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: 15%
Final essay:
   Outline and bibliography: 10%
   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 me an email or 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 8 reading responses over the course of the term. Each response will be 500-600 words – it will say what you find interesting, significant or debatable in the text or texts we are discussing for a particular class.

*Submission methods and dates:* Responses are due the night before class, at 8:00 pm.
   (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:* November 1, 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, December 3rd, 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 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, December 17th, 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 0: September 6:
Thursday: Introduction: language, politics, and how they intersect

Week 1: September 11, 13
Tuesday: how can language be political?
Thursday: Languages, states, and nations 1
Response 1 due (night before)

Week 2: September 18, 20
Tuesday: 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
Thursday: Languages, states, and nations 3: language planning (the state)
Response 2 due (night before)

Week 3: September 25, 27
Tuesday: Languages, states, and nations 4: language formation in civil society
Thursday: Languages and nations 5: ‘minority languages’
Response 3 due (night before)
Week 4: October 2, 4
Tuesday: 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
Thursday:  
   Response 4 due (night before)
   • Vershawn A. Young, “’Nah, we straight’: an argument against code-switching’.  
     JAC 21:1-2 (2009), 49-76

Week 5: October 11
Thursday: Debate!: linguistic crossing or cultural appropriation?
   Response 5 due (night before: comment on Sweetland or Rampton)
   • 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
     421-7.

Week 6: October 16, 18
Tuesday: Who owns language?
   Response 6 due (night before)
   • Christopher Hutton, ‘Who owns language? Mother tongues as intellectual  
     property and the conceptualization of human linguistic diversity’. Language  
     Sciences 32 (2010), 638-47.
Thursday: Colonialism and language
   • Robert Phillipson, Linguistic Imperialism (Oxford: Oxford University Press,  
     1992), chapter 5, ‘The colonial linguistic inheritance’.

Week 7: October 23, 25
Tuesday: Colonialism: Africa
   • Ngugi wa’Thiongo, ‘The Language of African Literature’, New Left Review 150  
     (1985)
Thursday: Colonialism – Ireland
   Response 7 due (night before)
   • Brian Friel, Translations (London: Faber & Faber, 1981)

Week 8: October 30, November 1
Tuesday: Creoles, writing
   • Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin. ‘Re-placing language’. In The Empire  
     Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge,  
     1989), 37-76.
Thursday: Midterm examination
Week 9: November 6, 8
Tuesday: Feminism, Gender, and Language

Thursday: Feminism II
*Response 8 due (night before)*

Week 10: November 13, 15
Tuesday: Feminism III
- Anne Leclerc, ‘Woman’s Word’, in Cameron, *Feminist Critique*
- Luce Irigaray, ‘Women’s Exile’, in Cameron, *Feminist Critique*

Thursday: Feminism IV
*Response 9 due (night before)*

Week 11: November 20, 22
Tuesday: Orwell

Thursday: Discourse and Power
*Response 10 due (night before)*

Week 12: November 27, 29
Tuesday: Hate Speech

Thursday: Review and essay preparation

**Policies**

**Cross-listed course**
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 and Discipline

**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. See the Office of Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, 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 professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Grievances and Appeals

**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:** The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (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 the AS office 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 supports 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: 519-749-433 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 at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#).

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)](#).

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information.

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**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 10 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 (PDF)](#).

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**Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo**

[Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour](#) 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.