

## ENGL 4300-01 (English Grammar)

MW 9:30 – 10:50 pm / Pafford 109

Spring Semester 2015

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### Office Hours:

MW 8:30 - 9:30 am; 11:00 am - 12:30 pm;  
W 2:00 – 3:00 pm; and by appointment

**Course Description:** In this course we will explore the structure or grammar of the English language and work toward understanding the principles or rules that make it work. This course is primarily designed for English majors who seek to improve the grammatical proficiency of their writing and for future teachers at the secondary and college level in all disciplines. However, this course also has applications for students entering business and industry, science and medical fields, law and politics, media and public relations, or anyone else who recognizes how the ability to use language effectively contributes to personal and professional success in life. In this course we will discover that knowing how to speak a language and knowing how that language is structured are different kinds of knowledge. Even the ability to speak grammatically correct sentences in no way guarantees that a speaker knows enough about English to explain what makes those sentences grammatical. This course is designed to help you achieve that kind of higher level, analytical knowledge. We will refer frequently to Standard English, and, certainly, one of the benefits of this course is that it will help you refine your written and verbal language skills. However, this is not simply a course about grammatical correctness and prescriptive rules of grammar; instead, this course is designed to help you understand *how* the English language functions, what structures and rules are behind the sentence constructions that you and others create every day. To accomplish this task, we will learn some basic linguistic and grammatical concepts, and we will learn how to analyze (and diagram) different phrase and clause constructions. Along the way, we will also take some time to learn how elements of the language (verbs, nouns, sentence structures, pronouns, etc.) emerged and changed over time to create the language we use today.

**Learning Outcomes:** 1) Students will learn the general principles of comparative linguistics; 2) Students will learn some of the most significant causes of change in the historical development of the English language; 3) Students will learn how to apply grammatical concepts, analysis, and theory to "real-world" situations such as teaching and text editing; 4) Students will be able to identify some of the most significant theories and methods that shape the contemporary study of grammar, including prescriptive and descriptive grammar, clause and phrase structure grammar, and transformational-generative grammar; 5) Students will develop the ability to understand and articulate the concept of dialect or variety in English; 6) Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work a discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well supported analysis of course-related material; and 7) Students will learn to use discipline-specific computer technologies related to the study of language.

**Relationship of Course to Program Goals:** 1) This course fulfills the language and writing requirement in the major; 2) This course fulfills the language requirement for secondary certification in English and Middle Grades Language Arts certification; 3) Students will develop the analytical and/or oral communication skills required to pursue graduate study or careers in teaching, writing, business and a variety of other fields; 4) Students will be able to define and pursue independent research agendas; 5) This course contributes to the program goal of equipping students with a foundation in the history and development of the English language and the issues surrounding language study in contemporary culture; 6) This course broadens students' desire and ability to understand, appreciate, and utilize the English language in its historical and linguistic contexts.

### Required Texts:

Vitto, Cindy. *Grammar by Diagram*. Second Edition. Broadview Press, 2006.

Vitto, Cindy. *Grammar by Diagram Workbook*. Broadview Press, 2008.

Supplemental material will be posted on Desire2Learn (CourseDen).

**Grading Scale:** Students are assigned a letter grade for each assignment ranging from A+ to F based on the numerical scale below. This grade will be used when calculating the final average at the end of the semester.

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+	below 60 = F
94-96 = A	84-86 = B	74-76 = C	64-66 = D	
90-93 = A-	80-83 = B-	70-73 = C-	60-63 = D-	

### Course Evaluation

10%	Grammar Workbook	20%	Examination II
10%	Quizzes	20%	Examination III
20%	Examination I	20%	Examination IV (Final)

**Attendance Requirements:** Linguistics (the science of language) is a challenging subject, and it requires different critical and analytical skills than those you have developed in literature and writing courses. Consequently, careful preparation and active participation are crucial to your success in this course. I expect you to be present and on time for all class meetings. Readings and homework exercises should be completed in advance of each class. You should be prepared to participate actively by volunteering to complete exercises OR by simply *asking* questions.

Remember: if you do not understand something presented in class, *ask!*

If you are going to be absent from class, you should let me know, preferably in advance. Late work will not be accepted unless you make arrangements with me in advance and you have a legitimate reason (a serious medical or family emergency) for turning in work after it is due. In the case of excused absences, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with me to complete assignments you have missed immediately upon your return to class. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a zero or a reduction in the grade for assignments not submitted on time. I do not allow students to make up daily quizzes.

If you find it unavoidable to miss class, be aware of the following guidelines: 1) Four (4) absences are allowed during the semester. Every absence thereafter will result in a 2 point grade reduction of your final grade in the course, regardless of the nature of the absence. I do not make distinctions between excused and unexcused absences, so you should use your allotted absences wisely. Unplanned or unexpected occurrences are likely, so be prepared to use absences for these events only; 2) Class roll will be taken at the beginning of every class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to let me know immediately after class or you will be counted absent. It is your responsibility to keep up with your absences and tardies; 3) Entering class late and leaving class before it is over will count as an unexcused absence, unless you have a legitimate medical excuse for doing so. Reasons related to outside employment or work in other classes are not legitimate excuses for habitually leaving class early or arriving late; 4) Excessive absences or tardiness from class may result in failing this course.

**Textbook Exercises:** Along with the reading assignments from the course textbook, you will be expected to complete the exercises in the course textbook as part of your weekly preparation for class. I will post the list of exercises from each chapter that you will need to complete on CourseDen. I expect you to have these exercises completed in advance and to bring them with you to class so that we can use them as our part of our classroom learning.

**Workbook Exercises:** To help you master the concepts in this class, you will also complete the supplemental exercises in the grammar workbook (required for this course). Typically, you will need to complete all of the exercises from each chapter. I will post a list of any you may omit on CourseDen. You will receive credit toward your final grade (10%) for simply completing the exercises. I will collect the workbooks during each exam to check your progress. Many of the exercises on the exams and the quizzes will be taken directly from the workbook (as well as the textbook), so completing the exercises will help you to prepare for these course assessments.

**Quizzes and Homework Assignments:** We will have unannounced quizzes throughout the semester, usually one every week. These quizzes will be brief (2-3 exercises) and will be given at the beginning of class. They will include course content that we have *already covered in class* (usually the prior class) and will consist of exercises taken from the textbook and workbook. These quizzes have three goals: to reward students to attend class on time; to reward students who keep up to date on homework and workbook assignments; and to practice exercises that will be similar to those on the major exams. If you arrive late to class you will miss the quiz and receive a zero grade. Please note that there will be no opportunities to make up any of the unannounced quizzes that you miss, so you should make every effort to be in class and on time every day we meet. I will drop at least one of the unannounced quizzes before I average your final quiz grade.

**Scheduled Quizzes:** We will also have several longer quizzes that will cover material from the course that I expect you to study on your own. These quiz dates (and the sections in the textbook that they will cover) are listed in the syllabus. These quizzes will count as the equivalent of two unannounced quizzes. I will offer make-up quizzes for the longer quizzes but only for legitimate medical or personal emergencies. Make-up quizzes will be given at my discretion, so I strongly encourage you not to miss them.

**Examinations:** There will be four (4) major examinations. Each exam will cover approximately three chapters in the textbook/workbook and will draw from the following: 1) information from the course textbook and workbook including key terms, methods, and practice exercises; and 2) supplemental lectures and other materials provided by the instructor and posted on CourseDen. Exams will consist of short answer questions or identifications (for such things as definitions and methods of sentence structure analysis), sentence exercises, and sentence diagrams. Most of the exercises on the exams will be similar to the exercises in the textbook and workbook, so completing those exercises will help you on the exams. Late exams will be marked down one letter grade for each day they are late unless you make arrangements with me in advance *and* you have a legitimate *medical* or personal reason for completing the exam after the deadline. The date for each exam is listed on the course syllabus. A study guide for each chapter will be posted on CourseDen.

**Extra Credit:** I do not give extra credit for additional work beyond the assignments listed here.

**Electronic Devices:** Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before entering class. No text messaging or phone calls are permitted during class. Use of them will result from your dismissal from class. Laptops can be used for class-related work only. Use for other purposes will result in your dismissal from class.

**CourseDen & Learning Technology:** This is a technology-supplemented course; therefore, you need to be familiar with CourseDen (<http://westga.view.usg.edu>) and have basic technology skills to participate in this course. Reading and homework assignments, lecture notes, and other supplemental information related to this course will be posted on CourseDen. General information about CourseDen is available online including student tutorials. Let me know if you need assistance with using this official UWG online platform.

**UWG Email:** The official email communication method for all UWG classes is through campus email (MyUWG). UWG students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. This email account is the official means of communication between the university and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email. Please use your UWG email when communicating with me about this course. Do not use outside email accounts. You can also communicate with me about this class through CourseDen, although I only receive these messages when I am signed in to CourseDen.

**Remind:** In addition to UWG email (which you should use to communicate with me) and Course Den, I use Remind (<https://www.remind.com/>) to communicate with participants in this course. Announcements may include such things as reminders about upcoming assignments, changes in the schedule, or—in rare instances—class cancellations. Information about Remind and how to use it can be found on CourseDen. You can receive announcements directly via text message or you can download the Remind app. Using Remind means you do not have to be signed on to CourseDen to see new course announcements or updates. To sign up for Remind, text @engl4300g to this number: 81010. Once the course has ended, you will be removed from the notification system.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. *Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given.* If you

have a registered disability through UWG that requires accommodation, see me at the beginning of the semester so that I can work with you to determine what accommodations might be needed. For further information about accessibility services and how to schedule an appointment: [http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index\\_8884.php](http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php).

**Credit Hour Policy:** The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

**University of West Georgia Honor Code:** At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this class, including essays, quizzes, and materials submitted for a grade. The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG. Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. It is your responsibility to report instances of academic dishonesty if you see them occur. UWG Honor Code: <http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php>

**Department Policy on Disruptive Behavior:** Students may be dismissed from any class meeting during which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, allowing cell phones to ring, speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students, checking email or texting, and using personal electronic devices. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the course attendance policy. If you have concerns about disruptive behavior or would like to talk about the classroom environment or your participation in the class, please set up a time to meet with me. For more information see [http://www.westga.edu/vpsa/index\\_4615.php](http://www.westga.edu/vpsa/index_4615.php)

**Conferences and Outside Assistance:** I am always available to meet with you outside of class to discuss your progress in this class, upcoming and graded writing assignments, research topics, or reading assignments we are currently studying. If you are having trouble with the material in this course or have questions and/or concerns you would like to discuss, please set up a time to meet with me. My office hours are listed above, but I will be glad to meet with you at other times, if we arrange a mutually convenient time in advance. I am usually here throughout the week and can arrange to meet at days and times outside of my scheduled office hours.