

Spring 2020

MWF Period 5 (11:45 AM – 12:35 PM), Matherly 0102

Instructor: Aleksandra Tomic, MA

Office: Turlington B132

Office hours: MF Period 6 12:50 PM – 1:40 PM, by appointment

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### Course Description

This course is designed to help you acquire a deeper understanding of Modern English grammar and the terminology pertaining to it. You will develop an awareness of:

- the form, meaning, and use of various grammatical structures of the English language;
- basic elements of grammar structure form, meaning, and use descriptions;
- the differences between prescriptive and descriptive rules of the English grammar, with a focus on the actual ways speakers of English use the language, i.e. desc. rules;

We will also touch on the variation of grammatical systems depending on dialect, register, speaker.

Simultaneously, we will be working on developing a pedagogical perspective on different ways these grammatical features can be taught to learners of English.

### Course Objectives

By the end of this course you will have acquired the ability to competently describe and explain the **phenomena of basic English grammar**, as well as **more advanced grammar points** which learners of English as a second/foreign language often find challenging. You will also have become acquainted with **contemporary language teaching methods**, with a focus on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Apart from the theoretical background on language teaching methodology, you will participate in class activities that you could use as a teacher in your own class, and you will gain experience in creating authentic grammar-teaching resources.

**The end goal is for you to acquire the basic terminology, critical analysis, and teaching skills, so that when you come across an unknown grammatical feature, you would be able to come up with a rough description of its form, meaning, and use, similar to what you would find in modern grammar books, and you would have a rough idea on how to teach it.**

### Course Credit Requirements and Grading

Homework Assignments	40%
Grammar Explanation Assignment	25%
Attendance and Participation	5%
Reading Assignments	10%
Grammar-for-Teaching Assignments	20%

**Attendance and Participation**

Most of your learning will happen in class, during group, partner, and individual activities. You will learn both from the instructor and other students. You will receive one point for each class you attend, and 0.5 points if your level of participation is not satisfactory (using electronics for fun, not contributing to the group discussions, spacing out, etc.). The percentage of attended classes will then be applied to 5% going to your final grade. In the event of an absence, all assignments are to be turned in on time. Excused absences are counted as a full point.

**Reading Assignments**

Over the course of the semester, you will be assigned approximately 7 readings and you will be asked to complete short accompanying activities to demonstrate comprehension. Readings will be posted at least 3 days in advance. Reading in advance will give you a chance to use the classes for practicing and resolving any issues you might have with the material, instead of sitting in grammar lectures. The percentage of completed assignments will count towards 10% of your final grade.

**Homework Assignments**

You will submit 5 written homework assignments over the course of the semester. Among other, these assignments will require to analyze authentic examples of a grammatical feature in terms of form, meaning, and use. In some assignments, you will be required to find authentic examples yourself. In others, the authentic texts for analysis will be provided for you. You will also be asked to complete grammar exercises demonstrating your knowledge of previously covered grammar structures. Specific details and instructions will be posted on Canvas at least a week prior to the deadline.

**Grammar Explanation**

As a member of a group, you will work on a poster or a PowerPoint presentation explaining a grammar structure of your choosing. You will prepare a poster/presentation explaining a grammar structure, present it to your peers in a 20-min session, write a reflection paper on the experience, and write a commentary on a poster presentation of your choosing. More info will be posted on Canvas in advance of the assignment. Your group members will assess your performance in writing using a feedback sheet provided by the instructor. Their averaged assessments will count as 5% towards your final grade; the instructor's independent assessment of your performance and poster/presentation content will count as 10% towards your final grade; your reflection paper will count as 5% towards your grade; your observational comments on a poster/presentation of your choosing will count as 5% of your final grade.

**Grammar-for-Teaching Assignments**

In order to prepare you for teaching English to ESL/EFL students, you will complete 3 activities in which you use your grammar skills for teaching purposes. The Authentic Grammar Resource assignment (4%) will require you to find a piece of authentic text illustrating a grammar point, with a brief explanation on why you picked this text and what type of learner this text would be

suitable for. In the second assignment, Authentic Text Lesson Plan (10%), you will find an authentic text containing examples of a grammar feature of your choice and write a brief lesson plan involving this text. For the third assignment, Learner Writing Analysis (6%), you will receive a copy of a learner writing sample and analyze it in terms of overt grammar errors and genre/register mistakes regarding grammar structure choices. You will have been prepared for this task through similar class activities.

### Assignment Submission

The homework assignments are tentatively due on the dates listed on the schedule below by 11:59 pm as electronic copies on Canvas. Each assignment will be posted on Canvas along with the actual due date. All submissions will be graded *anonymously* using Canvas features. Late submissions will be accepted. Nevertheless, you will lose 10% of the total points with each day after the due date. If there is a valid reason for tardiness, please let me know ahead of the due date.

### Grading Scale

100–93=A; 92.9–90=A–;  
89.9–87=B+; 86.9–83=B; 82.9–80=B–;  
79.9–77=C+; 76.9–73=C(S); 72.9–70=C–(U);  
69.9–67=D+; 66.9–63=D; 62.9–60=D–;  
59.9–0=E

For information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points, please go to <<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>>.

### Extra Credit

There are no extra credit opportunities in this course.

### Classroom Etiquette

Please turn cell phones to silent/airplane mode before entering class. Habitual tardiness is unacceptable in this course – it is highly distracting to your fellow students. Being more than 7 minutes late to the start of the class will count as an absence after the third tardy.

### Required Materials

There are no required textbooks for this class, as we will draw course materials from several resources. All course materials will be made available online or in class. Two grammar books are particularly useful resources for future teachers of English and will be heavily drawn from:

- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*.
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Leech, G. (2002). *Longman student grammar of spoken and written English*.
- Celce–Murcia, M. and D. Larsen–Freeman. (1999). *The grammar book*. MA: Heinle & Heinle.

A less comprehensive and systematic grammar book, but great for guiding you through the steps in critical analysis is the following:

- Firsten, R., & Killian, P. (2002). *The ELT grammar book: A teacher-friendly reference guide*. Alta Book Center Publishers;

**Accommodations**

Please contact me as soon as possible with any concerns of this type. It is of great importance that everyone’s needs are met and that everyone feels comfortable in the class, to facilitate learning and well-being.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, please go to <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>>.

**Academic Integrity**

The UF Honor Code, which all students are required to abide by, reads:

*We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”* For more information on the UF Honor Code, please go to: <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcode.php>>.

**Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

**Tentative Course Schedule\***

DATE	DAY	CONTENT
01/06	M	Introduction to the course and individual introductions
01/08	W	Grammars, grammars
01/10	F	Grammar variations <b>Turn in Getting to Know You</b>
01/13	M	The Basics: Word Classes
01/15	W	The Basics: Word Classes
01/17	F	The Basics: Clause and Sentence Structure
01/20	M	<b>Holiday</b>
01/22	W	The Basics: Clause and Sentence Structure

01/24	F	Nouns
01/27	M	Noun Phrases <b>Homework 1 Due</b>
01/29	W	Determiners – Articles
01/31	F	Determiners - Articles
02/03	M	Determiners – Articles
02/05	W	Determiners – Quantifiers <b>Homework 2 Due</b>
02/07	F	Determiners - Quantifiers
02/10	M	Verb Phrases
02/12	W	Verb Phrases
02/14	F	Verb Phrases
02/17	M	Modality, Tense and Aspect <b>Homework 3 Due</b>
02/19	W	Modality, Tense and Aspect
02/21	F	Present Tense
02/24	M	Present Tense
02/26	W	Present Tense <b>Homework 4 Due</b>
02/28	F	Past Tense
03/02	M	<b>Spring Break</b>
03/04	W	<b>Spring Break</b>
03/06	F	<b>Spring Break</b>
03/09	M	Past Tense
03/11	W	Past Tense
03/13	F	Modal Verbs
03/16	M	Modal Verbs <b>Homework 5 Due</b>
03/18	W	Modal Verbs
03/20	F	Modal Verbs
03/23	M	Grammar Teaching
03/25	W	Grammar Teaching
03/27	F	Grammar Teaching <b>Authentic Grammar Resource Due</b>
03/30	M	Grammar Teaching
04/01	W	Grammar Teaching
04/03	F	Complement Clauses
04/06	M	Complement Clauses <b>Learner Writing Analysis Due</b>
04/08	W	Presentation Session
04/10	F	Presentation Session
04/13	M	Presentation Session

04/15	W	Presentation Session <b>Authentic Text Lesson Plan Due</b>
04/17	F	Presentation Session
04/20	M	Presentation Session
04/22	W	What Makes a Great Language Instructor? Discussion and wrap-up
04/24	F	<b>Reading Day</b>
04/30	12 PM	<b>Reflection paper and commentary due</b>

\* This schedule is tentative and subject to changes. For exact deadlines, please refer to assignment deadlines in Canvas. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class.