

Linguistics 312: Language and Gender

Spring 2009

MWF 11:00 – 12:00 (40500)

MWF 1:00 – 2:00 (40505)

Instructor: Sarah Wagner
Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 2-3:30, and by appointment
Office: CAL 431B
Contact: swagner@mail.utexas.edu

Course Description:

One of the most vibrant and cutting-edge fields of sociolinguistics is the study of language and gender. Beginning in the 1970s, this field has expanded and changed tremendously. Further developing the classic language and gender studies, current research continues to challenge our assumptions about how women and men speak by examining how we create our selves through our language choices.

In this course, you will gain a fundamental understanding of the main issues in gender and language research by looking at the history and development of the field and the current issues confronting researchers. In addition, you will learn basic sociolinguistic methodologies throughout the semester. Over the second half of the semester, you will put these methodologies to use by doing a short field research project in which you will collect, analyze, and report on your own data, both in a final presentation and a paper.

Class Policies:

- ☞ You're expected to be on time to class every day. More than four absences will result in a drop of one letter in your final grade.
- ☞ Turn off your cell phones in class.
- ☞ Please get your water, phone calls and other needs taken care of before class starts.
- ☞ This course will be a mix of lectures and discussions. I expect that everyone will join in discussions regularly. Please respect your classmates' different skills, opinions, needs, and goals for the semester.
- ☞ You are responsible for keeping track of due dates for class assignments. Late assignments will lose a letter grade.
- ☞ I use Blackboard to post readings, the syllabus and grades. If you do not know how to use Blackboard, ask a classmate or come and see me during office hours.
- ☞ Academic honesty: Proper citation of others' intellectual property is an absolute must. Plagiarism and collusion are impermissible. In the case of academic dishonesty—intended or not—the penalty ranges from failing the assignment to expulsion from the University. It is your responsibility to learn proper citation methods.

Special Needs: If you have any special needs associated with any learning or physical disability, please feel free to let me know. Before course accommodations can be made, you may be required to provide documentation for the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. UT provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, call the Office of the Dean of Students: 512-471-6259 (512-471-4641 TTY).

Required Texts: (Available at the Co-op)

Eckert, Penelope and McConnell-Ginet, Sally. (2003). *Language and Gender*. CUP.
Hall, Kira and Bucholtz, Mary (eds). (1995). *Gender Articulated*. Routledge.

Grading:

Precis: 20%

Precis are 1-2 page (single-spaced) summaries of articles—we'll go over what they entail in class. Each of you will be required to do two precis on articles of your choosing. The first will come from an article mentioned in *Language and Gender*. You will choose the article by the second day of class, and the precis is due on Friday of the week we discuss the article. I'll provide complete information on the process in class. The second precis will come from *Gender Articulated* or another reading assigned in the second half of the semester. We will discuss two articles each week. In the week we discuss your article, you will bring copies of your precis for everyone and help lead the discussion. Again, I'll provide more details in class.

Test: 20% Quizzes: 20%

There will be two quizzes on material covered in the first half of the semester, as well as a test covering all of *Language and Gender*. All three will require that you've done the reading, asked questions on material that is unclear to you, and participated in class discussions. I don't give "gotcha" exams—no trick questions, nothing about what's on page 43. However, you will not be able to pass them if you don't have clear and in-depth knowledge of the material.

Paper: 30% Presentation: 10%

Your final project for the semester will result in an 8-10 page paper as well as a class presentation. Note that these two assignments count for 40% of your grade—do not leave this until the last minute! I intend for this project to be a *fun* way to use the knowledge you've acquired and get some experience doing research and analysis.

Throughout the first section of the course, you should be thinking of what type of project you'd like to carry out. After we finish the first half of the semester, we'll take a week to discuss sociolinguistic methods and potential research questions. By the end of the week, you'll turn in a summary of your project, its questions/hypotheses, its relationship to existing research, and the method(s) you'll use to gather and analyze data. As you go forward with your project, you are encouraged to come to office hours to discuss any questions or issues you have. During the last two weeks of the semester, you'll present your findings to the class. Your final paper will be due during exam week.

Schedule

L&G: *Language and Gender* text

GA: Article is in *Gender Articulated*

BB: Article available on Blackboard

Week	Dates	Discussion	Assignments
1	1/21-1/23	Introductions, course overview	Article choice due 2/23; Lg & gender exs due by noon Sunday 1/25
2	1/26-1/30	L&G: Introduction and Chapter 1	L&G: Introduction and Chapter 1 Quiz Friday 1/30
3	2/2-2/6	L&G: Chapters 2-3	
4	2/9-2/13	L&G: Chapters 2-3 cont.	
5	2/16-2/20	L&G: Chapters 4-5	
6	2/23-2/27	L&G: Chapters 6-7	Quiz Friday 2/27
7	3/2-3/6	L&G: Chapters 8-9	
8	3/9-3/13	Test; Methodology and Project Planning	
9	3/16-3/20	SPRING BREAK!	YAY!
10	3/23-3/27	Test review	Test on Friday 3/27
11	3/30-4/3	BB: Herring; Waseleski	
12	4/6-4/10	GA: Bucholtz; Moonwomon BB: Liang	Status summary—turn in a 2 page (double-spaced) report on the status of your project
13	4/13-4/17	GA: Mendoza-Denton; Ochs & Taylor; BB: Wagner	
14	4/20-4/24	GA: Hall; McElhinny BB: Livia	
15	4/27-5/1	Presentations	
16	5/4-5/8	Presentations/Evaluations/Last Class	Final Paper Due

Writing

These are general guidelines for formatting papers within the liberal arts. Different professors may have different guidelines, but most of these specifications you should be doing on a regular basis for everyone. Failure to do so for my papers/summaries may result in having your paper returned and graded as a late paper.

- * At the top of your first page, aligned left or right and single-spaced, please make sure to have the following information: your name, date, my name, class, name of assignment. Then you may include a title of your own.
- * Please use 12-point font, double-spacing, 1-1.5 inch margins and *always* number your pages.
- * Do not put extra space between paragraphs. Make sure your computer is not doing this automatically.
- * Staple your papers *before* class starts. Don't ask me for a stapler—find it on your own.
- * You may choose what reference format to use for your papers. You must include citations within the papers and a list of works cited at the end. Please use APA formatting, as it is fairly standard in linguistics. The easiest way to do this right is to use Noodlebib, which is available through the library website or through our Blackboard site.
- * Use italics (whole works: books, magazines, CDs) and quotes (subsets of the whole: chapters, articles, songs) properly.

Other Resources

- * Make use of the Undergraduate Writing Center. <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc/> Students I've had in several classes have found them very helpful. If you want, you can have them send me a note about your session so I know where you're at.
- * Get yourself to the PCL. There are librarians who specialize in different areas of research: Lindsay Schell (women's and gender studies) and Susan Macicak (linguistics). They can help you define research topics, find sources, and use different library tools. You can also ask general questions of a librarian on-line or in person. One great database for sociolinguistics articles is the LLBA (Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts).
- * Use my office hours! That's what I'm there for—come with editing, writing, time management, research or other questions.