, Sweetland and Rampton/Charalambous)**  
• Nicole Holliday, ‘When is lexical innovation cultural appropriation?’, https://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/2017/04/18/cultural-appropriation-lexical-innovation/.

• Julie Sweetland, ‘Unexpected but authentic use of an ethnic dialect’, *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 6: 4 (2002), 533-46


**Thursday: Colonialism and language**  

**Week 7: February 25, 27**  
**Tuesday: Colonialism – Africa**  
**Response 6 due (night before)**  


**Thursday: Colonialism - Ireland**  
Week 8: March 3, 5
Tuesday: Creoles

Thursday: Midterm Examination

Week 9: March 10, 12
Tuesday: Universal languages/global languages: Esperanto
Response 7 due (night before)
- Paul Carus, ‘Esperanto’, *The Monist* 16: 3 (1906), 450-55

Thursday: Universal languages/global languages: Global English

Week 10: March 17, 19
Tuesday: Gender and language 1
Response 8 due (night before)

Thursday: Gender and Language II

Week 11: March 24, 26
Tuesday: Gender and Language III
Response 9 due (night before)

Thursday: Gender and Language IV

Week 12: March 31, April 2
Tuesday: Hate Speech

Response 10 due (night before)


Thursday: Orwell


POLICIES

Cross-listed course (requirement for all Arts courses)

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check the Office of Academic Integrity website for more information.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Mental Health Support
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

**On Campus**
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- **MATES**: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek form Student Life Centre

**Off campus, 24/7**
- **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts [website](mailto:facultyofarts@uwaterloo.ca)
Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/mental-health) (PDF)
Download the [WatSafe app](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/mental-health) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

**Territorial Acknowledgement**
We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.
For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the [CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/mental-health) (PDF).

**Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo**
[Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/mental-health) states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), “The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, ‘academic freedom’ refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible.” This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.