

# Sociolinguistics: Language Variation and Change

Linguistics 9819A / French 9800A  
2014-15

Jeff Tennant  
jtennant@uwo.ca  
661-2111, ext 87885  
Office: Arts & Humanities Building (“Old Ivey”) 2R12A  
Course website “FRENCH 9800A 001 GF14” on Owl: <https://owl.uwo.ca>

Friday 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Arts & Humanities Building (“Old Ivey”) Room 2R09

## Office Hours (Arts & Humanities Building “Old Ivey” 2R12A):

My scheduled office hours are posted on the OWL site and will be announced in class. I am also available by appointment – e-mail me and we can arrange a time to meet.

## Course Description:

This course offers students the opportunity to explore foundational research as well as some of the most recent work on language and society, with a particular focus on the theory, methodology and findings of sociolinguistic research on language variation and change.

Students will carry out an empirical analysis of a set of language data as part of their course project, or do a critical survey of the literature to argue a position on a given sociolinguistic topic. Through bibliographic research and a class presentation, they will progress incrementally in their research on their chosen topic throughout the course, and this work will culminate in a final paper.

While some “classic” work in sociolinguistics will be read and reviewed, a significant proportion of our effort in the course will be devoted to studying some of the most recent research in the field.

*The language of instruction will be English but students have the option of submitting written work in English, French or Spanish. Students in French Studies graduate programs are required to submit all written work in French.*

## Weighting of Graded Assignments:

Bibliography assignment:	20%
Abstract	10%
Oral presentation:	20%
Research paper:	50%

## **Readings:**

Readings are posted on the course OWL Site. There will be approximately 25 articles assigned as required reading, and some optional readings on topics studied will also be made available on the site, or can be found in the Western Libraries system. Students will do readings in addition to these on a topic of their choice for the assignments in the course.

## **Assignments:**

Reference list on chosen topic (OPTIONAL, NO MARK ASSIGNED: due October 10)

You are asked to prepare short paragraph describing a sociolinguistic topic on which you plan to do research (please consult the instructor on your choice of topic), and include a list of 10-15 bibliographic references on the topic. Be sure to pay careful attention to the format of bibliographic references.

Annotated bibliography assignment (due October 24)

You are asked to prepare an annotated bibliography on your topic. Please see guidelines posted on the OWL site.

Abstract: (due November 14)

You are asked to prepare an abstract of the research you plan to do for the presentation and the research paper. Please see guidelines posted on the OWL site.

Presentation (December 12)

You are asked to make a presentation to the class, about 15 minutes in length (followed by 5 minutes of discussion), in which you will present the sociolinguistic issue(s) that you are studying. Please see guidelines posted on the OWL site.

Research Paper (due date: January 5<sup>1</sup>)

This assignment involves preparing a well-structured research paper on a sociolinguistic topic, of about 15 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point format). Possible approaches:

- A synthesis of the research on a particular issue: establish a position (thesis) on the question and argue your position while critically reviewing the relevant research
- An empirical study of data from a linguistic corpus.

## **Format for Submission of Written Assignments:**

The preferred method for submission of written work in the course is as a word processing file (Microsoft Word) sent to the instructor via the OWL site on the Assignments page. This saves paper resources and facilitates the provision of timely and detailed feedback.

## **Submission Deadlines:**

All work in graduate courses must be submitted by the deadline set by the instructor. "Incompletes" will not be permitted without medical documentation. (In order to continue to receive financial support from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, each student must demonstrate satisfactory progression in her or his program. Regulations are available upon request in the office of Chrisanthi Skalkos, Graduate Studies Secretary in the Department of French).

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<sup>1</sup> December 15 if you are completing your graduate program at the end of this semester.

**Plagiarism:**

It is expected that graduate students will be aware of the regulations regarding plagiarism and other scholastic offences to be avoided, but I include here the text that the Senate recommends we include in all course outlines:

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>”

**Schedule of Course Meetings:**

A schedule of course meetings, including topics, readings and assignments for each class, is posted on the OWL site.