

Winter 2011

LING 453: Historical Linguistics II

Instructor: Amanda Pounder
Time: TR 12:30-13:45
Location: ST 130

Office: SS 838
Office Hours: by appointment
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Course Materials:

A reading list will be provided, with assigned readings available on the Blackboard site. Readings will consist of articles and book chapters, and will be selected on the basis of participant interests. Electronic databases, specialized websites, and printed texts, distributed in class, will provide data for investigation.

Course Description: This course takes a two-pronged approach to acquiring advanced knowledge and skill in Historical Linguistics. On the one hand, we will read and discuss influential and controversial writings that have shaped debate in the field (possible topics include: explanation in Historical Linguistics; who initiates language change; role of external factors in language change; the hypothesis of regularity of sound change; the status of grammaticalization as a process in language change). On the other hand, students will be involved in group and individual projects which will require them to search for appropriate data, analyze texts to establish patterns of usage and indicators of variation and change, and develop analyses of change(s) they have identified.

Prerequisites: The prerequisite for this course is Linguistics 353. A student may not register in any linguistics course unless a grade of at least C- has been attained in all prerequisites for that course.

Course Requirements:

Article Review	10%
Presentation	5%
Midterm Test	20%
Text Analysis	10%
Class Discussion	10%
Final Project	40%
Presentation	5%
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	100%

Article Review: Each student will choose an assigned reading, present it to the class, and submit a short critique one week after the class discussion.

Midterm Test: The midterm test is based on the assigned readings discussed in class. We will set the date for the midterm test in the first week of classes.

Text Analysis: Students will be assigned two similar texts in a language of their choice written at different times and will be required to identify and describe changes in lexicon, phonology, morphology, and syntax. This is prepared in a group setting, although students are each responsible for their own texts.

Final Project: Students will carry out a research project on a topic and language of their choice, based on an analysis of text material. The topic may be defined by theoretical issue or by historic language community. Past topics include: evolution of French negation and its effects on the semantics of pronouns, fricatives in Colonial Mexican Spanish, French in an Acadian exile community, evolution of semantic field of terms of affection in English.

Deadlines and Absences:

Tests: There is no possibility of a make-up midterm test. At the instructor's discretion, students who miss the test will have an additional assignment to complete, corresponding to the tested material; this option will only be available to students who can produce a valid excuse supported by appropriate documentation. Valid excuses are illness, childbirth, and domestic affliction. Unexcused absence from the test will result in a mark of zero.

Assignments: All assignments are to be handed in on the designated due date (by 4 pm unless otherwise stated). Late assignments will not be accepted without valid excuse as above.

Grading Scheme:

A+	95-100	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	55-59
A	90-94	B	73-76	C	63-66	D	50-54
A-	80-89	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	F	<50