

English 107 – Language and Culture

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a Humanities elective involving the study of language in the context of ethnology. Emphasis is on the effect of social variables on language use and on the role of power relations in communication. This course seeks to develop students' intellectual viewpoints through open class discussions, critical thinking through writing a research paper, and basic skills of oral communication to persuade and inform an audience through debate and/or oral presentation.

OBJECTIVES

English 107 is a Humanities elective course designed to help students explore issues relating to language and culture. Throughout the semester, students will seek to understand how language and culture combine to create meaning in terms of symbolic power, taboo and euphemism, gender relations and conversation.

In this course, you will engage in class discussion as a means of discovery and as a demonstration of your mastery of course content. Furthermore, the informal written assignments (journal entries) will culminate in a well-developed essay based upon your analysis of and response to the thematic book excerpts in the course pack and your own research on your topic. No written examinations are planned for this course. You will learn to think critically about language and culture from reading and discussing texts on the topic as well as doing some research and writing a paper relevant to the subject of this course.

RESOURCES

Chapter 3 – “Authorized Language” *and*

Chapter 4 – “Rites of Institution” from *Language & Symbolic Power*
(Pierre Bourdieu, 2003)

Chapter One – “Different Words, Different Worlds” from *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*
(Deborah Tannen, 2001)

Chapter Two – “Asymmetries: Women and Men Talking at Cross-Purposes” from *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen

“Lecture I” from *How To Do Things With Words*
(J.L. Austin, 1975)

Chapter 2 – “Logic and Conversation” from *Studies in the Way of Words*
(H. Paul Grice, 1989)

Chapter 2 “Saussure’s Theory of Language” from *Ferdinand de Saussure*
(Jonathan Culler, 1986)

Chapter 9 “Words and Culture” from *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (Fifth Edition)
(Ronald Wardhaugh, 2006)