

Prof. Elisabeth Oliver  
Winter 2012  
Monday, 8:30-11:30 a.m.  
Office C-8119  
[elisabeth.oliver@umontreal.ca](mailto:elisabeth.oliver@umontreal.ca)

## ANG 2020: English Languages since 1066

This course provides an overview of the development of English languages from 1066 to the present day. Studying the evolution of English will give us insight into the linguistic and cultural factors that give shape to the languages of literature and everyday speech. We will consider the ways that the forces of history, religion, politics and technology have influenced the direction of the language and the meaning of individual words. This course will also emphasize the plurality of Englishes that have always co-existed and the many efforts to standardize and order such deviations. Our inquiry into the history of English will also chart the way that the language has spread geographically—from being the mother tongue of a small island, to being a truly global language that shapes and is shaped by the diverse populations that adopt it.

### Textbooks

David Crystal, *The Stories of English*. London: Penguin, 2005.  
Jack Lynch, *The Lexicographer's Dilemma*. New York: Walker, 2009.

Course Reader

Shorter Readings will also be available online, linked through Studium

### Evaluation

Participation	10%
Critical Questions	20%
Word Study	25%
Essay Workshop	5%
Final Essay	40%

### Description of Assignments

#### Critical Questions:

Students are responsible to coming up with 3 critical questions based on a particular day's reading assignment. The idea is to come up with questions that will engage your peers and stimulate discussion. To this end, please formulate questions that are capable of sparking debate and various kinds of

responses, as opposed to those that encourage simple “yes” or “no” answers. You may formulate questions on any aspect of the readings (both primary and secondary) and you are encouraged to follow your own interests in this regard. In addition to these discussion questions, students are required to write a written response (2-3 pages) in response to one of these questions. The expectation is that you write a formal essay, with a proper thesis statement, introduction and conclusion. I will make a sign-up sheet available the second week of term. This sheet will then be posted on my office door. If you need to switch the date of your discussion questions and written response, you may cross out your name and pick another slot that is **blank**.

#### Word Work (oral and written components):

This assignment asks you to explore the etymology, homonyms, usage and nuances of a particular word or word-set. This assignment is based on the idea that a detailed knowledge of individual lexemes leads to a greater understanding of how language functions. You may choose to work alone or in small groups of 2-3 people. You or your group should select words that interest you—follow your curiosity! I will ask you to run your proposed focus by me in advance to avoid unnecessary complications or dead ends. The oral component of this assignment asks that you present a 10-minute presentation to your peers on your findings. You may either divide the presentation equally between group members or choose a group spokesperson. In addition, you are each required to submit a written assignment that will be graded. This assignment is due the date of your presentation and should be 2-3 pages in length. It should be structured as a short essay, with title, introduction, thesis, argument and conclusion. Please note: this written component is to be done individually; it is not a collaborative effort. Each group member must submit a written assignment.

#### Essay Workshop

You must come to the essay workshop with two copies of a draft of your introduction and outline for the final paper. Those who fail to attend or present these draft documents will receive a mark of 0 for this exercise.

#### Final Essay

The final essay gives you the opportunity to explore a topic related to the history of the English language that interests you. Your essay must cite a minimum of three (3) secondary sources, of which two (2) must not be websites. I will present you with a selection of topics, but you are also free to pick your own topic. Those who select their own topic must have the topic approved before writing and submitting the essay. These essays should be four to five (4-5) pages long, double spaced, in 12-point font, and formatted according to MLA guidelines.

### Participation

Students are expected to come to class prepared for both informed discussion and active listening. Both the critical questions and word work assignments will involve peer assessment and your thoughtful and constructive feedback will be factored into this segment of your grade.

### **Plagiarism**

To put it simply: don't even think about it. Be advised that the instructor has an especially low view of such behaviour. All students should familiarize themselves with the policies of the FAS: [www.fas.utmontreal.ca/plagiat](http://www.fas.utmontreal.ca/plagiat). Students are also advised to consult the pages on plagiarism in the FAECUM agenda 2011-2012. Plagiarism may result in a grade of zero for the assignment or the course. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please do not hesitate to contact me **in advance** of handing in your assignment.

### **Late Policy**

Term papers and written assignments will incur a penalty of two percent (2%) for each day late in all cases except certified emergencies. Weekends count as two days. **Essays and assignments handed in more than a week late will not be accepted.**

### **Schedule of Readings**

A detailed schedule of readings will be provided the first day of class