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## ENG 2901-002: Structure of English

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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W 1-2, and by appointment

### Syllabus for English 2901.002: Structure of English, Spring 2020, CRN 30542

#### Required Texts

*An Introduction to the Grammar of English*, revised edition, 2010, Elly van Gelderen  
*The Five-Minute Linguist*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2012, edited by E. M. Rickerson and Barry Hilton

#### Catalog Description

This course is an introduction to the grammar of English. It is designed to help you learn to describe and analyze the structure of sentences in English and, as such, focuses primarily on syntax. However, phonology (pronunciation), morphology (word forms), and semantics (meaning) will also come up from time to time. Although we will consider grammar from both traditional and modern perspectives, we will take a rhetorical rather than rules-based approach. In other words, we will treat grammar as a tool for reflecting on possible stylistic choices, not as a set of inflexible rules. Ideally, this course will heighten your understanding of the complexity of the English language and help you develop strategies for communicating clearly and effectively in speech and writing.

#### Learning Objectives

This semester, you will learn to:

- diagram phrases and sentences;
- employ concepts and technical terms related to grammar and linguistics;
- describe and analyze how sentences are constructed in English;
- recognize and appreciate varieties of English;
- use grammatical and linguistic knowledge to make careful choices in your own speech and writing.

#### Assignments

**Examinations:** a mid-term and a comprehensive final examination will test your knowledge of course readings and discussions.

**Group Presentation:** your group will explain a short article from *The Five-Minute Linguist*, providing examples to support your reading of the article.

**Individual Presentation:** you will present individually on an element of grammar, style, or usage; on the etymology of a word or phrase; or on some aspect of linguistics.

**Quizzes:** you will take at least two short quizzes covering material from Van Gelderen's *An Introduction to the Grammar of English*.

**Daily Assignments:** various types of homework, in-class exercises, and individual or group activities will count as daily assignments. These will be assigned on a day-to-day basis.

#### Policies and Statements

**Email:** Recently, the English Department removed phone lines from most faculty offices. If you need to speak to me outside of class, email me or drop by during my office hours. I try to answer emails quickly, but please do not expect (or depend on) an immediate response to an email. Sometimes my schedule does not allow me to answer emails within a day, much less an hour or two.

**Attendance:** More than four unexcused absences will result in the loss of your participation grade for the semester. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what happened from another member of the class and for picking up missed handouts. Absences will be excused only in the case of a documented illness or emergency, or of documented participation in an official university activity. You must provide me with a legible photocopy of your documentation for my records, and if your absence is excused, I will return a copy of your documentation indicating as much. You must provide documentation either before you miss class or on the day you return. Please do not come to class late. Frequent tardiness will significantly lower your participation grade for the semester.

**Grading Scale:** 100 to 90 = A, 89.99 to 80 = B, 79.99 to 70 = C, 69.99 to 60 = D, 59.99 and below F

**Percentages for Assignments**

Mid-term and Final Exams	25% each
Group Presentation	10%
Individual Presentation	10%
Quizzes and Daily Assignments	20%
Participation	10%

**Assessment:** I will provide assignment sheets for the presentations. Your grade for each presentation will be determined by how well your work fulfills the requirements outlined in the assignment sheet. Presentations must be given on the dates for which you have scheduled them, except under the most extenuating circumstances. Daily assignments will generally count for 10 points. Daily assignments will not be graded formally—you will receive full credit for completing them in full. (Points will be deducted for incomplete work.) **Daily assignments will not be accepted late.** Quizzes will count for 20 to 50 points each and be graded. Your “Quizzes and Daily Assignments” percentage grade will be determined by dividing your point total by the total number of points possible. A quiz or examination may be rescheduled or made up **only** in the case of an excused absence. A rescheduled quiz or examination may cover different material than the original. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, the regularity and quality of your contributions to class discussions, and your level of engagement during group work and class activities.

**Academic Dishonesty:** According to the *MLA Handbook*, the word “plagiarism” has its origin in the Latin term for “kidnapper”: plagiarists kidnap other writers’ sentences, phrases, or ideas and present them as their own. The *Random House Dictionary* defines “plagiarism” as “The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work.” As these sources suggest, plagiarism often results from faulty documentation or careless note taking. Always place quoted materials in quotation marks, and always cite quoted and/or paraphrased sources, even in rough drafts of papers or in presentations. Respect for the intellectual work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources. Inexcusable acts of plagiarism include downloading or buying a paper from the internet; copying and pasting phrases or passages from electronic sources into your paper without citing them; submitting a paper written by another student as your own; borrowing the language and content of a website verbatim and using it as an “original” presentation; and so on. The penalty for academic dishonesty is failure in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**The Office of Disability Services:** If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

**The Student Success Center:** Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

**Provisional Schedule**

Note: Each reading should be completed *before* class on the day it is listed.

Van Gelderen = *Introduction to the Grammar of English*

Week One

T Jan 14 Introduction to the course  
 R Jan 16 Linguistic Knowledge  
 Chapter 1 in Van Gelderen  
 "Do All Languages Have the Same Grammar?" (Chapter 14, *Five-Minute Linguist*)

Week Two

T Jan 21 Categories, Pronouns, and Loanwords  
 Chapter 2 in Van Gelderen  
 R Jan 23 Categories, Pronouns, and Loanwords continued

Week Three

T Jan 28 Phrases and Tree Diagrams  
 Chapter 3 in Van Gelderen  
 R Jan 30 Phrases and Tree Diagrams continued

Week Four

T Feb 4 Phrases and Tree Diagrams continued  
 R Feb 6 Review of Chapters 1-3 in Van Gelderen

Week Five

T Feb 11 Quiz  
 Functions in the Sentence  
 Chapter 4 in Van Gelderen  
 R Feb 13 Quiz Review / Q & A  
 Preparation for Group Presentations

Week Six

T Feb 18 Group Presentations, Peer Evaluations  
 R Feb 20 Group Presentations, Peer Evaluations

Week Seven

T Feb 25 Functions continued  
 R Feb 27 More Functions, Prepositions and Particles  
 Chapter 5 in Van Gelderen

Week Eight

T Mar 3 More Functions continued  
 Review of chapters 4-5 in Van Gelderen  
 R Mar 5 Midterm examination

Week Nine

T Mar 10 Structure of the Verb Group  
 Chapter 6 in Van Gelderen  
 R Mar 12 Structure of the Verb Group continued

Spring Recess

Mar 16-20, no classes

Week Ten

T Mar 24 Finite Clauses  
 Chapter 7 in Van Gelderen

R Mar 26 Finite Clauses continued

Week Eleven

T Mar 31 Non-finite clauses  
Chapter 8 in Van Gelderen

R Apr 2 Non-finite clauses continued  
Review of Chapters 6-8 in Van Gelderen

F Apr 3 Last day to withdraw with a W

Week Twelve

T Apr 7 English Studies Conference

R Apr 9 Quiz

Week Thirteen

T Apr 14 Quiz Review / Q & A  
Excerpts from Chapters 9, 10, and 11  
Structure of AdjP; Clauses as Parts of NPs and AdjPs; Special Sentences

R Apr 16 Individual Presentations

Week Fourteen

T Apr 21 Individual Presentations

R Apr 23 Individual Presentations

Week Fifteen

T Apr 28 Individual Presentations

R Apr 30 Final Exam Review

Final Exam Mon., May 4, 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.