ANT 320L-4
American Indian Languages and Cultures
SAC 4.118
TTH 9:30-11:00

Instructor Information:
Anthony K. Webster
SAC 4.154
Office Hours: T 11-12; TH 1-3; OR by appointment
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Course Description: This course explores the myriad of indigenous languages of the North America and how they are intertwined with culture. The focus of this course is both descriptive and anthropological. That is, the indigenous languages of the Americas will be considered with respect to their phonologies, complex morphologies, discursive structures, and historical relations as well as their place within the sociocultural milieu of speakers. Language is made real in use. We will look to the uses and users of language.

Requirements: Each student will lead discussion on a reading at least twice during the semester (this is dependent on the number of students in the class). A handout covering the reading should be prepared by the student(s). Each student not presenting that week will turn in a set of weekly questions on the assigned readings for that week. These weekly questions should be posted to the class on Blackboard by Monday night (so that they are available before class Tuesday morning). There should be at least 1 (one) question per reading. The questions can range from the informational to the more theoretical. These questions compose 10% of your grade.

There are three longer writing assignments. There are two book reviews (15% each). These should be from 5-7 pages and should both describe and evaluate the work. Comparisons with class readings when relevant may also be included. The first book review is of Margaret Bender’s Signs of Cherokee Culture and is due Mar. 6th. The second book review will be chosen by the student in consultation with Dr. Webster from the list at the end of this syllabus. No students will review the same book for their second book review. During the final two weeks of class each student will present a book report in class on the book they have reviewed (15%). The order will be determined later in the semester. The written review is due May 1st (also 5-7 pages).

There is also a project. This project is inspired by the article by Barbra Meek in week four. Each student will select a piece of popular culture (a film or television show) and following the methods described by Meek will analyze that piece for the ways that it represents the ways of speaking of Native Americans. This analysis should be from 5-10 pages long (15%).

I will not accept late assignments. Please do not ask. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

All classes are works in progress, and, if the need arises, the current plans and objectives may need to be changed to enhance the learning opportunities in the class. This is to be expected and such changes will be clearly communicated.
Grading:
Project............................................................15% of grade
2 book reviews..........................................................30% of grade (15% each)
Final presentation....................................................15% of grade
Leading reading discussion........................................20% of grade
Weekly questions....................................................10% of grade
Class participation..................................................10% of grade

If it is not abundantly clear yet, let me make it clear here: the readings are a vital component of this class.

Required Texts:
Basso, Keith.
Bender, Margaret.
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Schedule

Jan. 14-16 Week one: Introductions

Jan. 21-23 Week two: thinking about languages and language ideologies
Collins, James.
Mithun, Marianne.
Webster, Anthony and Leighton Peterson.

Film: Finding My Talk: A Journey through Aboriginal Languages
Jan. 28-30 Week three: Linguistic Relativity

Whorf, Benjamin Lee.
Whorf’s paper can be found at the following website:
http://languageandhistory-rz.wdfiles.com/local--files/dg05/1-4-whorf.pdf

Hallowell, A. Irving.

Basso: Chapter 1 (‘Western Apache classificatory verb system’)

Hymes, Dell.

Feb. 4-6 Week four: American Indian Englishes

Leap, William.

Meek, Barbra.

Webster, Anthony.

(See also: Barbra Meek. 2011. “Failing American Indian Languages.” American Indian Culture and Research Journal. 35(2): 43-60)

Feb. 6 Project assigned

Feb. 11-13 Week five: zombies, ‘extinction’ and oppression or building community

Leonard, Wesley.

Perley, Bernard.

Uran, Chad.

Film: myaamiaki eemamwiciki: Miami Awakening
Feb. 18-20 Week six: ways of speaking: ritual speech
Kroskrity, Paul.

Innes, Pamela.

Jackson, Jason Baird and Linn, Mary S.

Tedlock, Dennis.

Feb 20 Project Due

Feb. 26-28 Week seven: languages in contact
Basso: Chapter 2 (‘linguistic acculturation’)
Goodfellow, Anne.
American Indian Culture and Research Journal. 27(2): 41-59. (ON-LINE)

Peterson, Leighton and Anthony Webster
Pragmatics. 23(1): 95-118. (On-Line)

Film: Michif: Getting into Michif

Mar. 4-6 Week eight: writing
Basso: Chapter 3 (‘writing system’)
Neely, Amber and Gus Palmer, Jr.

Bender: Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah’s Syllabary in Eastern Cherokee Life.

Film: Syllabics: Capturing Language: Cree

Mar 6 FIRST BOOK REVIEW DUE

Mar. 8-16: Week nine: SPRING BREAK (no classes)
Mar. 18-20 Week ten: Western Apache doing things with words
Basso: Chapters 4 (‘Wise Words of the Western Apache’), 6 (‘stalking with stories’), and 7 (‘speaking with names’)

Mar. 25-27 Week eleven: ways of speaking: politeness and values
Basso: Chapters 5 (‘to give up on words’)
Rushforth, Scott.

Cowell, Andrew.

Trechter, Sara.

April 1-3: Week twelve: collaboration
Zepeda, Ofelia and Jane Hill.

Ahlers, Jocelyn.

Film: The Young Ancestors

April 8-10 Week thirteen: languages and publics
Debenport, Erin.

Muehlman, Shaylih.

Nevins, Eleanor.

Peterson, Leighton C.
April 15-17 Week fourteen: poetics
Mitchell, Blackhorse and Anthony K. Webster

O’Neill, Sean.

Woodbury, Anthony.

April 22-24: Week fifteen: presentations

April 29-May 1: Week sixteen: presentations

May 1 Final Book Review DUE

Special Needs
Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to me at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. See following website for more information: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php

Emergency Evacuation Policy
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation: Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building.

Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building. If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.