

**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**Anthropology 9215B**  
**Discourse and Society**  
***Winter 2019***

**Lectures:** Thursdays 1:30 pm–4:30 pm

**Classroom:** SSC 3315

**Instructor: Dr. Karen Pennesi**

**Office:** SSC-3404

**Office hours:** Tuesdays 1:00 pm-2:30 pm

**Email:** [pennesi@uwo.ca](mailto:pennesi@uwo.ca)

**Credit value:** 0.5 credit

**Calendar Course Description:**

Discourse analysis provides empirical grounding for explanations and interpretations of culture, society and social behaviour. Attention to discourse (language in use as talk or text) reveals the diversity of perspectives within cultural and social groups, reminding us to be critical of generalizations we make, while deepening our understanding of issues. In this course, we will explore how discourse is shaped by many things including the world as we know it, the structures of language itself, socio-political relations, prior discourses, the limitations and possibilities of the medium, and various interactional goals. Examples of discourse features include: discourse markers, slang, stance, style, framing, register, genre, language choice, and reported speech.

**Course Syllabus:**

We will be studying several types of discourse analysis, all of which involve the study of discourse within cultural and social contexts. We will consider both the interactional structure and the social principles (pragmatics) that influence the production and interpretation of discourse. We will be asking how particular discourse patterns help speakers interpret their daily experiences and negotiate relationships within questions of power, identity, inequality, modernity/tradition, globalization, and others. We will take an explicitly ethnographic approach to show how speakers and speech are simultaneously located in interactional, local,

national, and global contexts. In addition to analytic models, we will also address issues of data collection, transcription and representation.

Students are expected to make connections to their own research and apply the theories and methods from the readings to analyses of their topics of interest. Because discourse analysis is best learned by practice, students will be required to conduct original research, collecting, transcribing and analyzing data.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

identify structures and patterns in oral and written discourse

describe linguistic phenomena using academic terminology

use various theoretical models to analyze how spoken and written discourse is connected to social, political and cultural processes

conduct a research project investigating aspects of language in use

### **Course Materials:**

Required books to purchase:

Ahearn, Laura (2017) *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Alim, H. Samy and Geneva Smitherman (2012) *Articulate while Black: Barack Obama, Language and Race in the U.S.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Roth-Gordon, Jennifer (2017) *Race and the Brazilian Body: Blackness, Whiteness and Everyday Language in Rio de Janeiro.* University of California Press.

Additional required readings will be made available on the course OWL site before the first day of class.

### **Evaluation:**

*Research Ethics Tutorial – 5%      Due 24 January*

Approval from the Research Ethics Board is required to record talk for class assignments. All students will need to complete the **online training** with the TCPS2 tutorial (<http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>) and

submit the certificate of completion to me by 24 January. This will be worth 5% of your grade.

If you will be collecting new data for this project, you will need to write a **letter of information and a consent** for your participants that meets Research Ethics Board requirements. A template for the Letter of Information and Consent Form is available here [https://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/human/board\\_guidelines.html](https://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/human/board_guidelines.html) under Templates (I recommend the second one).

### *Class Participation and Response Papers – 15%*

Your active and informed participation is expected in every class. The expectation is that everyone will receive full marks (5 points per class) unless there is reason to deduct marks for insufficient preparation, inappropriate or insufficient contribution to discussion, or unexcused absences.

Before each class, you will prepare a **single page (double-spaced) response** to the readings in terms of what you found useful, insightful, difficult or problematic. This assignment will ensure a close reading of the material to maximize your learning and prepare you to be an active participant in class discussions. Papers are due at the beginning of each class in the week that we discuss the related readings. Late papers will not be accepted since this counts as part of your participation mark for the week. Responses will be given a score out of 10 and this will be added to your weekly participation grade for a total of 15 points. The average of these weekly marks will be calculated to make up this 15% of your course grade.

### *Seminar Leader – 20%*

Each student will be responsible for leading one weekly class discussion. There are 3 parts to this assignment.

- a) You will write a **two-page (single-spaced) synthesis** of the main ideas (theoretical approaches, concepts, analytical methods) of the readings. Note that this is not just a summary of the individual readings, but you are discussing them in relation to each other and to a common theme. You must upload a .pdf copy of your synthesis on OWL by **Wednesday at noon** for the members of the class to read before we meet.
- b) You will prepare 3-5 **discussion questions** which show connections among the current set of readings as well as to past weeks as appropriate.

- c) The leader will also bring in a **small data set** for the class to analyze using the concepts and theories presented that week. You need to provide some guidance in the form of questions or instructions the class can follow individually or in small groups.

Grades for leading the seminar will be based on how well the leader is able to draw out the main ideas and common themes in the readings, provoke thoughtful and productive discussion through the questions and presentation of the material, facilitate participation of the group, and choose an appropriate data set for illustrating points from the readings.

*Annotated Bibliography on Analytical Methods – 20%*      *Due 14 February*

Each student will write an annotated bibliography on a selected method of discourse analysis. You will choose **three** sources. The annotations should be about **300** words each. Your bibliography should have a **250-word introduction** in which you give an overview of the method in terms of the kinds of questions that can be answered by using it and the kinds of data that it works best with.

You must **submit an electronic copy** of your annotated bibliography to OWL>Assignments. It will then be made available to the rest of the class in another OWL folder.

*Individual Project – 45%*

The topic for this project is open, with the requirement that you use the models and theories from the course to perform an original analysis of some discourse.

This assignment will be broken down into 3 components:

- Five-page proposal and outline – 5% (Due on or before 7 March)
- Fifteen-minute presentation – 10% (Due 28 March)
- 18-20 page essay – 30% (Due 4 April)

More information will be made available to students on the course OWL site.

**Course Specific Statements and Policies:**

*Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations:*

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic

counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

### *Statement on Plagiarism:*

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

### *Computer-related Problems*

Make sure to frequently back up all your work and the materials you download on an external site (such as an external hard drive, cloud, an e-mail to yourself) in case your computer crashes or is damaged, stolen, etc. This should be standard practice for anything you do on your computer. No extensions for any assignments will be granted for computer-related problems or lost files.

It is your responsibility to solve any problems you encounter with the OWL system on your device, including access to the site or uploading and downloading files. The OWL Help Desk can be reached at 519-661-3800.

### *Format for Written Assignments*

All written assignments must follow the formatting guidelines below.

- Except for the weekly synthesis, all assignments should be double-spaced.
  - The weekly synthesis should be single-spaced, 2 pages. The discussion questions can be on a third page.
- Use a 12 point font in black ink with 2.5 cm margins.
  - Use the same font throughout the assignment unless there is a theoretical reason, which you explain, for using different fonts.
- Indent the first line of paragraphs (unless under a major heading) and do not leave a blank line between paragraphs.
- Always include page numbers.
  - Number all pages consecutively, including References, Appendix, Transcripts or anything else that comes after the main text.
- Always staple multi-page documents.
- You may print on both sides of the page.
- All assignments should have a title and your name.

- A title page is not necessary if you include title page information on the first page.
- Include name, title, date, course number, professor's name
- If you use a title page, the first page of the essay should be p. 1 (not p.2)
- The title should be meaningful and not simply the name of the assignment (e.g. Essay #1)
- If you use a title page, do not repeat the title on page 1.
- Bibliographic references should follow a common style from Anthropology or Linguistics. When in doubt, follow a style from one of our class readings.
  - List all references cited in the paper alphabetically, under "References", following the text
  - Do not use footnotes for citing references
  - Do not include any citation in the References list which was not cited in the paper
- Check grammar and spelling.
- Provide a key for transcription symbols. Typically, this is in an Appendix if excerpts are included in the text. If you have a longer transcript as an Appendix, the key should come at the beginning of the transcript.

### *Missed Deadlines:*

Assignments are due in class, at the beginning of class, printed and stapled, on or before the date specified in the syllabus. Otherwise, they will be considered **late and lose 10% per day**. Assignments submitted outside of class time should be put in the drop box in front of the Anthropology Main Office on the third floor of Social Science Room 3326. Be sure to have a title page with your full name, the professor's name and the course number so it can be delivered properly. Assignments sent by e-mail will not be accepted.

### **Institutional Statements and Policies**

*All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined, with links to the full policies, at: [http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/academic\\_policies.html](http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/academic_policies.html)*

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting

plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

A full schedule will be available on the course OWL site before the first day of class.