

# Sociolinguistics (LING 448)



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## Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Ellis Quay-Jones
- **E-Mail:** Canvas Mail
- **Syllabus:** [Course Syllabus](#)
- **Office Location:** 118 Wagner
- **Official Office Hours:** By appointment
- **Office Phone:** 555-1212 (with Voicemail)

## Meeting Times

This semester we meet **T,R 9:45-11:00** in **118 Wagner**.

## Required Textbooks

(r) = Required

- (r) A Introduction to Sociolinguistics, 5th Ed, Ronald Wardaugh
- (r) Electronic Reserves (links will be in Canvas)

## Requirements by Percentage

Assignment Type	% age	Notes
11 Homeworks (Drop 1)	~55%	Data analysis and one question for ANGEL discussion board.
1 In Class Review Presentation	5%	See list of potential topics below.
Final Blog Site Project	~30%	See list of potential topics below.
Participation/Attendance	10%	Equivalent to one Homework overall.

# About the Course Content

## Prerequisites

To get the most out of this course, you should be comfortable with grammatical terminology either from foreign language courses or writing courses.

## Course Objectives

This is an introductory sociolinguistics course focused on describing different phenomena arising out of the **interaction of unconscious linguistic behavior and conscious psychological or cultural behavior**. By the end of this class you should be able to do the following

- Transcribe the sounds of English and other languages in basic phonetic notation
- Develop "ear" to discriminate key phonetic differences
- Identify phonological processes when described
- Describe simple morphological and syntactic features of different speech grammars
- Differentiate between different types of speech communities/patterns including regional dialects, standard dialects, pidgins, creoles, registers
- Identify types of discourse patterns used for different situations and by different speech communities
- Identify how neighboring languages influence each other
- Describe how "conventional wisdom" about language differs from linguistic description
- Describe the impact of linguistic prejudices on different communities
- Identify issues and multiple perspectives for determining policy on language usage and language education
- Use research tools for identifying and accessing different types of linguistic and sociolinguistic data

## You encounter Sociolinguistics when you ...

- Identify language differences based on region, class or employment.
- Judge a person as "classy" or "trashy" based on their accent.
- Laugh when a comedian makes a "true" comment on his or her ethnic community.
- You can't interpret or misunderstand someone even they are speaking "the same language".
- Debate which languages children should be taught in.
- Debate which languages tax forms should come in.
- Adopt foreign words to sound chic or local slang to sound down to earth.
- Make sure to use "proper speech" in a job or scholarship interview.
- Hear your instructor use slang in order to relate to the students.

- Are shocked when you hear a woman say "F\*&(" or a man say "chartreuse."
- Get disoriented by a multilingual sign at the airport.
- Think everyone from the same area of the world sounds alike even if they speak completely different languages.
- Read "informed", yet linguistically non-descriptive, commentary on language.

## Policies

### Academic Integrity Statement (Liberal Arts)

This information is for students who are completing work in [Liberal Arts](#) courses or programs. [Graduate students](#) and [Schreyer honors students](#) should also consult graduate or honors program information.

What academic integrity is, and how it is maintained and enforced, varies across cultures, schools, colleges, and universities. At Penn State, students are responsible for understanding how to avoid academic misconduct and academic dishonesty. Copying from online or prohibited sources, collaboration (working with another person), hiring someone to complete your coursework, and plagiarism (misrepresenting another person's words, images, or ideas as your own) are often prohibited in Penn State courses. If you have questions about academic integrity, you should seek guidance before you submit work for evaluation. Often, you can find helpful information in your course syllabus. You may also seek guidance from your instructor and from our Academic Integrity Office ([laai@psu.edu](mailto:laai@psu.edu) ; (814-863-4297). For an overview of University procedures, please read the information on the [G-9 Academic Integrity page](#) - <http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/G-9-academic-integrity.html>

### Turnitin

Students will be required to **submit certain writing pieces to the Turnitin** service in Canvas. The instructor also reserves the right to submit other samples to Turnitin on a case by case basis.

### Disability Access Statement

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The Student Disability Resources Web site provides [contact information for every Penn State campus](#): <http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/campus-contacts>. For further information, please visit the [Student Disability Resources Web site](#): <http://equity.psu.edu/sdr>.

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, [participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation](#): <http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/applying-for->

*services*. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your [campus's disability services office](#) will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

## **Counseling and Psychological Services Statement**

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

1. [Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park \(CAPS\)](#)  
(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/>): 814-863-0395
2. Counseling and Psychological Services at [Commonwealth Campuses](#)  
(<https://senate.psu.edu/faculty/counseling-services-at-commonwealth-campuses/>)
3. **Penn State Crisis Line** (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400
4. **Crisis Text Line** (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

## **Educational Equity: Report Bias Statements**

Consistent with University Policy AD29, students who believe they have experienced or observed a hate crime, an act of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment that occurs at Penn State are urged to report these incidents as outlined on the [University's Report Bias webpage](#) (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>)

## **Sociolinguistic Topic Discussion Guidelines**

Materials in this course involve the discussion of linguistic and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices, which can potentially trigger negative emotions in some of your colleagues in the course. To facilitate a safe discussion space, the following guidelines are recommended.

1. Use "I" language (e.g. "In my opinion...", "I feel that...", "What I heard was..."). Many "common knowledge facts" about languages and sociology are subject to interpretation.
2. When someone is speaking, let them complete their thoughts. Interruptions can be perceived as attacks or as being defensive. We will make sure every has a chance to speak or communicate online on any given topic.
3. Answer any questions respectfully. Questions can be a valuable way to recognize your unconscious assumptions.

4. Whenever possible, speak with an even tone. Intonation can intensify negative reactions both on the part of the speaker and the listener.
5. Focus differences of opinion on topics, not the person. Name calling or personal attacks will not be permitted.
6. Use specific examples, including personal experiences or historical events, if you need to explain a point.
7. Please know that I may call on people who have not spoken much. Short statements are fine if you do not feel you wish to contribute additional information.  
**Note:** Writing on discussion board posts or other assignments be counted towards your participation.
8. Have fun with the topic - this is also a class where reality TV can be “educational.”

## Schedule

**Assignment Due Dates:** All assignments are **due at 6:00 PM** in the appropriate Canvas drop box. A busy network connection will not be considered to be a reasonable excuse for lateness.

**Note:** Readings are due BEFORE the class assigned to them. In-class exercises will be based on content of readings.

### Week 1

Tue	Thursday	Homework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: What is What is Sociolinguistics? + Syllabus</li> <li>• Readings: Wardaugh Chapter 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: Codes: Register &amp; Genres</li> <li>• Readings: Wardaugh Chapter 2 (pp 41-end)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Homework 1</a> Assigned

### Week 2

Tue	Thursday	Homework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialects &amp; Macrolanguages – Distinguishing Political vs. Linguistic Reality</li> </ul> Readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wardaugh Chapter 2 (pp 23-41)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: Grammar" &amp; Morphology Warmup</li> </ul> Readings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (Required) <b>Reserves</b> – "Morphemes: The Minimal Units of Meaning" (Chapter 3)"</li> <li>2. (Optional) <b>Reserves</b> – "Syntax: Linear Order, Heirarchical Structure and Ambiguity" (File 50) "</li> </ol>	<a href="#">Homework 2</a> Assigned  Homework 1 Due Thursday 6PM

## External Linguistics Links

- [UCLA Phonetics Lab - Index of Sounds](#)
- [www.dialectsofenglish.com](http://www.dialectsofenglish.com)

## Wikipedia in Ancient Languages

- Latin: [About Latin](#) | [Latin \(Encyclopedia Britannica\)](#) | [Vicipaedia Latina](#)
- Old English: [About Old English](#) | [Old English \(Encyclopedia Britannica\)](#) | [Englisc Pīkpǣdia](#) |

- Classical Nahuatl: [About Nahuatl](#) | [Nahuatl \(Encyclopedia Britannica\)](#) | [Huiquipedia \(Nahuatl\)](#)