Course Objectives
This course explores the reasons for variation in language and the mechanisms through which change takes place by examining the regional and social structure of American English. We will explore such questions as why people from different parts of the United States have “accents,” why certain varieties of American English are considered more “prestigious” than others, how variation can lead to change, and what are some of the changes that have taken place in American English over the last several decades.

Course Requirements
**The prerequisite for this course is LING 3060 or an equivalent, approved course from another university.
Course grades will be determined from the following:
1. 15% Class Participation
   This includes regular attendance, active participation in class discussions and group work, and in-class presentations of projects and articles. Students will be uploaded to Blackboard and will be expected to participate in online discussions.
2. 60% Short Assignments
   These will be assigned during the semester to coincide with the different topics covered. The instructions for all assignments will be on Blackboard.
3. 25% Semester Project in lieu of midterm and final exam
   Students will work in groups throughout the semester on a field-based project. Details of the project will be discussed during the first week of class. Students will analyze and discuss the data in a ppt presentation during finals week.

Most of what you will learn in this class will come from class interactions, discussions, and oral presentations. Therefore, attendance is required. Late assignments will be graded down 5 points each day they are late. If you know of any circumstance that will cause you to miss class please let me know in advance so we can make any arrangements necessary. If you are too ill to come to class, you must call or email me before class to let me know.

Course and Reading Schedule (may be revised because of current events in the media)
[There will be supplemental readings for each unit that will be posted to Blackboard. Note that not all the supplemental readings are listed below.]
Unit #1 - Regional and Dialectal Variation / Accents and the “Standard”

Aug. 29, 31:  Introduction to course; attitudes towards social, regional, and ethnic variation in English; social class in the U.S. – how does this relate to linguistic variation?  
Read: Lippi-Green: Introduction pp. 3-6, Chap. 1  
Video: “People like us” available through the UNT Media Library video on demand. See Blackboard for assignment instructions.

Sept. 7:  The diversity of American English - accents and “standard” English; why languages have dialects  
Read: Lippi-Green: Chap. 2, 10; Preston: “Where the worst English is spoken”; Fridland and Bartlett “Correctness, pleasantness, and degree of difference ratings across regions”

Sept. 12, 14:  Guest lecturer – Rosalia Dutra. “Syntactic freezes”; language ideology in advertisements  
Read: Cooper and Ross “World order”

Unit #2 - Motivations for Language Change / Methods to Study Language Variation

Sept. 19, 21:  Social factors involved in variation; Labov’s Martha’s Vineyard and NYC studies.

Sept.: 26, 28:  Linguistic geography – dialect regions of the United States; Linguistic Atlas studies; survey research  
Read: Bailey et al.: ”The linguistic consequences of catastrophic events: An example from the American Southwest”; Tillery and Bailey: “Yall in Oklahoma”  
Bailey: “When did Southern American English begin?”

Oct. 3, 5:  Survey research cont., sociolinguistic fieldwork; origins of variation

Unit #3 - Accent Discrimination / Language Ideology and Society

Oct. 10, 12:  Accent discrimination; language ideology and language attitudes: What is “standard” English?  
Read: Lippi-Green: Chap. 3, 4, 11  
Levels of dialects; dialect vs. slang; the BE LIKE phenomenon  
Read: D'Arcy: ”Like and language ideology: Disentangling fact from fiction”; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy: “He's like, she's like: The quotative system in Canadian youth”; Rickford et al. “Intensive and quotative all: Something old, something new”

Oct. 17, 19:  Language subordination in the media  
Reading: Lippi-Green: Chap. 5, 7

Oct. 24, 26:  Language subordination in schools and in the workplace; the judicial system weighs in . . .  
Reading: Lippi-Green: Chap. 6, 8
Unit #4 - Social and Ethnic Dialects

Oct. 31, Nov. 2: Standard English and education – from Ann Arbor to Oakland; social realities of having an accent
Read: Lippi-Green: Chap. 9; Freeman: The Ann Arbor Decision: The Importance of Teachers’ Attitudes toward Language; Labov: “The logic of nonstandard English”; Rickford and Rickford: Chap. 9, 10 Spoken Soul

Nov. 7, 9: Historical roots of African American Vernacular English (AAVE); WPA Slave Recordings
Reading: Bailey and Cukor-Avila: Chap. 1

Nov. 14, 16: Grammatical and phonological features of AAVE; the “divergence controversy” grammatical innovations.
Read: Cukor-Avila ”Co-existing grammars: A social and historical overview of the relationship between the evolution of African American Vernacular English grammar and the grammar of Southern White English Vernaculars

Nov. 21, 23: Grammatical and phonological features of AAVE cont.

Nov. 28, 30: Educational issues revisited
Reading: Labov: “Can reading failure be reversed? A linguistic approach to the question.”

Dec. 5, 7: In-class work on final project

Dec. 14: Final project presentation

Suggested Journals (These are good sources for articles and information for your assignments and project)
American Speech
Language in Society
Language Variation and Change
English World-Wide
Journal of Sociolinguistics
Journal of English Linguistics

Some useful URLs
www.ling.upenn.edu/~labov/home.html
www.americandialect.org/ (American Dialect Society)
www.lisadc.org/ (Linguistic Society of America)
www.linguistlist.org/ (Linguist-List)

Assignment Submission and Grading Academic Dishonesty and Integrity
It is your responsibility to become familiar with UNT’s Policy of Academic Dishonesty. The full policy can be found at http://policy.unt.edu/policydesc/student-standards-academic-integrity.
This policy defines the following forms of academic dishonesty:
• **Cheating**: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.

• **Plagiarism**: The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.

• **Fabrication**: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

• **Facilitating academic dishonesty**: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity.

If any course material is submitted that violates this policy of academic dishonesty, the assignment will receive a grade of "F", and the student may receive a failing grade for the entire course; appropriate judicial action will be filed. This action includes a report of academic misconduct to the Office of Academic Integrity and possible dismissal from The University of North Texas. There are no first-offense warnings regarding plagiarism.

**Student Behavior**
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

**Essential Competencies**
ODA policy – *The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.*

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, we will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to accommodate reasonably qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation, please advise us of your needs in writing no later than the end of the second week of the semester. Essential competencies for this course include the ability to:

• read and synthesize research articles.
• interact with subjects in a professional and ethical manner.
• use an audio and/or video recorder.
• use a computer with various word processing, e-mail, transcription, and graphics software applications.
• speak in front of the class and use multimedia to support the presentation.