

## Course Information

E360K, English Grammar	Dr. Jacqueline Henkel
Spring 2010, #34890 & #34895	Office: Parlin 14; 471-4942
GAR 3.116, TTh, 8:00-9:30 & 9:30-11:00	Hours: TTh, 11:30-1:00
<a href="http://www.utexas.edu/courses/henkel/E360K">http://www.utexas.edu/courses/henkel/E360K</a>	henkelj@uts.cc.utexas.edu

### Course Goals:

English Grammar examines the syntax or structure of present-day English. Its major aim is to encourage students to think about the English language and English grammar in a new way. The term "grammar" describes both the linguistic knowledge that speakers of English share (an internalized or mental "grammar") and any representation of linguistic conventions (a "grammar" or model of English). Thus one course aim is to make explicit the syntactic conventions speakers of English know unconsciously (Why do you interpret "Igor ran up a hill" differently than "Igor ran up a bill"?). A second course goal is to study ways of modeling language structure (How should we describe the linguistic conventions you just applied?). We will use traditional terminology as we investigate English syntax for some of the course, but we will also draw on the methods of generative grammar, especially as we consider alternative explanations for language structure and for linguistic knowledge. A final course aim is to consider English syntax in context. So we will also briefly discuss syntactic variation in American English, attitudes toward language variation, and controversies involving English usage.

### Required Texts:

- Martha Kolln and Robert Funk, *Understanding English Grammar*, Allyn and Bacon, 8th ed., 2009.
- Course packet (available at Speedway Copy in Dobie Mall or on-line through electronic reserves).

### Recommended Text:

- David Crystal, *The Fight for English: How Language Pundits Ate, Shot, and Left*, Oxford UP, 2006.

### Course Prerequisites:

For registration in upper-division English you must have: credit for E603 or E316K and credit for 30 semester hours (excludes F and X grades).

### Course Requirements:

In order to pass this course, you must: 1) work consistently (if not always accurately) on weekly exercises; 2) earn a passing average score on quizzes; 3) complete all exams with a passing average score (no exam may be missed); 4) demonstrate familiarity with required readings; and 5) attend class regularly. Note that these are minimum requirements.

### Grading:

Course grades are calculated in two ways; the instructor counts the highest calculation as the student's final course average. Calculation #1: 25% of the grade based on quizzes, 25% on each of three exams. Calculation #2: 33% of the grade based on each exam. The purpose of the double-calculation system is to ensure that students can use quizzes as genuine learning opportunities. That is, you can use quizzes to improve your grade, but if you've been temporarily confused about something on a quiz you won't be penalized for that in your final average.

Class final course averages are then curved and assigned letter grades. Discussion and attendance are considered essential; thus, this letter grade may then be adjusted up or down (often one-half grade), depending on the student's attendance, class participation, and performance on collected but ungraded assignments. Final grades include "plus" or "minus" grades.

A grade of C will indicate work that meets all the basic course requirements; A's and B's are honors grades, designating work of some distinction. Grades are based only on work assigned to everyone in the class; no extra credit work can be accepted.

**Attendance and Classroom Courtesies:**

An inconsistent attendance record may affect the "participation" part of your grade (see details in "Requirements" and "Grading"). Beyond that, excessive absenteeism is penalized. Specifically, missing more than two weeks of class (four classes) will lower a student's final average by one grade. Students who miss more than three weeks of class (six classes) will fail the course. Note that this attendance policy is generous enough to allow you time to manage your life--to be ill or attend a medical appointment, to finish a paper assignment for another course, or to participate in a sports event. So you need not report the reason, however legitimate, for your absence. But any absence will simply count as such; that is, no distinction will be made between "excused" and "unexcused" absences (except on exam days).

Absent students are of course responsible for all material (including handouts) missed, and should make independent efforts to collect notes from other students and to finish readings before consulting the instructor. Students absolutely must attend all exams on the scheduled date, except in cases of documented medical emergency. Note that this policy applies to the final exam. Make-up exams may not be identical to the in-class exams over the same material.

Students should arrive on time for class. Normally two late arrivals count as one absence. If you are tardy for some unavoidable reason, take a seat near the door when you arrive. Students who are habitually late because of a class across campus or some such circumstance should alert the instructor at the start of the semester. Students who for some reason must often leave the room during class should again sit near the door and alert the instructor as to the problem.

**Incompletes:**

An incomplete or X grade is reserved for students who have attended class regularly and who are missing only one exam (normally the final) for a sound and documented (usually medical) reason. If, due to a family or medical emergency, you miss more than one exam and more than six classes, you must drop the course.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The University of Texas provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Students with documented disabilities should contact me at the beginning of the semester if special arrangements for test-taking are required. Some students will find the lecture outlines (linked from the Reading Schedule page of this site) helpful; note that I do not distribute Powerpoint presentations.

**Exercises:**

The best way to prepare for exams is to complete the assigned exercises (many of the test questions will be similar to these). I do not collect and mark all the practice problems (though I will collect designated exercises), but we will discuss your answers and difficulties in class. This means that you will not be penalized for your initial mistakes on new material. Learn to use this system to advantage. That is, complete the exercises on your own before class; they may be harder than they seem. Then ask questions about the problems you don't understand. Don't worry about your first mistakes, but find out where you went wrong before you are faced with more complicated exercises and the next exam.

**Quizzes:**

You will take a short (15 min.) quiz at the beginning of class approximately every two weeks (quizzes are announced one class period in advance). These are designed to discourage last-minute cramming and to help you

locate your confusions before major exams. Missed quizzes cannot be made up, but I will drop the lowest scored quiz from each student's record before determining the quiz average.

**Exams:**

Exams will take the class period to complete (see further details under "Grading" and "Attendance"). Exams normally consist of two parts: a section of multiple choice questions and a section of exercises. Both sections of the exam will test you on the kinds of questions and exercises posed and presented in discussion, on the board in lecture, on quizzes, and on weekly exercises. You will take two exams during the semester and a third during the final exam period.

**Scholastic Honesty:**

Students are expected to be honest and fair, to do their own work on exams, and to respect their peers. Work on writing assignments must be each student's own; any borrowed or quoted material in these assignments must be properly cited. Plagiarism, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students and may result in a final F grade or other course penalty.

If you have questions about your use of outside sources, see me before turning in your assignments. Also, please see the university's information on citing sources and its tutorial on plagiarism.

**Important Dates:**

- Tues., Jan. 19--class begins
  - Thurs., Feb. 18--Exam #1
  - Mon.-Sat., March 15-20--Spring Break
  - Thurs., April 1--Exam #2
  - Thurs., May 6--last day of class
  - Thurs., May 13, 9:00 am-12:00 noon--Exam #3 (for the 9:30 class; location TBD)
  - Fri., May 14, 2:00 pm-5:00--Exam #3 (for the 8:00 class; location TBD)
- (Exam dates are subject to change, but only when announced two class periods in advance.)

## Lecture and Reading Schedule

### Tentative Course Outline

**Note:**

Readings marked "Kolln and Funk" are in the required texts. Other readings are available both in the course packet (marked "P") and through electronic reserves (the password is "splitinfinitive"). Topics on the schedule below link to lecture or unit outlines.

**T,1/19- Th,1/28    Unit I, weeks 1-2: Introduction to the Study of English Grammar**

Language basics

1. "Nine Ideas about Language," Daniels (P).
2. "Language: A Preview," O'Grady (P).
3. "Primitive Languages," Bauer, Holmes, and Warren (P).

Prescriptivism and descriptivism

1. "The Prescriptive Period," Riley and Parker (P).
2. "Introduction," "The Study of Grammar: An Overview," Kolln and Funk 1-14.

Prescriptive rules and descriptive rules

1. "Prescriptive Rules," Riley and Parker (P).
2. "Myth: Bad Grammar is Slovenly," Milroy (P).
3. "Myth: Double Negatives are Illogical," Cheshire (P).
4. "Grammar Puss," Pinker (P).

**T, 2/2-T, 2/9**

**Unit II, weeks 3-4.5: English Morphology and Lexicon**

Language change

1. "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," Bauer, Holmes, and Warren (P).

English morphology

1. "The Minimal Units of Meaning: Morphemes," Ohio State (P).

Words and dictionaries

1. "Word-Making: Some Sources of New Words," Francis (P).
2. "Myth: The Meanings of Words Should Not be Allowed to Vary or Change," Trudgill (P).
3. "Standard Varieties and the Process of Standardization," Finegan and Besnier (P).

**Th, 2/11-Th, 4/8**

**Unit III, weeks 4.5-11: English Syntax**

Basic terms; functional analysis; usage controversies

1. "The Form Classes" (Chpt. 12), Kolln and Funk 243-64.
2. "The Structure Classes" (Chpt. 13), Kolln and Funk 268-89.
3. "Pronouns" (Chpt. 14), Kolln and Funk 293-307.
4. "Using Gender Appropriately" (section in Chpt. 15), Kolln and Funk 341-45.
5. "Prescriptive Grammar and the Pronoun Problem" MacKay (P).

Sentence types; linguistic insecurity

1. "The Grammar of Basic Sentences" (intro. to II), Kolln and Funk 17-18.
2. "An Introduction to Words and Phrases" (Chpt. 2), Kolln and Funk 19-29.
3. "Sentence Patterns" (Chpt. 3), Kolln and Funk 32-63.
4. "Sentence Patterns" (section in Chpt. 15), Kolln and Funk 314-17.

**Th, 2/18**

**Exam #1**

Mainstream and vernacular verbs

1. "Expanding the Main Verb" (Chpt. 4), Kolln and Funk 67-85.
2. "Choosing Verbs," "The Abstract Subject" (sections in Chpt. 14), Kolln and Funk 321-27.

Transformations

1. "Changing Sentence Focus" (Chpt. 5), Kolln and Funk 90-104.
2. "Sentence Rhythm," "Sentence Transformations" (sections in Chpt. 15), Kolln and Funk 317-21.

Subordination

1. "Expanding the Sentence" (intro. to III), Kolln and Funk 109-11.
2. "Modifiers of the Verb: Adverbials" (Chpt. 6), Kolln and Funk 112-28.
3. "Shifting Adverbials" (section in Chpt. 15), Kolln and Funk 327-32.
4. "Modifiers of the Noun: Adjectivals" (Chpt. 7), Kolln and Funk 132-63.
5. "The Noun Phrase Functions: Nominals" (Chpt. 8), Kolln and Funk 168-89.

**Th, 4/1**

**Exam #2**

Coordination and discourse markers

1. "Sentence Modifiers" (Chpt. 9), Kolln and Funk 193-208.
2. "Coordination" (Chpt. 10), Kolln and Funk 213-23.
3. "Metadiscourse," "Style," "Antithesis" (sections in Chpt. 15), Kolln and Funk 332-34; 334-40; 340-41.

**T, 4/13-Th, 4/22 Unit IV, weeks 12-13: Practical Grammar**

Perspectives on written English

1. "The Written Word," Barry (P).
2. "Spelling," Crystal (P).

Speech and writing

1. "Speech and Writing," Palmer (P).
2. "The Linguistic Facts of Life," Lippi-Green (P).

Speech, writing, and variation

1. "Dialects, Standards, and Vernaculars," Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (P).
2. "Language Styles and Dialects," Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, and Harnish (7.2, excerpt) (P).

Historical contexts

1. "Punctuation," "Antecedents," "Consequences," Crystal (P).

**T 4/27-Th 5/6 Unit V, weeks 14-15: Applying grammar**

Usage reconsidered

1. "Purposeful Punctuation" (Chpt. 16), Kolln and Funk 347-54.
2. "What Can You Do Now That You Can Do Grammar?" Morenberg, (P).

Grammar and style

Exercises distributed in class.

Grammar and literature

Exercises distributed in class.

Conclusions and review

Evaluations.

Th, 5/13, 9:00 am-12:00 noon (for the 9:30 class);

F, 5/14, 2:00 pm-5:00 (for the 8:00 class)

Final exam periods, reserved for (semi-comprehensive) Exam #3  
( locations TBD)