

## ENGL 103, Modern English Grammar, Fall 2020

Instructor(s):	Scott Jarvie
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Office Hours:	Online by appt.
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00AM - 10:15AM (for now)
Classroom:	Online

*Grammar is social — the way it plays out relationships of people to people and objects. It's how I'm able to say that you are sitting across from me right now.*

—Aditi Machado

*Grammar balances, mediates, moves speech and sight so that we may trust the momentum of thought, the choreographies of intellect as they are and not as they are institutionally expected to be.*

—Serena Chopra

### Course Description

Why do we teach grammar, and what does it mean to teach it today? This course explores the growth, structure, and history of Modern English, with a particular focus on pedagogy. Together we'll think through the implications of power, culture, experience and identity for how we use language in our lives and how we teach it in classrooms. We'll cover various grammatical concepts, as well as recurring problems of "usage" and "correctness". We'll also take up critical theoretical perspectives on English grammar to trouble those concepts, considering what those perspectives mean for our practices as readers, writers, speakers, and teachers in classrooms. While the course emphasizes grammar pedagogy, the material will be of interest to anyone interested in learning about the historical ways English language has been structured and possibilities for how we might imagine it differently.

### Format

The course will be conducted online, with a mix of synchronous meetings and asynchronous discussions on Canvas. Students will need computer/Internet access, as well as a camera for participating in class and small-group conversations.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain various English grammatical concepts.
2. Analyze the functions of grammatical structures in written and spoken language.
3. Critique varied uses of grammar for their implications along lines of power, culture, and identity.
4. Plan grammatical lessons that reflect a variety of approaches to teaching English.

## Required Texts

- *Analyzing English Grammar*, by T. Klammer, M. Schulz, & A. Volpe, Pearson. (6th Ed., 2010). (I went with the 6th Edition, because it's significantly cheaper. If you have an issue getting a hold of this let me know. See calendar below—we won't begin readings from it until the end of August).
- *Sin & Syntax: How to Craft Wicked Good Prose* by C. Hale. Three Rivers Press (Revised Ed., 2013)

Additional texts provided on Canvas.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

*Participation.* As a discussion-based course, ENGL 103 proceeds with the expectation that students will a) do the reading and b) engage in discussion with peers and the instructor in challenging, thoughtful, and intriguing ways. This last part is important as the instructor himself may not be particularly thoughtful nor intriguing. The point being: we're co-constructing learning here. If you feel it useful to augment the readings in some personal, pedagogical and/or active way...go for it. We will become a community of learners and this is good practice for those of you planning to be teachers of your own some day. (25% of Final Grade).

In addition to participation in class discussions, you'll have three major assignments to complete this fall. Additional details on each assignment will be provided throughout the semester.

*Grammar Lesson.* One of the primary ways we'll think about grammar in this course is *pedagogically*: How we teach and are taught by grammar in different ways throughout our lives. For the first major assignment, you'll pair up to teach a brief lesson to the class about a specific grammatical concept. This is an opportunity for all of us to learn more about various grammatical concepts, but it's also a chance for you to think through how people come to learn about grammar, and how they might learn differently. As you plan your lesson, you'll consider: What assumptions are you beginning with about the concept, and about grammar generally? What do you want to teach about the concept specifically? Why those lessons? What do you want students to know, or be able to do, at the end of your lesson? How can we teach grammar online? After your lesson, we'll have a class debrief to think through your pedagogy and what we learned together. (20% of Final Grade; *SLO 1, 4*)

*Personal Essay.* A second assumption of this course is that grammar matters on a *personal* level. Grammar is important to how people express themselves, to the formation of their identities, and it often reflects people's educational experiences, social and cultural backgrounds, and their raced, classed, gendered, and linguistic identities. In this assignment, you will explore the intersection of grammar and your own personal experience through an extended piece of narrative writing. How have you been taught to think about grammar? Where, when, and by who? What event(s) have shaped your understanding of how you use language? What role has language played in how you understand the world, and yourself? Leading up to this, we'll read and talk through a variety of examples of what this might look like. (20% of Final Grade; *SLO 3, 4*)

*Pop Culture Analysis.* Your final project will engage grammar *culturally*. You will identify one particularly significant grammatical construction drawn from culture today, e.g. Twitter or other social media platform, music, television, recent film, personal conversation, contemporary book, journalism, meme, press conference, etc. You'll analyze this construction for us, breaking down its components as we've come to understand them through our course readings, its functions, flaws, and the linguistic traditions it operates within or breaks away from. Then – the fun part – you'll situate it within the broader culture, making a case for how this form matters in people's lives today. You'll share your work with the class during our final exam session. (35% of Final Grade; *SLO 1, 3, 4, 5*)

## Grading Information

I will always give you fairly detailed instruction and support in class for major assignments. When applicable, I will also distribute rubrics that should help guide your thinking. I don't always use rubrics, but when I do, you will certainly have access to them. You will also have access to exemplar texts whenever possible. Additional grading info related to the assignments above will be addressed in class.

Late work will not receive full credit. I know things happen. Please communicate with me as needed.

If you have questions or concerns about your grades, contact me within a week of receiving the grade.

We'll use the following grading scale to determine final grades:

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
0-59	F

## Attendance

Attendance in this course is mandatory. It is a professional expectation that you will be present and on-time to every synchronous meeting, as well as present and engaged in our asynchronous work on Canvas each week. While I am understanding of extreme circumstances such as serious illness or family emergency, simply letting me know that you will be absent does not count as an excused absence.

Please notify me in advance on any absence and work within your peers/colleagues to collect any materials or information shared. You will be responsible for in-class and out-of-class responsibilities every week.

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#) relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information web page](#), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education.

## ENGL 103 Fall 2020 Course Schedule

Schedule subject to change as needed and depending on our conversation in the first class. Readings should be completed by the date they're listed below.

### Course Schedule

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments
8/20	Introductions; course co-construction.
8/27	Language & identity, culture, & power. --Dunn & Lindblom (2003) --Excerpt from Bell (2020)
9/3	Language & identity, culture, & power. --Curzan & Adams (2012) --Cisneros, "The Power of Language" --Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"
9/10	Histories of English/grammar. --Klammer et al., Ch. 1
9/17	Grammar pedagogies. --Zuidema (2005) --Baker-Bell (2013)
9/24	Grammar pedagogies. --Beach, Thein, & Webb
10/1	Morphology of English. --Klammer et al., Ch. 3 --Grammar Lesson (2 groups)
10/8	Form-class words. --Klammer et al., Ch. 4 --Hale, Chs. 1-5 --Grammar Lesson (3 groups)
10/15	Modifying & connecting words. --Klammer et al., Chs. 5-6 --Hale, Chs. 6-8 --Grammar Lesson (2 groups)
10/22	Phrases & sentence types. --Klammer et al., Chs. 7-8 --Hale, Chs. 10-11 --Grammar Lesson (2 groups)

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments
10/29	Sentence transformations, adverbial & adjectival clauses. --Klammer et al., Ch. 9 & 10 --Grammar Lesson (3 groups) --Personal Essay due.
11/5	Nominal clauses & nonfinite verb phrases. --Klammer et al., Ch. 11 & 12 --Grammar Lesson (2 groups)
11/12	Applications: Formal writing. --Hale, Chs. 13-16
11/19	Applications: Informal writing & spoken language.
12/3	Future(s) of grammar. --Pop Culture Analysis due.
12/9	Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec. 9 <sup>th</sup> , 7:15AM-9:30AM, online. Present pop culture analyses.

*Language is not, as we are led to suppose by the dictionary, the invention of academicians or philologists. Rather, it has been evolved through time, through a long time, by peasants, by fishermen, by hunters, by riders. It did not come from the libraries; it came from the fields, from the sea, from rivers, from night, from the dawn.*

—Jorge Luis Borges