

## Classics 111 *Word Origins*

CLAS 111

Summer Session II 2015

Instructor: Prof. Valerie Spiller

Email: [vspille1@binghamton.edu](mailto:vspille1@binghamton.edu)

Fulfills the Harpur Writing Requirement and Global Interdependencies Gen Ed

### **Course Description:**

This course provides a systematic study of the structure and formation of English words that are derived from Greek and Latin roots. Students will acquire the skills needed to determine the meaning behind Latin and Greek based vocabulary by breaking down their structure into key prefixes, stems, and/or suffixes as adopted into English. They will learn the principles of word analysis and construction. Students will also study English word origins beyond Greek and Latin, earning a “G” Global Interactions GenEd and a Harpur College “W” (Writing) as they learn the history of English and the many non-European languages that influenced its vocabulary. There are no prerequisites. Although we will be working with Latin and Greek terms, no background knowledge of these or other foreign languages is required.

### **Course Goals:**

- 1) Students will acquire a working vocabulary of Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes.
- 2) Students will learn the principles of word analysis and (de)construction.
- 3) Students will become acquainted with the history and evolution of the English language.
- 4) Students will research, analyze and write about the history of the English language with an emphasis on the influence of non-European languages in its development and acquisition of vocabulary.

### **Required Text Books:**

*English Words from Latin and Greek Elements* by Donald M. Ayers

ISBN-13: 978-0816508990 ISBN-10: 0816508992

We will be working from the 2nd edition which is the most recent and most widely available. We will be using this text to practice analyzing words and building our English vocabulary that derives from Classical languages (Latin and Greek).

*English in the World: History, Diversity, Change (Worlds of English)* by Philip Seargent and Joan Swann (editors)

ISBN-13: 978-0415674218 ISBN-10: 0415674212

This book is can be found for sale or for rent as an ebook as well as in print. We will be using this text to get a deeper understand of the history of English with an emphasis on its development and role as a global language.

***The Adventure of English: The Biography of a Language*** by Melvyn Bragg

ISBN-13: 978-1611450071 ISBN-10: 1611450071

This book makes the history of the evolution of the English language and how it was shaped by other world languages very accessible and will support our goal of understanding English word origins.

You will also be using any dictionary of your choice (online or print) and the online etymological dictionary [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)

### **Note on time management and rigor of this summer course:**

This course will involve a lot of learning and studying Latin or Greek elements (e.g. prefixes, suffixes, etc.). It will also involve serious reading and reflection on the history and development of English. These will require both time and effort for successful completion. Given the brevity of a 5 week summer course, you do need to make time for this course and make sure it is a priority.

Even though this summer session is a mere 5 weeks, you will receive 4 credit hours for the work you do in this course. Credit hours awarded recognize the rigor of your coursework. Beyond the time it takes to complete word analysis exercises, short writing assignments, discussion board posts, and quizzes, you will be spending significant time reading, writing, and in critical thinking to prepare for your time within the online “classroom.” Consider the number of work hours required in and out of the classroom for a 4 credit course in a traditional fall or spring semester, and expect to complete the same amount of work hours for this course during the condensed 5 week summer semester.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### **Weekly Discussion Board Posts**

Each week you will be assigned readings from our two textbooks about the history of English, *English in the World: History, Diversity, Change (Worlds of English)* and *The Adventure of English: The Biography of a Language*. To demonstrate your comprehension of the content, your critical thinking and reflection, we will be using the discussion board to share our thoughts on our reading assignments. By **Wednesday** 11:59 PM EST you will have written a post sharing your own reflections on the content. You may start your own thread or post on someone else’s thread if your comments are on their topic. Your post should be 150-250 words. They can be about any topic you found intriguing, provocative, and/or may be critical to a thorough understand of the development of the language. By **Friday** 11:59 EST you will have commented

on two other students' comments. These posts can be shorter than your original post, but they still have to relate back to the text and your own analysis of it. Brief exclamations, however kind and supportive, like "wow! what a great idea!" do not count as a sufficient response.

On the topic of discussion board etiquette, please always be careful and thoughtful with your writing. Be mindful that we cannot see the faces of our classmates and it is difficult to understand tone and implication. Make sure you read and reread your post, both as good editing practice but also to imagine how others might read and interpret it. When you read someone's post, try to give them courtesy and the benefit of the doubt if you're unsure what they mean by a comment. Use professional and academic language to ask them clarifying questions if needed. If a comment is truly egregious, inappropriate or offensive, email me to alert me to the situation rather than address it yourself which could cause confusion and harm to escalate.

5 weekly discussion board sessions for 20 points each = 100 points (for further information on grading you can find my rubric under the "MyGrades" Blackboard feature)

### **Wiki Entries on Etymology Exercises**

For this course we will use the Wikis feature on Blackboard to help us collaborate and learn vocabulary, bases, roots, prefixes, and suffixes together in groups. Using the "Groups" feature on Blackboard you will be assigned to groups of about 4 students. When we move from the Latin Lessons to the Greek Lessons after the first two weeks, I will reassign the work groups.

We will work through the exercises from the Ayers' *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements* textbook together on the Wiki pages. You will be required to contribute to the wiki each week, completing different exercises from the textbook. For each week, I will have a clearly labeled wiki and specific pages for each of the lessons we will cover and their required exercises.

Some clarification on the terminology I'm using for these assignments. "Lessons" refers to what are essentially chapters in the book. Lessons are either Latin or Greek, and ordered with Roman numerals. Roman numerals are also used to label the different sections of various types of tasks within each lesson. When I say "**exercises**" I mean the **Arabic numerals, 1,2,3, within each section**. So in the Introduction lesson, identifying 1. Hindi as Cognate with English (because both are Indo-European languages) counts as one exercise from section I. In Latin Lesson II, section III, exercise 2, you would find the root of the word *annihilate* following the example in the directions, and that would count as one exercise.

Each week there will be at least (but always more than) 400 exercises from the book. That means each student within the group is responsible for completing 100 exercises per week. Do not despair! As long as you read the textbook, use a dictionary, and the online etymological dictionary [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com), many of the exercises will be very short and simple. You're welcome to do more and get good analysis practice – but filling in at least 100 is the minimum

requirement for this assignment. Your grade for these wiki entries will be based on whether you participated and attempted to help answer these exercises for the group, not whether your analysis was right or wrong. Please put your name or initials next to the exercises that you have worked on to help me more easily grade these wikis. You could even use different colored fonts to make it visually clear which students contributed to which parts of the wiki. From these exercises I'm hoping that we will learn the prefixes and suffixes and understand the vocabulary using a tool that will allow us to help one another learn these terms. If you come across a word or exercise that you have questions on or think someone else's entry is wrong, go ahead and mark it up (e.g. add your suggestion in a different color or font or make a comment on that entry – take advantage of the Wiki technology that we have) and you can come to a conclusion as a group.

To make sure that you don't save all your exercises to the last minute, you must post at least one wiki entry by **Tuesday** night (11:59pm EST) of each week – and all of your remaining entries by **Thursday** night (11:59pm EST). See suggested day-by-day schedule below. Note that wikis will be unavailable for viewing or editing on Fridays while students may be taking the weekly quiz, so be sure to turn in your postings/edits on time.

Check the "Content" folder each week for supplementary materials regarding the concepts covered each week in Ayers' *English Words...* It will not be required reading but it may help you get a different perspective and complete the work more successfully.

To participate on the Wiki you will, 1) go to the course shell on Blackboard, 2) Click on Tools on the left side panel, 3) Click on Wikis (last entry/option in the alphabetical list of possible tools), 4) Click on the selected wiki for that week, 5) Note the sub-wikis listed in the box on the right hand panel and select the different wiki exercises you want to contribute to 6) Click Edit Wiki Content, make edit and click Submit.

4 weekly wikis for 25 points each = 100 points total

### **Weekly Quizzes**

You will have 4 weekly quizzes, one during each of the first four weeks of the course. The last week of class will be focused on the final project and also will leave us time to help any student with truly extenuating circumstances.

Each of the 4 weekly quizzes will be centered on the week's exercises from Ayers' *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements*. Each quiz will be made of a combination exercises directly from the book (typically those not completed by each group in the wikis), exercises created by the instructor using the same content and format as those from the week's assigned exercises, and one or two short response questions based on the content from the textbook (Ayers'). The instructor reserves the right to vary the format of each weekly quiz within these aforementioned parameters. For example, one week's quiz might feature more exercises from the

text than those created by the instructor along with one short response, while the following week the quiz might have only exercises created by the teacher and two short responses.

All quizzes will be worth 25 points totaling up to 100 points of your 500 point overall average (1/5 of your grade). Exercises will be worth one point each and short responses will be worth 5 points each.

Since your wiki exercises will be open until 11:59 pm EST Thursday, your quizzes will become available at 12:01 am EST each Friday. You can take the test at any time between 12:01 am EST **Friday** until 11:59 pm EST **Sunday**.

You may use any articles, books, dictionaries, notes or previous exercises you have completed to help you. *However*, you have a limited time to complete the test. Prepare yourself ahead of time. Reviewing materials beforehand, asking the instructor and classmates questions, and diligently completing wiki exercises that week will ensure your success.

If you have any confusion about a quiz, please contact me via email, [vspille1@binghamton.edu](mailto:vspille1@binghamton.edu) and ask questions before beginning the test. The test will be timed and there will be no retakes. Let's take care of those technical issues and any confusion beforehand.

4 weekly quizzes for 25 points each = 100 points

### **Weekly Short Assignments**

*Individual Exploration of Non-European English Vocabulary* – For these weekly short assignments, you will write 2 full double-spaced pages responding to a different prompt each week. The prompts will help you prepare for your final project and will involve preparation, research, editing, planning, and reflection over the course of the class. The assignments will be found under the “Content” folder for the week and will be submitted by uploading a file using Turnitin. These short writing assignments help fulfill the requirements for the Harpur Writing Requirement. These are due each **Friday** by 11:59pm on Blackboard under Content. For further information on grading, you can find a rubric under the “MyGrades” feature on Blackboard.

5 weekly assignments for 20 points each = 100 points

### **Final Project**

*Individual Exploration of Non-European English Vocabulary* – Instead of a final exam, students will create a digital presentation on the etymology of 5 English words from a non-European language of their choosing. You will select from one of 4 different language groups: Semitic, West African, Indian Subcontinent, or Indigenous American. This work will help you complete your “G” GenEd requirement.

Each student will have broad latitude to focus on the specific languages or language groups, historical developments in the English language, and English vocabulary that he or she finds most interesting. For example multiple students may select the Semitic language family, but one student may choose to focus on words that came into English from Yiddish speaking immigrants in America and another may choose to focus on scientific and mathematical terminology developed by Arabic speakers in the Middle Ages.

Each presentation will need to teach our class about 1) the language family you have selected, the different languages within that family, and whether this language family is cognate with English, 2) what historical events and global interactions brought speakers of these languages in contact with English language speakers and how words were exchanged during these circumstances, 3) key spelling and phonetic features that can help English speakers recognize words derived from these other languages, 4) etymological analysis of 5 words from this language family that have come into English vocabulary.

You can use either the free online tool Prezi ([www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)) or Powerpoint or Google Present or a similar presenting software program. If you come up with another creative format you can use to “present” (electronically share) your work with your classmates, you can share your ideas with me both in your weekly short assignments and also in emails.

More details on this forthcoming in the course (e.g. where to submit on Blackboard, etc.). You will also be able to find my grading rubric on Blackboard. 100 points

**Grading for Course:** Written assignments, such as discussion board posts, short weekly writing assignments and the final project, will be graded using rubrics which you can access on Blackboard.

A	461-500	Weekly Quizzes - 25 points each = 100 points total
A-	446-460	Wiki Entries - 25 points each week = 100 points total
B+	431-445	Discussion Board Posts – 20 points each = 100 points total
B	411-430	Weekly Written Reflections– 20 points each = 100 points total
B-	396-410	Final Project - 100 points
C+	381-395	Total = 500 points
C	361-380	<i>I will be using a cumulative point system rather than focusing on the traditional letter grade system. I find it can be motivating for students to think of their grades from a positive/additive “scoring points” perspective rather than a percentage based/subtractive perspective. If you are confused or concerned about any of your grades using these</i>
C-	346-360	
D	325-360	
F	324 or less	

*calculations you are free to contact me by email or during office hours.*

### **Concerning Late Assignments:**

I accept all late work for partial credit. Keep in mind, however, that due to the condensed timeframe of this summer course, staying on schedule is essential. Late assignments will lose 5 points for each day they are late. For example, a would-be 20 point assignment handed in a day late will earn 15 points. In addition to the due date the time an assignment is due is also specified. All times are in Eastern Standard Time; students in other time zones, be aware.

### **Communications and Technology:**

#### Announcements

Please check the Announcements section of Blackboard every day. I will very frequently add announcements about assignments, grading, changes in schedule, etc. throughout the course. I will sometimes forward these announcements to your Binghamton email but you are still responsible for checking Blackboard regularly.

#### Email Correspondence

Email is the best way to get in touch with me during this course. I can be reached at my Binghamton email address, [vspille1@binghamton.edu](mailto:vspille1@binghamton.edu). I will not be checking the Inbox or Communication features of Blackboard so do not attempt to contact me this way. Before sending any inquiries through email, please check the syllabus, all Blackboard announcements, folders, and assignment directions. I want to prioritize specific and individual questions rather than repeat information publicly posted on Blackboard. This ensures that I can respond to serious issues in a timely manner.

#### Office Hours

I will be holding office hours twice a week. On Mondays I will be available from 4pm - 6pm. On Thursdays I will be available from 10am- 12pm. Since the Office Hours feature on Blackboard does not appear to function easily for all users, I will be holding office hours on our **Binghamton Email**. Just like on any gmail account, we are able to use the chat feature on the left. I have emailed you using my Binghamton address [vspille1@binghamton.edu](mailto:vspille1@binghamton.edu) so that I appear in your contact information.

To start chatting, hover over my name and in the box that pops up you should see an icon in the lower left corner that looks like a cartoon dialogue bubble with a plus sign in it. This is the "Invite to chat" button. After I accept your invitation, we can begin our office hours' conversation.

Please check the syllabus, all Blackboard announcements, folders, and assignment directions before you ask questions in office hours. This will keep our office hours' conversations more efficient and pertinent to your individual needs.

### Assignments and Readings

The syllabus and your weekly short written assignments will be posted on Blackboard under "Content" in clearly labeled weekly folders. Under "Content" you will also find quizzes and a link to the "Wiki" tool. All readings will be out of the required textbooks. I will sometimes include supplemental images, audio, video, and texts that support your understanding of the required texts.

### Turning in Weekly Written Assignments

All short weekly writing assignments will be submitted using Turnitin. To turn in an assignment, go to "Content" on Blackboard and click on the link for the assignment in question. You will be prompted to upload your document and click Submit. You should receive a receipt email once this is complete. If you do not receive an email receipt, you have not successfully turned in your assignment. Please be sure to keep these receipts in case of technical difficulties in order to prove that you have turned in your assignment on time.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Below I've provided a weekly checklist of types of assignments and when they are due. Specific assignments for each week will be found in Announcements and Content folders. Please remember the *time* by which certain assignments are due as well as the due dates.

Weeks 1-4

MON: Read through lessons and reading assignments, optional office hours 4-6pm

TUE: **Begin posting on the exercise wiki by 11:59pm EST**

WED: **Discussion board post based on reading assignments by 11:59pm EST**

THUR: **Complete all wiki postings 11:59pm EST**, optional office hours 10-12am

FRI: **Weekly written assignment, 2 comments on discussion board posts by 11:59pm EST**

SUN: **Weekly quiz due by 11:59pm EST**

Week 5

8/3: Read through reading assignments, optional office hours 4-6pm

8/4: **Final Project turned in by 11:59pm EST**

8/5: **Discussion board post based on reading assignments by 11:59pm EST**

**8/6: Share all critical feedback on classmates' presentations in wiki by 11:59pm EST**  
(details to come), optional office hours 10-12am

**8/7: Weekly written assignment, 2 comments on discussion board posts by 11:59pm EST**

**\* Note: Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated in this or any course at Binghamton University. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will automatically fail that assignment. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism or academic honesty, please consult me or the University's Student Handbook for more information.\***

**\*\*Note: I reserve the right to alter the syllabus or schedule at any time.**