

English 315: The English Language
MWF 1-1:50, 114 Clough
Fall 2013, CRN 14546

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Course Description

Ye knowe eek, that in forme of speche is chaunge. . . (Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*)

In this course, we will examine the history of the English language from its beginnings to the present. We will trace its Indo-European and Germanic origins, its development into Old and Middle English, and its transformation from the early modern period into its diversity as a modern “world” language. Language cannot be separated from the people who speak it, and our emphasis will fall equally on the formal and social aspects of language history. At each stage of language history, we will seek to understand the linguistic forces of phonological, morphological, and syntactical change as well as processes of semantic change and new word formation. Throughout the semester, we will explore such topics as language and literature, the social implications of language variation, text production, and the effects of languages in contact--as a result of war and colonization as well as through trade, tourism, and even the internet. The course will be of special interest to students of literature seeking to understand more fully the linguistic forces at work in the texts they study but is likely to be of value to anyone who uses language. Prerequisites: Any 200-level literature course or permission from the instructor.

Required Texts

- Algeo and Butcher (based on the work of Pyles), *The Origins and Development of the English Language* 7th edition (2014)
 - Please note that significant changes have been made from the previous editions, and you will need the 7th edition for this course. Electronic editions through Cengage or Kindle are fine and less expensive alternatives, provided you can bring appropriate devices to read the text in class.
- Algeo and Butcher, *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (workbook), 7th edition (2014)
 - Daily assignments will be made for the workbook, and we will use material from the workbook in class on a regular basis. Please bring it to class each day and make sure to check for workbook assignments if you have to miss class for any reason. I will occasionally take workbooks up to check progress. Be aware that while the electronic edition of the textbook is fine, you must have a hard copy of the workbook.
 - The workbook provides important opportunities to practice and apply course concepts, and it is very important that your work be entirely your own. For this reason, your workbook must be new, and credit will not be given for work in used workbooks. The Rhodes Bookstore has been notified of this requirement. Please note also that your *own* workbook cannot share with other students. Please notify me as soon as possible of any problems obtaining the workbook.
- *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th edition unabridged (2011)
 - This is the dictionary that will be required for any assignments involving dictionaries. Except where otherwise noted, editions earlier than the 5th or abridged editions (such as the AHD College or Desk versions) will not suffice for class purposes.
 - The following (free) online <http://www.ahdictionary.com/> includes most of the information needed for class in its entries (such as etymologies, word histories, and usage notes).
 - Hard copies, which include supplemental essays and a dictionary of Proto-Indo-European roots, are available at a discounted rate at <http://www.hmhco.com/shop/books/the-american-heritage-dictionary-of-the-english-language-fifth-edition/9780547041018>
 - An iOS app will be available soon.
- *Oxford English Dictionary*, online and available through Barret Library

Course Requirements

- Examinations: 35%
 - The first two examinations will be worth 10% each, and the final examination will be worth 15%. Any special arrangements for make-up examinations must be made ahead of time and outside of class. Except in the case of serious illness or other documented emergency, make-up examinations will receive a 20% deduction.
 - The final examination will be comprehensive but will emphasize material from the second half of the semester.
- Microthemes: 20%
 - A series of four microthemes (500- 700 words each) are short compositions that provide additional opportunities to explore and apply course concepts through clearly organized and tightly focused writing. Topics and additional details on microthemes will be provided in a separate handout and on the course website.
 - Microthemes submitted within one week after the due date and time will receive a 10% deduction. Those submitted more than one week after the due date will not be accepted. Please note that papers submitted more than five minutes after the beginning of class on assigned due dates will be subject to a reduced late penalty of 5%.
 - Microthemes should be submitted in hard copy and electronically through the course website.
- Quizzes: 20%
 - A series of quizzes (most online) will provide opportunities to review and apply course material. Most (but not all) of the questions will come directly from assigned exercises in your workbook and exercises completed during class, so be sure to have your workbook with you when you begin. Quiz questions drawn from the workbook will be timed and will assume that you have already completed all assigned exercises.
 - All online quizzes must be completed before the beginning of class on the dates provided below. Late submissions will not be accepted unless special arrangements have been made ahead of time and outside of class; however, the lowest will be dropped to allow for unexpected computer problems, illnesses, or other emergency situations. If you are unable to use Moodle from your personal computer, please take advantage of one of the many computer labs on campus to complete online quizzes and assignments.
- Final Paper and Progress Report: 20% (15% paper; 4% progress report; 1% submitting topic on time)
 - The paper final offers the opportunity for you to develop your thoughts and research in more depth on a topic that we cover at any point in the semester. Additionally, it is possible for you to look at topics or issues concerning the English language other than those that we discuss in class. In all cases, however, it is necessary for me to approve your topic ahead of time. Additional information and requirements regarding the paper and progress report will be provided later in the semester.
 - One full letter grade will be deducted from papers submitted more than five minutes after the beginning of class but before the final exam. Papers submitted after the final exam will not be accepted. Any special arrangements must be made ahead of time and outside of class.
 - Papers must be submitted both electronically through Moodle and in hard copy.
- Participation: 5%
 - Your participation grade will be determined on the basis of your attendance, the quality of your contributions to discussion, your participation in class activities, and your completion of any ungraded assignments. Please note that the course's success will depend largely on class discussion, and there will be many ways to participate. In all cases, contributions to discussion (in class, online, and in working groups) should demonstrate careful reading of course materials and must be respectful of other students' ideas and points of view.

Additional Notes

Class preparation: Please read all materials carefully and complete all assigned workbook exercises before you come to class. Bring questions about what is difficult or confusing to you. Also come prepared to share your thoughtful insights and responses. It is your responsibility to notify me *before* classtime of any problems completing readings or assignments. While time spent completing readings and assignments will no doubt vary from student to student and from day to day, you should expect to spend several hours preparing for each hour that you are in class. See helpful tips on time management at <http://www.rhodes.edu/counselingcenter/12089.asp>.

Honor code: All work must adhere to the honor code: “As a member of the Rhodes community, I pledge I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and that I will report any such violation that I may witness.” Please note that copying the work of another student into your own workbook, using answers from a used workbook, or using an answer key for the workbook would all constitute violation of the Honor Code in this class.

Plagiarism and academic integrity: The Rhodes College Honor Council Constitution defines plagiarism as follows: “Cheating includes plagiarism; specifically, it is the act of using another person’s words or ideas and representing them as one’s original work. This includes, without limitation, using information from any source without proper reference, getting ideas or words from a classmate’s paper, failure to properly punctuate direct quotes, and obtaining a paper from someone else. Ignorance is not an excuse for these violations. It is the student’s responsibility to consult the professor, an Honor Council member, or writing handbooks for procedure for properly acknowledging sources.” Barret Library offers the following advice for avoiding possible plagiarism (<http://www.rhodes.edu/barret/15554.asp>):

- Acknowledge and cite all sources properly.
- Use quotation marks around words that are not your own.
- Properly introduce and indent longer quotations that are not your own.
- Use footnotes or endnotes to acknowledge another’s words or ideas.
- Do not paraphrase too closely.

Please note also that all writing in English 315 must be original work produced specifically for this course. No paper or portion of a paper—even if revised— may receive credit if it has already received or will receive credit in another class. Please ask me or a Writing Center staff member if you have any doubt about even a small portion of a paper that you have produced.

Attendance: As the official Student Handbook explains, Rhodes College “considers interactive engagement with other students and the professor, in a structured setting, to be one of the essential and central components of the academic program. . . . Absenteeism is not to be taken lightly” (<http://www.rhodes.edu/academics/6938.asp>). Regular attendance is thus expected and counts as a part of your participation grade. Three tardies will be treated as one absence. In addition to the effect of absences on your participation grade, after three unexcused absences, your overall grade may automatically be reduced by 1 percentage points each day, down to 60%. (In other words, a student will not fail on the basis of attendance alone, but poor attendance could theoretically reduce a grade as low as D-.) For example, if your course average at the end of the semester is an 80% and you have 4 unexcused absences, your course grade will be lowered to 79%. I will take roll or distribute a roll sheet at the beginning of each class. I will have a sign-in sheet for late arrivals at the front of the room. Please note that it is *your* responsibility to sign the sheet if you arrive late in order to avoid recorded absences. Absences and tardies may be excused only if I have been notified ahead of time and outside of class. If you miss class, be sure to check the course website for missed material or assignments. Students whose reasons for absence raise privacy concerns should seek assistance from the Office of Student Affairs: <http://www.rhodes.edu/campuslife/1186.asp>.

Computer problems: Please be aware that computer and printing problems will not serve as an excuse for late assignments. Back up your hard-drive files frequently, and always keep a second hard copy of your assignments.

Course Website: We will be using Moodle extensively for readings and assignments. If you do not have a personal computer compatible with Moodle, please make use of the Computer labs in Barret to complete graded work and access required readings. Grades will also be posted to Moodle regularly. If you suspect an error in your reported grade, please notify me within one week of receiving the grade, since it will be much more difficult to determine the source of any confusion or problem at the end of the semester. While I will always make allowances for campus-wide outages, please note that individual problems with a personal computer or account will typically not serve as an excuse for late assignments.

Special Accommodations: If you require any disability-related accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible. I am more than happy to help make any necessary arrangements. If you have not already done so, please contact the Office of Disability Services: 901-843-3885. For further information, go to <http://www.rhodes.edu/disabilityservices/default.asp>.

Electronic Devices: To facilitate a classroom environment most conducive to learning, courtesy and respect are required by students with regard to electronic devices. Tablets, laptop computers, and related devices may be used

exclusively for note-taking, engaging assigned course readings, and other appropriate class-related purposes. Checking e-mail, web-surfing, reading Facebook, texting, and similar activities during class are strictly prohibited. Students violating any part of this policy will be required to turn off and stow the device and may lose the privilege of using such devices in future class periods.

Library Reserve: Occasionally, books that might be especially helpful for your research may be placed on reserve in Barret Library.

Additional Resources: Success in this course and others is likely to be enhanced with careful time management, good study habits, and a general sense of well-being. The Counseling Center offers free and confidential counseling to Rhodes students: <http://www.rhodes.edu/counselingcenter.asp>. In addition, helpful links and information on such issues as test anxiety, procrastination, study skills, and stress are available at <http://www.rhodes.edu/counselingcenter/12077.asp>.

Extenuating Circumstances: If you need to discuss extenuating circumstances, please arrange a time to meet with me or contact me by email. Please avoid using the time immediately before and after class to ask for special arrangements. Information on late penalties can be found under course requirements.

Tentative Schedule

Note: All readings and assignments should be completed by classtime on the dates provided below. If you miss class for any reason, please contact me or check the Moodle site for daily workbook assignments, which do not appear on the syllabus. Please be sure to notify me as soon as possible and before the start of class if you encounter any problems.

W 8/21: Introduction to class.

UNIT 1: LANGUAGE CHANGE AND THE ORIGINS OF ENGLISH

F 8/23: McWhorter, "Lava Lamps and Language," from *Word on the Street: Debunking the Myth of "Pure" Standard English* (Moodle); "Guide to the Online *American Heritage Dictionary*" (Moodle); **Online Quiz 1** (Complete this and all online quizzes before class, unless otherwise instructed.)

M 8/26 : Algeo, Ch. 1

W 8/28: Bryson, "Pronunciation," from *The Mother Tongue: English and How it Got That Way* (Moodle)

F 8/30: Algeo, Ch. 2; **Online Quiz 2**

Monday, September 2: Labor Day, no class meeting

W 9/4: Fridland and Bartlett, "Correctness, Pleasantness, and Degree of Difference Ratings Across Regions," *American Speech* (Moodle)

F 9/6: Brown, "Evolution of the Merger of /I/ and /ɛ/ before Nasals in Tennessee," *American Speech* (Moodle)

M 9/9: **Quiz 3** (International Phonetic Alphabet), in class.

W 9/11: Algeo, Ch. 3

F 9/13: Algeo, Ch. 4 (53-74)

M 9/16: Algeo, Ch. 4 (74-end); **Online Quiz 4**

W 9/18: In-Class Review; **Microtheme 1 Due**

F 9/20: **Exam 1**

UNIT 2: OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH

M 9/23: Baron, "The Etymology Trap," in *Declining Grammar*; Goodlad, "Strange Deliveries: Contextualizing Shakespeare's First Citations in the *OED*," in *Stylistics and Shakespeare's Language: Transdisciplinary Approaches*; excerpts from *Reading the OED: One Man, One year, 21,730 Pages* (Moodle)

W 9/25: Algeo, Ch. 5 (84-93); **Online Quiz 5**
F 9/27: Algeo, Ch. 5 (93-99)

M 9/30: Algeo, Ch. 5 (99-end)
W 10/2: Osborn, "Shakespeare Did Not Write in Old English" (Moodle); **Online Quiz 6**
F 10/4: Crystal, "The End of Old English" (Moodle)

M 10/7: Algeo, Ch. 6 (121-25); Knowles, "English and French," in *A Cultural History of the English Language* (Moodle)
W 10/9: Algeo, Ch. 6 (126-139); **Online Quiz 7**
F 10/11: Algeo, Ch. 6 (139-end)

Monday, 10/14: Fall Break, no class

W 10/16: Workbook readings/exercises only; **Online Quiz 8**
F 10/18: Review; **Microtheme 2**

M 10/21: **Exam 2**

UNIT 3: EARLY MODERN AND MODERN ENGLISH

W 10/23: View *Muse of Fire*; Read "I Do, I Will, Shakespeare's English" (Moodle); Hock and Joseph, Chicago Sound Shift (Moodle)
F 10/25: Algeo, Ch. 7

M 10/28: Algeo, Ch. 8 (169-78); **Online Quiz 9**
W 10/30: Guest Speaker, Scott Garner: "Sports and the History of the English"
F 11/1: *American Heritage Dictionary*: Introduction, Usage Panel, Usage in the AHD (Moodle)

M 11/4: **Microtheme 3**
W 11/6: Algeo, Ch. 8 (178-end); **Online Quiz 10**
F 11/8: Algeo, Ch. 9

M 11/11: Lerer, "Antses in the Sugar: Dialect and Regionalism in American Literature," in *Inventing English*; **Online Quiz 11**
W 11/13: Lucas and Bayley "Variation in American Sign Language," in *Linguistics of American Sign Language* (Moodle) **Microtheme 4; last day to submit tentative paper topics**
F 11/15: Algeo, Ch. 10

M 11/18: Algeo, Ch. 11; **Online Quiz 12**
W 11/20: Algeo, Ch. 12
F 11/22: *No Class Meeting. Progress Report Due*

M 11/25: *No Class Meeting. Online Quiz 13*

Wednesday and Friday, November 27 and 29, Thanksgiving Break, no class

M 12/2: Newspaper articles on English in a global context (Moodle)
W 12/4: **Research Paper Due**; Review for Final Exam.

315 Final Exam: *Saturday, December 7 8:30 am, regular classroom. Alternate exam time will be arranged for those with conflicts.*