



## ENG 301 MODERN GRAMMAR SPRING 2014

### 1. COURSE INFORMATION



INSTRUCTOR: Christian F. Hempelmann, Ph.D.

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OFFICE PHONE: (903) 886-5291

OFFICE: HL 226

OFFICE HOURS:

*online*: weekdays 10am–10pm

*in my office*: W 10am–noon

Best way to contact me: e-mail

### 2. MATERIALS

**This course does not require you to purchase any textbooks.** All required materials are online. Feel free to thank the instructor when you run into him. If you want to own a book that has some, but not all, of the ideas presented in the course, you may purchase this book (especially chapters 18 and 19):

- Brown, Steve and Salvatore Attardo. 2005. *Understanding Language Structure, Interaction, and Variation*. University of Michigan Press. Second edition.

For an accessible linguistic description of the grammar of modern English you can also consult this book:

- Greenbaum, Sidney and Randolph Quirk. 1999. *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. Longman.

### 3. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a course in basic English grammar. It is based on the idea that grammar is really fairly simple and that it has been turned into something confusing and scary by centuries of misrepresentation, misunderstanding, and lack of study.

A great part of the work is focused on identifying, analyzing, and using in context the parts of speech and the units of discourse of the English language. Detecting and analyzing errors is a great resource in writing and some attention will be dedicated to this, but this is not the primary goal of the course. The primary goal is rather to foster the realization that English grammar is a system, and a fairly simple one at that, whose purpose is to encode meanings that are used frequently in language. To put it differently, how does the system of English grammar work? The answer to this question is the content of this course.

Students will learn how to handle grammatical rules and their “exceptions” by approaching them through heuristics and particularly how to observe those mechanisms in actual texts. Students will also be guided to recognize the ambiguities and multiple possible interpretations of constructions.

#### **4. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the social, historical, and pedagogical issues surrounding grammar. These three objectives will be measured through a weekly assignments for each of the three areas in the form of exercises, most in multiple-choice format, some in self-correcting form, some in short essay format. Not every week requires an assignment for all areas, but the majority does.

- a) They will be familiar with the history of the development of grammar.
- b) They will be familiar with the basic concepts of variationist sociolinguistics, as they relate to grammar.
- c) They will be exposed to issues of usage and orthographic and spelling conventions.

#### **5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will develop a good grasp of the meta-language of grammar. This general outcome will be assessed in three specific areas by evaluation of the weekly exercises in the form of multiple-choice assessment quizzes, self-correcting exercises, a mid-term exam, and a final exam.

- a) They will be able to identify and manipulate parts of speech and phrases.
- b) They will be able to identify and manipulate the different types of clauses and sentences.
- c) They will be able to identify and manipulate the different types of voice and focal constructions.

#### **6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to achieve the outcomes of the course, you will be involved in a number of different activities. It is fundamental to complete all of the readings and activities: the exercises, the exams, and the assessment tests. Most activities will be graded. If something is not directly graded that does not mean that it will not be tested (except for the contents of “Finding out more” boxes). We are covering a lot of material in 15 weeks, which is a relatively short period of time, so you will need to keep up with your readings on a regular basis.

Access and follow all course instructions found in the weekly content area of the eCollege course. The weekly content area of our course is found on the left navigation bar. Clicking on each week’s tab you will find a section called “Activities & Assignment for this week”, where you will find the list of what is due for the week. If you have never taken an eCollege course before, I strongly recommend you to take the SOT, Student Orientation Tutorial found under your "my courses" tab.

#### **7. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS/ACTIVITIES/ASSESSMENT**

The **MIDTERM** and the **FINAL EXAM** will be timed objective tests. This means you will have a designated period of time to complete the test. If you do not complete the test in the designated time you will not be allowed to re-take the test.

The points within each unit are divided according to the chart below.

#### **EXTRA CREDIT**

There is no extra credit available for this course other than the Gotcha points (see Course Home).

## 8. GRADING CRITERIA

YOUR FINAL GRADES WILL BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

ACTIVITIES	POINTS	%
PRETEST	10 PTS	0.5%
SELF CORRECTING (5 PTS X 12 WEEKS)	60 PTS	3%
EXERCISES (25 PTS X 12 WEEKS)	300 PTS	15%
DISCUSSIONS (20 PTS X 12 WEEKS)	240 PTS	12%
VARIATION EXERCISES (10 PTS X 11 WEEKS)	110 PTS	5.5%
ASSESSMENT TESTS (40 PTS X 12 WEEKS)	480 PTS	24%
FINAL EXAM	500 PTS	25%
MIDTERM EXAM	300 PTS	15%
TOTAL	2000 PTS	100%

PTS	FINAL GRADE
1801-2000	A
1601-1800	B
1401-1600	C
1200-1400	D
BELOW 1199	F

## 9. SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS AND POSTING DISCUSSIONS

This course works on eCollege. You must submit assignments electronically.

Your Assignments should be submitted in designated Dropboxes under each particular week. Click **Dropbox** in the Tool Bar on the top of your eCollege page to access dropboxes (see further steps below). Assignments will not be accepted by e-mail.

Your assignments should be submitted using Microsoft Word (either PC or Mac). If you don't do so, your assignment will not arrive in a format that I can grade and comment on.

You are responsible for sending me a file I can read. If I cannot read your first submission, I will alert you and give you the opportunity to correct the problem. After the first time, if you submit work that I cannot read, you will be given a zero on that assignment if the due date has passed.

In order to submit an assignment using the dropbox, please follow these steps

1. Click the **Dropbox** tab
2. Click **Submit an Assignment**
3. Select Basket (e.g. Week 1, Assignment 1)
4. Add Attachments (3 steps: Select File, Attach File, OK)
5. Add Comments (if any).
6. Verify that your Attachment is indeed attached.
7. If all is OK, click Submit.
8. If your Assignment was successfully submitted, you will see OK. (If you don't see OK, you need to identify the problem.)
9. Your assignment then goes to the Outbox of your Dropbox. Once it is graded, it will be in your Inbox.

You are responsible for submitting your work correctly and on time.

## 10. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

You will need reliable **internet access** for the duration of the course.

This course has a dedicated eCollege shell where you will be able to find the readings and assignments, post the assignments, and check the syllabus, the deadlines, and any other information concerning the course. It is your responsibility to check your university email address to receive and to submit the assignments or other information and materials.

## 11. COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### 11.1 PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic Dishonesty Defined. Texas A&M University-Commerce defines “academic dishonesty” in the following way (Procedure A13.12 “Academic Honesty”): Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

“Plagiarism”. Further Specified. The Department of Literature and Languages builds on the university definition of “plagiarism,” given in 1, in the following manner (taken from “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices,” undated, pages 1-2, 12 March 2003. <http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9> Plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. [ . . . ] Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student would be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately. Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion.

### 11.2 ATTENDANCE

You have a whole week to participate to the discussions, to complete your assignments, and plenty of time to do your exams, so missing one of these, means not to receive a grade for that particular assignment/discussion/exam (zero points). Homework not turned in when due, earns zero points. No makeups are given.

If a student needs to be away from internet access for longer than a week, or is otherwise unable to fulfill the requirements of the course, he/she should contact the instructor as soon as possible (using any means available) to discuss arrangements to drop the course, request an incomplete, or receive alternate assignments, as appropriate. The instructor’s decision on the matter is final.

### 11.3 COMMON DECENCY

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student’s Guidebook, Policies and

Procedures, Code of Student Conduct). In this course debates are welcome, passionate discussions are welcome as well. Quarrels and fights will be not tolerated. You are expected to respect the differences of opinion, sex, religion, beliefs, origin, and mother tongues. Besides, you will be civil and polite. And yes, your behavior counts for the final evaluation.

### **11.4 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services - Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library - Room 132 ☎ 903 886 5150 or 903 886 5835 Fax 903 468 8148  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

### **11.5 TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

If you are seeking teacher certification in English, Spanish or ESL, you must pass the TExES, the state's certification examination. The TExES Preparation guides describing the English (#117, #131) and the ESL (#154) exams may be downloaded at <http://www.texas.com>

Additional information regarding teacher certification in English, ESL, and Spanish is available from the following faculty advisors:

English: Dr. William Bolin HL 324 ☎ 903 886 5272 [Bill\\_Bolin@tamuc.edu](mailto:Bill_Bolin@tamuc.edu);

ESL: Dr. Robert J. Baumgardner HL 116 ☎ 903 886 5254 [Robert\\_Baumgardner@tamuc.edu](mailto:Robert_Baumgardner@tamuc.edu);

Spanish: Dr. Inma Lyons HL 311 ☎ 903 468 8774 [Inma\\_Lyons@tamuc.edu](mailto:Inma_Lyons@tamuc.edu);

ENG 301.01W  
Spring 2014

Syllabus Modern Grammar  
Dr. Christian F. Hempelmann

## 12. COURSE CALENDAR (TENTATIVE)

WEEK	Applied Grammar	Exercises	Self correct. tests	Theoretical grammar	Discussions	Variation	Exercises	Assessment tests
<b>Week 1</b> Jan. 13–19	Introduction	Pretest	<b>NO</b>	Introduction	<b>NO</b>	Introduction	<b>NO</b>	
<b>Week 2</b> Jan 20–26	Coherence and cohesion	Exercise 1	SCT 1	Linguistics as science	Discussion 1	Writing and Speech	Var Exercise 1	Assessment test 1
<b>Week 3</b> Jan 27–Feb 2	Parts of Speech	Exercise 2	SCT 2	Prescriptive vs. Descriptive	Discussion 2	Formal vs. Informal	Var Exercise 2	Assessment test 2
<b>Week 4</b> Feb 3–9	Noun – NP - Pronouns	Exercise 3	SCT 3	Competence vs. Performance	Discussion 3	Register	Var Exercise 3	Assessment test 3
<b>Week 5</b> Feb 10–16	Verbs - VP	Exercise 4	SCT 4	“Standard” English	Discussion 4	Variation across the social strata	Var Exercise 4	Assessment test 4
<b>Week 6</b> Feb 17–23	Auxiliaries Modals Tense and aspect	Exercise 5	SCT 5	History of Grammar I: Antiquity and Middle ages	Discussion 5	Variation across space	Var Exercise 5	Assessment test 5
<b>Week 7</b> Feb 24–Mar 2	Determiners and Adjectives	Exercise 6	SCT 6	History of Grammar II: Renaissance to Chomsky	Discussion 6	Language and Gender	Var Exercise 6	Assessment test 6
<b>Week 8</b> Mar 3–9	<b>MIDTERM</b>							
<b>Spring Break</b> Mar 10–16	<b>Spring Break</b>							
<b>Week 9</b> Mar 17–23	Prepositions – PP Adverbs - AP	Exercise 7	SCT 7	History of Grammar III: Case Grammar, Functional Grammar, Cognitive Grammar	Discussion 7	Scientific Language vs. Jargon	Var Exercise 7	Assessment test 7
<b>Week 10</b> Mar 24–30	Sentence structure	Exercise 8	SCT 8	Types of Grammar	Discussion 8	Diachrony and Synchrony	Var Exercise 8	Assessment test 8
<b>Week 11</b> Mar 31–Apr 6	Transitive Intransitive Passive Copular verbs	Exercise 9	SCT 9	Pedagogy of Grammar: L1	Discussion 9	Language and Age	Var Exercise 9	Assessment test 9
<b>Week 12</b> Apr 7–13	Subordination and coordination	Exercise 10	SCT 10	Pedagogy of Grammar: L2	Discussion 10	Foreigner talk, EFL	Var Exercise 10	Assessment test 10
<b>Week 13</b> Apr 14–20	Relative clauses	Exercise 11	SCT 11	Diagramming Sentences	Discussion 11	Ethnic languages	Var Exercise 11	Assessment test 11
<b>Week 14</b> Apr 21–27	Marked constructions	Exercise 12	SCT 12	Usage & punctuation	Discussion 12	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	Assessment test 12
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Review Week</b>							