Fall 9-1-2000

LING 474.01: Language History, Variety, and Change

Deirdre Black

The University Of Montana

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/5157

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Ling 474:01 Language History, Variety, and Change
Fall 2000
DHC 117, MWF 11-12

Deirdre Black
Office: Ling 108
Hrs: 10-11 MWF; by appt
Tel: w 5164; h 728-0713


Reserve Room Readings: numerous texts tba
Films: In Search of the First Language
Selections from The Story of English
Selections from the Nova Series
(among others that may be available)

Requirements and Grading System
All students are required to complete five written assignments (5 x 10%), a midterm (25%), and a final (25%). In addition, graduate students must complete a small research project and provide a short presentation of that research to the class.

Description
This class provides a descriptive and theoretical overview on the origins of language, language development, and dialect variation. While the text selected is aimed at the non-specialist, those students with a background in linguistics will find the topics relevant, challenging, and nicely detailed. Specific topics include: language relationship, with a particular emphasis on Indo-European; the history of writing systems; changes in lexicon and grammatical structure; variety and change of sign languages; dialect variation, with a particular emphasis on American English; language contact; and, language reconstruction.

Objectives
Upon completion of this course, students will:
1. be familiar with the grammatical components of natural language and the tendency for grammatical features to vary over space and through time;
2. have explored some of the causes of language variation and change, as well as language birth and death;
3. have examined certain varieties of American English; and,
4. understand the inevitability of language variation and change.

Course Outline
Weeks 1-2 Introductory: introduction, Indo-European, and writing
Weeks 3-5 Change in Structure: phonology, morphology, and syntax
Week 6 Change in the Lexicon: semantics, borrowing, and coinage
Week 7 Review and Midterm Exam
Weeks 8-10 Language and Dialect
Weeks 11-13 Languages in Contact
Weeks 14-15 Language Relationship Review
Week 16 Final Exam on Monday December 18 from 8:00-10:00am