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 3070 or an equivalent, approved course from another university.**

Course grades will be determined from the following:
1. **10% Class Participation**
   This includes regular attendance, active participation in class and online discussions, group work, and in-class presentations of short assignments.
2. **75% 3 Short Assignments**
   These will be assigned during the semester to coincide with the units covered in the course and the final semester project. The instructions and due dates for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard.
3. **15% Semester Project in lieu of final exam**
   Students will work throughout the semester on a field-based project investigating characteristics of the Millennial Generation. Details of the project will be discussed during the first week of class.

Most of what you will learn in this class will come from class interactions, discussions, and oral presentations. This means that attendance is required. If you know of any circumstance that will cause you to miss class you must let me know in advance so we can make arrangements for you to get the material you will miss. If you are too ill to come to class you must email me before class to let me know and provide a medical excuse written on official letterhead the day you return to class. Students with 6 or more unexcused absences will have their final grade lowered by a letter grade. Late assignments will be graded down 5 points each day they are late and will not be accepted after 5 days.

Required Text:

Companion website http://www.americanenglishwiley.com/

[All supplemental readings not listed on the syllabus will be posted to Blackboard]
Course and Reading Schedule (may be revised during the semester)

Aug. 30: 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 for next class: AE Chap. 1

Sept. 1: Dialects, Standards, and Vernaculars; accents and “standard” English  
Read for next class: AE Chap. 2

Sept. 6: More on “standard” and “non-standard” English; Why languages have dialects – sociohistorical explanations  
Read for next class: continue with AE Chap. 2; Bailey et al. (1996) “The linguistic consequences of catastrophic events: An example from the American Southwest”

Sept. 8: Why languages have dialects – linguistic explanations  
Read for next class: AE Chap. 3

Sept. 13: Levels of Dialect  
Read for next class: AE Chap. 4

Sept. 15: History of dialects in the U.S.  
Read for next week: AE Chap. 5; Evans (2011) “‘Seattletonian to ‘Faux Hick’: Perceptions of English in Washington state”; Cukor-Avila (Forthcoming) “A variationist approach to studies of language regard”

Sept. 20, 22: Mapping regional variation; Linguistic Atlas studies; Dialectology; Perceptual dialectology research  
Read for next week: AE Chap. 6; Mather (2012) “The social stratification of /r/ if NYC: Labov’s department store study revisited”

Sept. 27, 29: Social variation in American English  
Read for next class: Tagliamonte chap. 4 “Quotatives: I’m like, ‘Oh my God!’”, Chap. 5 “Intensifiers: Upping the ante – super cool!”

Oct. 4: The spread of the “new” quotatives; intensifiers  

Oct. 6, 11: Ethnicity and American English  

Oct. 13: African American English  
Read for next week: AE Chap. 8

Oct. 25, 27: Grammatical and phonological features of AAVE; the “divergence controversy” grammatical innovations Read for next week: AE Chap. 9


Nov. 8, 10: Gender and language variation cont. Read for next week: AE Chap 10

Nov. 15, 17: Dialects and style

Nov. 22: Dialects and style cont.

Nov 29: Work on projects

Dec. 1: Work on projects

Dec. 6, 8: Project presentations

Dec. 13: Final project due

**Suggested Journals** (These are good sources for articles and information for assignments and the semester 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.american dialect.org/ (American Dialect Society)
www.lsadc.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/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf)

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 Dean of Students 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. Information about The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct)

Cell phone use is not allowed in class. Students must silence their phones and put them away during class time. Any student found using a phone in class for non-class related use will be asked to leave the class. If there is a reason to have your phone out during class you must clear this with the professor before the start of class.

Laptops and tablets may only be used for class-related purposes. Recent research has shown that students retain material much better if they take notes with a pen and paper and not on their computers [http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away](http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away) I encourage you to follow this practice. Students who are using their laptops or tablets to check email, Facebook, surf the web, send text messages, or other non-class activities will be asked to leave the class.

**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 the professor 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.