

## E322: English Language for Teachers I\*

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### **Course Description:**

The National Council of Teachers of English points out that while language is a subject worth studying in and of itself, language is ultimately about people:

*Language is a primary way individuals communicate what they think and feel. They find self-identity through language, shape their knowledge and experience by means of it, and depend upon it as a lifelong resource for expressing their hopes and feelings.... Skillful use of language may be the single most important means of realizing the overarching goal of education to develop informed, thinking citizens. (NCTE Guideline on the Essentials of English, 1982)*

With these assertions in mind, this course aims to provide you, the preservice teacher in secondary English Language Arts, with resources for understanding the following topics of study:

- how language is put together and used—grammar, word structure, sounds, spelling, punctuation, and so on
- how language evolves over time based on how people use it to meet their needs, express their thoughts and desires, understand themselves, and make themselves known to one another
- how and why language use varies from person to person, context to context, and culture to culture
- how people acquire language in home, school, and their everyday lives outside of school
- how language use is intimately connected to identity, culture, and power
- why issues related to language learning and use are of consequence in schools and the broader culture

Most importantly, we will consider what all of the above means for you as a teacher. While the course does contain a substantial amount of grammar, we will study it in a way that honors and develops your analytic skills and increases your understanding of linguistic study as inquiry into the human mind.

### **Course Objectives:**

My ultimate goal is that you will leave this course as a more intentional language teacher because you will understand more than you do right now about how language works, about how teachers' beliefs and stances regarding language use influence what happens in schools, and about some specific methods you can actually use in your classroom to help students gain access to the power of language and the languages of power in and outside of school.

If you read the course materials, come to class and participate fully each day, complete the assignments, and reflect on your learning, you should be able to do the following by the end of the course:

- ✓ explain various language theories and engage with sociolinguistic concepts
- ✓ name and apply grammar concepts in the context of reading, writing, and speaking
- ✓ articulate an expansive, contextually-based notion of language "correctness" that recognizes the relevance of context in shaping the rhetorical choices language users have the capacity to make
- ✓ explain the relationship between primary and secondary Discourses in terms of language acquisition, development, and use
- ✓ develop culturally inclusive, inquiry-based, rhetorically-savvy language instruction that meets a range of students' needs, including English Language Learners
- ✓ demonstrate professional habits of mind through reflection on your practice and collaboration with colleagues in this course

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\*I'm heavily indebted to Dr. Pam Coke for allowing me to adapt her overall design and many of her resources for this course (including this syllabus!).

## REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Benjamin, A., with Oliva, T. (2007). *Engaging grammar: Practical advice for REAL classrooms*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Frantal, C., & Zonana, E. (2009). *Catching up on conventions: Grammar lessons for middle school writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Ortmeier-Hooper, C. (2013). *The ELL writer: Moving beyond basics in the secondary classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Various articles, chapters, and online materials accessible from our class website and Google folder

## RIGHTS, RESOURCES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Rights to Full Participation:** If you have a physical challenge or special learning needs that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunities. Also, please realize that every voice is important in this class. If at any time you feel harassed on the basis of race, ethnic or cultural background, gender, or sexual orientation, or because you are differently abled, please notify me so that we can address the situation immediately and/or make the proper referrals to the appropriate campus personnel.

CSU's Student Sexual Harassment and Violence policy, following national guidance from the Office of Civil Rights, requires that faculty follow CSU policy as a "mandatory reporter" of any personal disclosure of sexual harassment, abuse, and/or violence related experiences or incidents shared with the faculty member in person, via email, and/or in classroom papers or homework exercises. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of personal relational abuse, relational/domestic violence, and stalking. While faculty are often able to help students locate appropriate channels of assistance on campus (e.g., see the CSU Health Network link below), disclosure by the student to the faculty member requires that the faculty member inform appropriate CSU channels to help ensure that the student's safety and welfare is being addressed, even if the student requests that the disclosure not be shared.

**Resources for Student Wellness:** For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu/>. Also, CSU's Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students who have experienced sexual assault. The web address is <http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/victim-assistance-team-volunteers>.

**Academic Integrity:** This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in the CSU Policy Library (<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=442>). Here are the specifics of how this code will play out in E322:

- ***What constitutes "academic integrity" in this class and why does it matter?*** Good ideas reflect hard work, and academic integrity requires that when you've drawn on others' intellectual property, you must give credit where credit is due. In this class that means three things: 1) you may not present the work of others as your own. When you draw on other sources to support your own ideas, including Internet sources, you must cite them properly; 2) you may not submit identical work in this course that you created for prior courses or for the courses you are currently enrolled in; doing so is considered "self plagiarism"; and 3) you must truthfully state the degree and substance of your contribution to any collaborative projects I ask you to complete in this class. To foster academic integrity, I'll ask you to accompany course projects with a bibliography, to include a signed honor pledge with major assignments, and to complete group and individual participation statements for collaborative projects.
- ***What specifically constitutes plagiarism and cheating?*** See the definitions included in the Student Conduct Code at <http://www.conflictresolution.colostate.edu/conduct-code>.
- ***What happens if I suspect you of academic misconduct?*** Depending on the severity of the violation, instructors are within their rights to impose consequences that range from giving you a zero on an assignment, to recommending the loss of the repeat/delete privilege and a notation of "AM" (for academic misconduct) on your transcript, to failing you for the course. The exact wording regarding academic integrity, the consequences of violating it, and the procedures for addressing it can be found in section I.5 of the CSU Faculty and Professional Manual on the CSU website (<http://www.facultycouncil.colostate.edu/files/manual/sectioni.htm>).

**Attendance and Late Work Policies:** Come to class for the entire period each day. You'll be missed and you'll be missing something if you don't. Because the class is so interactive, much of what goes on simply isn't reproducible outside of class. We will also sometimes complete writing and small-group activities that cannot be made up outside of class. It almost goes without saying that grades inevitably correlate with attendance and participation, but to be crystal clear, *excessive absences will override all percentages for class assignments noted in the "Course Projects and Activities" section.* See details in the description of "flex days."

If you must miss class for an established religious holiday or to participate in university-sanctioned extracurricular/co-curricular activities (e.g., competitions, events and professional meetings in which you are officially representing CSU), please let me know in advance so that I can tell you what you'll miss and we can make accommodations for turning in any work due that day. I also understand that illness or other extenuating circumstances sometimes cause you to miss class or prevent you from submitting your work on time. In these cases, you can use *flex days*.

**Flex Days:** You are allowed **three** flex days to be used for absences and/or extending the due date on the major projects for this class—the Scope and Sequence assignment and the Instructables Project. (You may not use flex days on other assignments like LAPPS, etc.). You may use your flex days as you wish as long as the combined number of absences and due date extension on these major projects does not exceed three or extend beyond Finals Week (in the case of the Instructables Project). **Furthermore, your course grade drops by one letter for each additional absence.** "Days" count in the following ways:

1) **Attendance and Participation:** Each absence is a "day," and attendance counts if you are present for, and participating in, the *entire* class period. If you miss a class OR your arrival to class is excessively late OR if you have the need to leave early for more than 15 minutes, you are using a flex day. (Note: Absences are absences, regardless of cause. This means that the three flex days you're allotted *include any absences related to illness or other emergencies.*)

2) **Due Date Extension for Scope and Sequence and Instructables Project:** If you need extra time, you can apply flex days toward these major projects only. *Again, because all other assignments are for use on a specific day, you must submit them on time or receive no credit.* Flex days used for this purpose refer to class periods, not calendar days.

## COURSE PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

### 1. Class Participation (25 points possible):

Part of professionalism is your accountability to your colleagues and your willingness to share your thinking. Your grade in this category will reflect your attendance and active engagement in class. You are expected to come to class each day with something to say about what you've read, an openness to others' responses and questions as well, and a commitment toward collaborating and constructing understanding together. We will develop specific criteria together in class to flesh out what such "engagement" looks like, but you can also use the following questions to evaluate yourself in this area. I'll periodically record a "working grade" for your participation on Engrade, the online grade book I use:

- *Am I present and on time for each class? Do I show respect for my colleagues by practicing "dinner table etiquette" (i.e. you refrain from technology use and sidebar conversations that don't directly connect to what's happening in class at the present moment, AND you take care of personal necessities prior to class)? To be absolutely specific, I ask the you behave as you would in a faculty meeting when you're a teacher. That is, I don't want you to use your cellphone or be on your laptop unless directed to do so in class. I also don't want you to get up and leave in the middle of class unless you've explained why you're doing so.*
- *Do I participate substantively, but judiciously, in classroom discussion, small groups, and other in-class activities? Do I demonstrate a healthy balance of "stepping up" (i.e., sharing my ideas regularly in order to move our class's thinking forward) and "stepping back" (i.e., listening well and learning from others by not hogging the floor)?*
- *Do I collaborate well? Am I an innovative thinker? Am I willing to consider ideas that may not map neatly onto my own? Am I being the student in this class that I expect my future students to be?*

### 2. LAPP Responses (50 points possible):

My colleague Pam Coke came up with the concept of LAPP response. (LAPP stands for "Language APplication.") As the name suggests, these responses are designed to help you apply what you're learning in class. You'll do 5 LAPP responses total. They'll take different forms, such as, responses to an assigned resource, explorations of language, and checkpoints that will help you develop various aspects of the major projects described above.

### 3. Midterm Exam (50 points possible):

This will be a multiple-choice exam based on course readings and class discussion to that point.

### 4. Scope and Sequence for Language Instruction (100 points possible):

For this project, you will develop an outline for incorporating inclusive language instruction in the secondary English language arts classroom that helps students develop as rhetorically savvy language users by exploring the power of language and the language(s) of power. As a result of this instruction, “students should be able to understand and talk about the English language in a way that allows them to make effectively rhetorical choices” as readers, writers, and speakers in particular communicative contexts (Benjamin, 2007). In your Scope and Sequence, you will specify a teaching context, outline a calendar, and develop resources for language instruction related to a genre of writing or a set of texts. Your work must reflect research endorsed by NCTE by including: *authentic texts, student-generated writing, visuals and manipulatives, and active learning pedagogy*. It must also *tap students’ natural language sense and reflect the dynamic nature of language*. The project includes 4 parts: 1) a **User’s Guide** that explains the focus and logic of your design related to the *content and application* of the resources you’ve created; 2) a **Glossary** of featured terminology; 3) a **Suggested Pedagogy** that reflects the NCTE principles described above; and 3) a **Summary** that clarifies what *students* should be able to do as language users after completing the scope of instruction you’ve designed and reflects what *you as a language teacher* are now able to do as a result of creating these materials. I’ll provide an assignment sheet with more details as the project approaches.

### 5. Instructables Project (50 points possible):

This collaborative project will function as the final for E322 and will focus on an “intractable question”—a persistent question that’s not easily solved—or cluster of questions related to the content and language issues emerging in the second half of the semester. You may be wondering, *what’s an Instructable?* [Instructables](#) is an online community that allows absolutely anyone to explore, document, and share their creations. MIT researchers initially created the site to share their own projects, “connect with others, and make an impact on the world.” The creators now describe what has become the largest existing DIY online site as an “amazing mix of wonder from around the world. Every day we continue to be amazed by the imagination, curiosity, and simple awesomeness of everyone who shares their creations with us on Instructables.” Projects include everything from how to make a hamster camper to how to make an Iron Man helmet for cheap to how to design English 101.

Your Instructable will help your online viewers conduct a DIY exploration of your intractable question. The product you create should be couched in theory, informed by practice, collegial in tone, and useful to English Language Arts teachers, parents, administrators, students, or anyone else for whom your question might be relevant. Your Instructable, you will identify your intractable question, explain why it matters, share your discoveries, and demonstrate something your users can actually do with this information. It will also include multimedia “bonus features” (e.g., some combination of images, video, audio, and text) your users will find helpful. You will post your Instructable online in a manner we will determine together so that others can access it beyond this class and be as amazed by your imagination, curiosity, and simple awesomeness as I am.

### 6. Optional: INTO Conversation Partner (10 points for one 5-week session / 20 points for two 5-week sessions):

You have the opportunity to earn extra credit for this class by serving as a conversation partner for an international student through the INTO CSU Academic English Program (AEP). No advance preparation is required. You simply show up to the conversation class and participate in activities that the AEP teacher has prepared to help you interact with your partner. After each session, you will write a brief reflection relating your experience to course readings and discussions. You earn 1 point for each AEP class you attend, and 1 point for your written reflection about your experiences in the class. This reflection is due 48 hours after the class you attend. You can find more information about the AEP Conversation Partners program and sign up at <https://wsnet.colostate.edu/CWIS1/net/form/ConversationPartners>. **Note:** Anyone who attends fewer than 3 AEP classes per session gets no credit.

## GRADING AND COMMENTS

The methods I use to grade and respond to your work will vary according to how involved the assignment is and what time of the semester you complete it. In other words, I’ll provide brief commentary and/or grade some things for completion only (e.g. LAPP responses, Conversation Partners reflections); a numerical grade only for the mid-term exam; extensive feedback (e.g., a detailed scoring guide and comments) on your Scope and Sequence; and a scoring guide and checklist feedback on your Instructable Project so that I can get grades in on time. You should also value the written and verbal feedback you receive from your classmates during in-class workshops, online, and in class presentations (though that feedback won’t figure into your grade for the course).

I'll periodically record grades on engrade.com so that you can see your scores on individual assignments and a cumulative percentage for the course. I use the following scale for letter grades and *do not round up* [NOTE: The same numerical pattern holds for grades of B and below.]:

- A+ = 98-100
- A = 94-97
- A- = 90-93

Additional Feedback: If you have difficulty understanding why you earned a particular grade, I'm always happy to talk with you about it in more detail. I ask that you follow these steps first:

1. Make an appointment to meet with me face-to-face. I will not discuss your grade immediately after class on the day that I return your work because I have found that when students are unhappy about a grade, they are reacting to a number rather than to written comments.
2. Before the conference, do your reading. When grading your work, I always have the original assignment sheet and scoring guide at hand, so it's important to understand my feedback in the context of these documents. Re-read these items before our conference. In fact, you may even find it helpful to re-read them in this order: the assignment sheet, the scoring guide, your paper, my feedback, and your letter grade. *Bring all of these documents with you to the conference* so that we can refer to them as needed. At that conference, I'll ask you if you've read these things; if you haven't, we'll reschedule.
3. Approach the meeting with a professional mindset. I know that your grades are important to you, and I don't assign them lightly. Most important, however, are the skills and dispositions you are developing as a teacher. If you are unable to demonstrate pedagogical skill through the projects you produce and professionalism in the conversations you have, your *students* will be the ones who suffer in the end. Ultimately, they are your "true work," as Rumi would say, so even in our conversations about your grade on an individual assignment, we must always, always keep them in mind.

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**CONFIRMATION OF E322 SYLLABUS REVIEW**

My signature below confirms that I have read the syllabus and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I have about how the course will be conducted and my work will be evaluated. I also understand that I can meet with Dr. O'Donnell-Allen at any point in the semester if additional questions arise.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_