

English Language and Grammar

Litt-2412-01

MWF 11:20-12:35 – B-003 (back to a chalk board)

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Office Hours: MWF 10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.; and by appointment. I am on campus nearly every day. I'm also available to Zoom most days when not teaching or off campus and am willing to Zoom after dinner hours—just shoot me an email.

This is a W2 Writing-Across-The-Curriculum-Course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no required text for this course. Please pay special attention to *this syllabus* and *the course blog*. It is in these documents that you will find the information that you need. <https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/>

SUGGESTED TEXTS

HarperCollins College Outline: English Grammar, by David Daniels and Barbara Daniels. Available rather cheaply on Abebooks.com and other used book sites.

An excellent, comprehensive dictionary of the English Language (paper or digital). You should get in the habit of consulting your dictionary, less for spelling (although that's important) and more for grammatical uses of words.

EXPECTATIONS

Members of this class have enrolled in a rigorous study of the English language. We will carefully review and practice rule-based grammar; analyze the way words, phrases, and clauses work within sentences; and study the way words mean and ways that meanings shift over time. This is not a remedial course, and this is not a course that discusses methodologies for teaching grammar. We will learn to describe and discuss the function of English at the level of syntax (which is a more technical term for grammar).

This is not a linguistics course—it is not a course in transformational or generative grammar. Noam Chomsky and linguists following in his footsteps are interested in mapping the deep structure of a language's semantic relations. There is a valuable approach, but abstract and less useful if the study at hand focuses on the techniques of writing. The grammar described in this course is interested in the surface-level syntax of English.

The key to this class is practice—in class and out. In order to successfully complete the course, assignments must be done on time. Perfect attendance is expected. If attendance is poor, you will be marked down. I am not allowed to give incompletes without exceptional reasons.

Prepare thoroughly for the grammar examinations. None will be easy (perhaps the first, if you are prepared and skilled), and each will be progressively more difficult. The final grammar examination requires excellent, in-depth knowledge of rule-based grammar: it *will* be difficult.

Essays should be printed and stapled. Please hand them to me on the assigned date at the start of our class meeting. They should be well structured and make use of an effective and efficient prose style; essays must be mechanically perfect. Choose an effective title for your essay and be forewarned that I will read the titles aloud on the date essays are due. It is your duty to verify that I have received the essay on time.

When the difficulty of the grammar intensifies—and it will—please see me during my office hours for further instruction. If enough of you are interested, extra sessions can be scheduled in person or via Zoom. This is a good idea. You are encouraged to form study groups and also to review video supplements available on YouTube (see the course blog).

Grammar Movies

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/elg-movies/>

Dependent Clause Movies

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/dependent-clauses/>

Plagiarism is, of course, strictly forbidden. Plagiarists will be reported to the office of Academic Affairs as required. Please do not resort to generative artificial intelligence (AI) programs, such as ChatGPT, when writing your essays. Let's do this on our own. I am, however, interested in possible uses of AI to learn grammar. If you believe you've found ways that will help in learning grammar let me know.

Note: Assignment dates for handouts are approximate. You are always welcome to begin handouts before the dates given (and sometimes should).

To see any of the handout with answers find the master list here:

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/handouts-answers/>

WEEK 1

W 9/6

Introduction to the course.

Editing; your knowledge; a complicated example.

Discussion of Special Collections and history centers (just because).

Drop/Add begins and runs through 9/11.

F 9/8

Begin "Sentence Parts" on blog:

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/sentence-parts_F2023.pdf

WEEK 2

M 9/11

Begin to discuss "Sentence Parts."

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/sentence-parts_F2023.pdf

Take Home Quiz on Sentence Parts (due Wednesday, 9/13 before class)

End of Drop/Add at midnight.

W 9/13

Discussion of Take Home Quiz on Sentence Parts.

F 9/15

"Nouns & Pronouns."

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/Nouns-Pronouns_F2023.pdf

Begin Handouts 1 & 2

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2012/09/1st-handout.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/2nd-handout.pdf>

Begin Handout 3.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/3rd-handout.pdf>

WEEK 3

M 9/18

Nouns and Pronouns

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/Nouns-Pronouns_F2023.pdf

W 9/20

Memorize handout on 8 principal parts of speech

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/8_principal_parts_F2023.pdf

Verbs. See Powerpoint here:

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/verbs2023.pptx>

Begin Handouts 4 & 4.5.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/4th-handout.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2009/02/45-handout.pdf>

F 9/22

More on Verbs.

Discussion of first essay.

Begin Handout 5.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/5th-handout.pdf>

September 23 is the Deadline to withdraw from a full-term course with a 50% refund (part-time students only).

WEEK 4

M 9/25

Verbs.

See “Prepositions, Adjectives & Adverbs” here:

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/prepositions-adjectives-adverbs_F2023b.pdf

Begin Review of 1st Examination material 1 & 2.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/review-1st-examination.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/05/review-1st-examination-2.pdf>

W 9/27

“Prepositions, Adjectives & Adverbs”

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/prepositions-adjectives-adverbs_F2023b.pdf

VISITING WRITERS SERIES: JANE WONG. 12:45pm in Meeting Room 5 of the Campus Center.

F 9/28

Pre-test of First Examination.

WEEK 5

M 10/2

Pre-test of First Examination corrected in class.

October 2nd is the Deadline to file for Fall 2023 graduation application without financial penalty.

W 10/4

Preparation for First Examination.

F 10/6

Preparation for First Examination.

WEEK 6

M 10/9

First Examination.

W 10/11

“Verbals.”

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/verbals_F2023.pdf

Verbals Card.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2012/12/verbals.pdf>

Begin Handouts 6, 7, 8.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/06/6th-handout.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/06/7th-handout.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/06/8th-handout.pdf>

VISITING WRITERS SERIES: JORDAN CALHOUN. 9:55am in the Multicultural Center.

F 10/13

“Verbals.”

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/verbals_F2023.pdf

WEEK 7

M 10/16

Phrases, Clauses.

Units of Grammatical Meaning

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2014/11/Units-of-grammatical-meaning.pdf>

Begin Handouts 8.5 & 9.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2011/10/Handout-8.5.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/06/9th-handout1.pdf>

W 10/18

Phrases, Clauses.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2014/11/Units-of-grammatical-meaning.pdf>

Handouts 8.5, 9, 9.5.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2011/10/Handout-8.5.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/06/9th-handout1.pdf>

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2007/07/Grammar-Handout-9.5.pdf>

F 10/20 2nd Test Prep handout.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2009/10/2nd-test-prep.pdf>

WEEK 8

M 10/23

2nd Test Prep.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2009/10/2nd-test-prep.pdf>

T 10/24

Preceptorial Advising – no classes.

W 10/25

Quiz on Verbals.

F 10/27

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2009/10/2nd-test-prep.pdf>

Test prep.

WEEK 9

M 10/30

Test prep.

W 11/1

Preceptorial Advising; classes begin at 3:25 PM.

F 11/3

Test prep.

WEEK 10

M 11/6

Second Examination, pt. 1.

T 11/7

VISITING WRITERS SERIES: MARICELA GUERRA. 6:00pm in L-wing.

W 11/8

Second Examination, pt. 2.

F 11/10

“Dependent Clauses.”

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/Dependent-Clauses_F2023.pdf

Dependent Clauses Card.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2012/12/Dependent-Clauses.pdf>

Begin Handouts 10-11.

<http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/grammar/10thhandout.pdf>

<http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/grammar/11thhandout.pdf>

WEEK 11

M 11/13

First Essay Due.

Review.

“Dependent Clauses.”

https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2023/09/Dependent-Clauses_F2023.pdf

Handout 12.

<http://loki.stockton.edu/~kinsellt/grammar/12handout.pdf>

{Monday, November 13th is the Deadline to withdraw from a full-term course with a W grade.}

W 11/15

Begin Handout 13: Apple Sauce Man and the Potato Gnomes.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/grammar/files/2008/07/13th-handout.pdf>

Review.

F 11/17

Review.

WEEK 12

M 11/20 Review. Introduction to Second Essay.

11/22 Classes end at 3:25.

TH-S 11/23 – 11/26 Thanksgiving.

WEEK 13

M 11/27 Review. More discussion of Second Essay.

W 11/29 More fun review.

F 12/1 Even more fun review.

WEEK 14

M 12/4 **Third Examination, pt. 1.**

W 12/6 **Third Examination, pt. 2.**

F 12/8 Class meets as usual on Friday.
Course postmortem.

WEEK 15

Finals Week

Final Exam

The Fourth, Optional Examination administered between 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. on Friday, December 15. Sorry for that scheduled date; it was not my call.

Second Essay is due on Friday, December 15 at 11:58 p.m.

EVALUATION

First Grammar Examination 15%

Second Grammar Examination 25%

Final Grammar Examination 40%

First Essay 7.5%

Second Essay 12.5%

The First Examination covers all points of grammar and mechanics learned to date.

The Second Examination covers all points of grammar and mechanics learned to date.

The Third Examination covers all points of grammar and mechanics.

The Optional Fourth Examination covers all points of grammar and mechanics. This is not a substitute for students who missed the Third Examination. This is a chance to take a final examination, equally or more difficult than the third, in order to supersede the results of the third examination. This is a suggestion from past students who argued that it provides a chance to demonstrate mastery, even if gained late in the course.

The First Essay (5–6 pages). This essay describes some aspect of your personal experiences with the English language.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to, early language acquisition, including reading experiences (your own or those of your children, siblings, friends); classroom experiences; thoughts on the relationship between grammar and writing, grammar and speech, grammar and social perceptions; regional language variants; family language backgrounds; theoretical implications of language.

The Second Essay (5–6 pages). In this second and final essay, you will apply grammatical analysis to texts of your own choosing. Here are some examples. We can discuss others:

- Select paragraphs from two of your favorite authors, then compare and contrast the grammar used by each, concluding with an in-depth statement about the ways you understand the effect of their different grammatical approaches;
- Select a poem, or two poems, and run the same sort of grammatical analysis. You might also talk about rhyming and other techniques that help to convey meaning;
- Select a grammatically thick paragraph from one author—or even one sentence—and then describe the grammar of that piece. This should be a piece of considerable grammatical difficulty.

The overarching exercise is first to complete a careful, grammatical analysis of your chosen text(s); then second, to suggest in your own words the ways that you view these texts achieving different meaningful effects based on their grammar.

