

Spring 2010 Course Descriptions

APLNG 210 - The Ecology of Global English

This course analyzes how English language aids globalization and how globalization changes English. English now features multiple grammatical systems and norms in diverse speech communities, adopts new modes of literacy and discourse practices, and enters fluidly into other languages and cultures. These changes call for a reconceptualization of language standards, speech communities, linguistic identities, literacy practices, language planning, and English language teaching. After studying the historical and geopolitical bases for the rise of English, we explore the implications of decolonization, diaspora communities, the Internet, and the new economy for diversifying the structure, norms, and usage of the English language. Course requirements include response essays, electronic discussion, and collaborative projects to explore the subject.

APLNG 412 – Teaching Second Language Writing

This course has been designed to provide opportunities to explore various perspectives on theory, research, and pedagogical applications in second language writing. Through readings, writing, class discussion, and development of practical applications, students may develop an understanding of how research and theory can inform their practice, as well as an awareness of how personal and professional factors come together to inform their own theory of second language writing. By engaging in instructional activities, such as evaluating writing, responding to writing, and developing materials, students may begin to develop an understanding of how to implement theory in practice aligned with understanding. The overriding objectives are for students to help develop self-awareness as a writer and a teacher of writing, develop their own philosophy of teaching composition in an additional language context and to develop curriculum that embodies this philosophy. Students will be evaluated on reading journals, tutoring in the Writing Center, literature review, materials development project and developing of materials. APLNG 412 is an elective course in the M.A. TESL program and/or PhD option in Applied Linguistics.

APLNG 484 – Discourse –Functional Grammar

The course provides an overview of grammar through a functional/discourse analytic approach to linguistic analysis. We will be analyzing English and grammars of other languages from the point of view of conceptualization patterns. That is, when speakers use various grammatical forms, they are actually exhibiting evidence with respect to how they conceptualize events, images, emotions, and so forth. By examining samples of actual oral and written discourse (essays, speeches, print ads, television commercials, stand up comedy, sitcoms), we will observe how and to what extent choice of grammatical structure is related to speaker stance, cognition, and interaction. Further, we examine what types of motivations might underlie such choice and will investigate how this approach to grammar can be applied in the analysis of English and/or other languages--whether for teaching purposes or overall analysis of issues relating to ideology, stance, underlying communicative messages, etc. Instructor has a working knowledge of Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Persian and some knowledge of Hebrew and Mandarin. Examples of these languages are brought into class discussions to more clearly illustrate concepts we will be examining.

This course is open to graduate (MA and PhD) and undergraduate students alike. Papers produced for this course are often developed into larger works such as conference presentations (in a variety of disciplines) and MA papers/theses. While not a pre-requisite, the course serves as a nice foundation for APLNG 581-Discourse Analysis.

APLNG 491 – Theory: Second Language Acquisition

This course considers the relationship between second language acquisition (SLA) theory and language teaching. An examination of various aspects of first language (L1) and second language (L2) learning/acquisition processes provides a framework for consideration of basic questions in SLA research and interpretation of findings to date. Of particular interest is the relationship of this research to teaching materials and methods. The questions addressed include the following: What is SLA? What are the methods and aims of SLA Research? How are theories of SLA related to major theoretical models of human language and human learning? What have been or could be important interdisciplinary perspectives in SLA?

APLNG 493 – Teaching English as a Second Language

This course focuses on the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. Specifically, the course explores the multidimensional nature of the teacher as a learner of teaching, the context of schools and schooling within which teaching occurs, and the activities and content of second language teaching and learning. Throughout the semester, students will engage in a range of theoretical, pedagogical, and reflective activities that will enable them to: 1) understand their own beliefs and knowledge about language learning and language teaching and become aware of the impact of such knowledge and beliefs on their classroom practices, 2) recognize the highly situated and interpretative processes involved in language teaching and be able to reflect on, critically analyze, and evaluate their own teaching practices, 3) become sensitive to the complex social, cultural, political, and institutional factors that affect language teaching and students' language learning, 4) come to recognize students' strengths and development as learners and language learners, 5) understand subject matter content from an instructional perspective and learn to anticipate areas that may require additional instructional support, 6) use their knowledge of theory to inform their instructional practices, 7) participate in professional collaborations with other teachers as they learn about language teachers, language teaching, and language learning.

APLNG 500 – Practice Teaching in ESL

This course is designed to provide instructional support and professional mentoring for L2 teachers during the practice teaching in ESL experience. Throughout the practice teaching experience, L2 teachers will have opportunities to: 1) learn about and participate in the daily instructional activities of the practice teaching placement, 2) create and teach appropriate instructional activities and materials for their practice teaching placement, 3) assess their ability to teach lesson content while effectively managing the learning environment, 4) develop and/or implement appropriate assessment measures to evaluate student learning and achievement, 5) observe a variety of ESL instructional contexts, 6) work collaboratively with their mentor teacher, fellow interns, and practice teaching supervisor as they plan and carry out their practice teaching responsibilities, and 7) reflect on and learn about their own professional development as L2 teachers.

APLNG 581 – Discourse Analysis

This course is designed to provide an overview of the various theories of and approaches to the analysis of spoken and written discourse, e.g., speech act theory, conversation analysis, pragmatics, contextual analysis, functional/cognitive grammar, grammar and interaction. These and other approaches are intended to serve as analytic tools and frameworks for students to ultimately design and carry out their own research projects within the course of the semester. Research projects may focus on any aspect of language use, such as language and grammar, language and interaction, language and culture, language socialization, language and cognition; projects may center on some phenomenon of English or may involve other languages, as long as the student is capable of conducting an in-depth analysis of the particular phenomenon under investigation in that language.

APLNG 583 – Methods of Language Assessment

This course is designed as both a theoretical treatment of language testing and a practical "hands-on" introduction to developing and using language tests. The course lays the theoretical foundation for language testing on current conceptions of language proficiency as communicative ability and on classical and modern psychometric techniques. Practical applications explore how to select, develop, administer, and analyze both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced instruments in both research and teaching. Students will also have practice in interpreting and reporting scores.

APLNG 589 – Technology in Foreign Language Education: An Overview

This graduate level survey course examines the roles, functions, and possibilities of technology use in both everyday life and second language education contexts. Course activities include critical discussion of established as well as emerging Internet communication, information, and composition tools. We will also consider research on, and exploratory uses of, synthetic immersive environments and massively multiplayer online games. Course readings will include technology-related research drawing from second language acquisition, sociocultural and activity theory, linguistics, cultural studies, and educational theories of development. Participants will be expected to exit the course with a broad knowledge of educational uses of technology and will have the opportunity, through a variety of course activities, to focus on specific empirical, theoretical, and/or pedagogical contexts that relate to their academic and professional specializations.

APLNG 597A – Meaning in L2 Learning

Meaning in L2 Learning: most of the focus of L2 research to the present has been on the acquisition of forms with much less attention pay to meaning; yet, meaning is at the center of one's ability to operate in communicative settings in a new language. The course will consider recent research on two important areas where meaning comes to the fore: figurative language (metaphor, metonymy and other tropes) and gesture (particularly gesture that synchronizes with speech).

APLNG 597B – Pragmatics in Language Learning and Teaching

The study of second language pragmatics raises many interesting questions: What is 'appropriate' language use? What are the links between norms of language use, second language performance, and identity? How can data revealing the nature of learners' pragmatic choices be gathered in ethical, yet ecologically valid ways? How are the pragmatic dimensions of language use best represented in the classroom? In this course we will survey the literature on the development of pragmatic abilities among learners in classroom, technology-enhanced, and immersion/study abroad environments. We will first examine how pragmatic competence is defined, and its development portrayed, in the applied linguistics literature. Then we will read a selection of relevant empirical studies from a variety of research traditions and learning contexts. Finally, we will focus on the role of pragmatics in language instruction, discussing a variety of approaches to teaching and assessment. Final projects for the course may be proposals for research, reviews of the literature on a specific related topic, or designs for pedagogical interventions.

APLNG 597C – Grantsmanship and Publication

The major requirements for this course are writing a standard scientific research grant and learning the process of publication and review of journal articles. In pursuit of this aim, the course covers each of the major stages in grant preparation and submission: developing research ideas into a comprehensive research program, identifying funding sources, designing the project (aims, hypotheses, lit review, pilot work, data collection, and analysis), writing a well-organized and persuasive text, generating a time-line, preparing a budget, complying with human subjects requirements, and submitting the grant to mock peer review. The course will also cover the practical steps involved in preparing articles for publication and responding to editorial review. In this vein, the course provides an opportunity to systematically revise previously written papers for possible submission to an academic journal.