

LANGUAGE AND HUMOR

Course #: UGS 302 (Unique #90475) Summer Session I
Dates/Times: T, W, TH 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Location: School of Social Work (SSW) 2.118
Instructor: **Dr. Angela M. Nonaka**
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Dept. Tel. #: 512- 471- 4206
Office Hours: T, W, TH 1:30-2:30 p.m. and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Adopting a linguistic anthropological approach to the study of 'language' and 'humor,' this course investigates the linguistic and cultural bases for and constraints on humor as well as its individual and collective psychosocial and communicative purposes and effects. Topically, students will identify and reflect on the reasons and motivations for humor, its sources and styles, for individuals and social groups. Methodologically, students will learn about and enjoy hands-on practice with basic linguistic anthropological methods (e.g., ethnographic observation, transcription, and discourse analysis) that will allow them to analyze the linguistic and cultural as well as the physical and performance aspects of humor. By examining a wide range of humorous phenomena, ranging from formal comedy routines to humorous exchanges in the course of every conversation, students will gain insight into the socio-communicative structures, functions, and practices of humor and their significance in human interaction and social life.

Interwoven with the study of language and humor, this course includes a number of key learning objectives specific to the Signature Course program. First, this class is small by design and is meant to encourage the development of intellectual community. Second, special activities like the Gems of UT experience will introduce students to some of the interesting and enriching opportunities that UT and Austin have to offer. Finally, this course purposefully incorporates a variety of instructional activities and learning assignments in order to enrich the educational experiences and maximize the learning outcomes of the most number of students and also to hone important social scientific academic skills (e.g., scientific observation and research techniques, data analysis, information literacy, writing skills, public speaking, etc.) that will serve them well at university and in the world at large.

Disclaimer/Warning: The study of humor is by definition interesting and fun, but at times it can be offensive. Because individual tastes vary and because the "offensive" aspect of words or actions in certain contexts may be the very source of humor itself, class members may sometimes have to work at the boundaries of or outside their normal comfort zone. Just as doctors are inured to human nakedness in the course of their medical practice, university-level students must be prepared to don the professional hat of a social scientist in order to undertake rigorous and meaningful study of language and humor.

COURSE-RELATED READINGS AND OTHER ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Readings: ***Readings should be completed on time as per the calendar of course events.***

- Required textbook = Ross, Alison. 2005. *The Language of Humor*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Additional electronic postings may be posted on Canvas.

In-class Lectures:

- Much information is covered in in-class lectures supported by powerpoint presentations.
- Handouts of ppt presentations will not be distributed, but students may review the ppts during office hours.

Audio-Visual Resources:

- Many humorous audio and visual resources are available through the Fine Arts' audio-visual library (see <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/fal/>) or online at public sites like youtube.com or hulu.com.

Undergraduate Writing Center:

- The Undergraduate Writing Center is an excellent UT resource!!! For info see <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>
- You may also schedule individualized appointments with a writing tutor.

UT Libraries and Collections:

- UT has numerous libraries with impressive holdings. Enjoy and take advantage of these collections! Learning to use the library; finding secondary good secondary source materials (not Wikipedia or Snopes); and so forth are critical skills to develop both for this class and for your academic future.
- The general library home page can be found at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>
- Library information and resources specially designed for undergraduate students is available at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/students>

Electronic Canvas (the new course 'Blackboard'):

- Canvas works on all major browsers, but **Firefox** or **Chrome** are recommended for optimal performance.
- <http://canvas.utexas.edu/>

Required Signature Course Activities:

- Gems of UT/Austin = Attend Esther's Follies (<https://www.esthersfollies.com/>)
The class will make an evening fieldtrip to Esther's Follies, "Austin's answer to SNL (Saturday Night Live)," to experience a live comedic performance. ***The cost a student ticket is \$23 (vs. \$25 undiscounted ticket).***
- Public speaking skills = individual oral presentations
- Critical thinking and information literacy = research, analysis, and transcription activities for final paper
- Cooperative/collaborative learning and service = contribute to new corpus of transcribed comedy routines

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Course Requirements: ***(The instructor may adjust these requirements to facilitate learning.)***

Additional assignment details may appear in the Weekly Calendar of Course Activities and on Canvas.

Required Assignments*	Due Date	% of Grade
ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION	Daily	10%
GEMS OF UT-Austin / Fieldtrip to Esther's Follies	TBA	5%
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS & QUIZZES a. Complete all homework for each unit of the textbook b. In-class mini-quizzes over information from textbook &/or lectures c. Other miscellaneous assignments	See class calendar	10%
RESEARCH & BIBLIOGRAPHY a. Find and analyze primary sources of language and humor b. Identify and use secondary source materials c. Develop data and content analyses for final paper d. Make bibliography for paper & online humor bibliography resource	See class calendar	10%
TRANSCRIPTION ASSIGNMENTS a. Miscellaneous practice exercises b. Final general transcript for final project c. Contribution to new online humor bibliography resource d. Final micro-analytic (CA) transcript for final project	See class calendar	10%
ORAL PRESENTATION a. related to final paper b. details of this assignment TBA	See class calendar	15% (10% talk; 5% peer feedback)
FINAL PAPER (stand-up comedy) a. ~10+-page final paper b. w/ supporting transcripts of primary sources c. incorporation of secondary sources d. bibliography	Thurs. 7/7	20%
FINAL EXAM (comprehensive test incorporating T/F, multiple choice, matching, short answer, applied analytical exercises)	TBA (Fri. 7/8 or Sat. 7/9)	20%

Additional Requirements:

- All readings and assignments must be completed on time and according to instructions.
 - Unless otherwise specified, you should submit hard copies of your assignments to the instructor.
 - Late assignments are subject to lowered grades.
- Students are advised to regularly check email and Canvas for new information, assignment updates, etc. and to maintain reasonable expectations for electronically communicating with the instructor.
- In class, however, please attend to other people in the room rather than to personal electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, ipods, email, skype, etc.), which should be turned down/off while class is in session.
- Avoid academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to 'plagiarism,' and may result in expulsion.
 - UT Libraries offer a useful online tutorial about plagiarism available at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

Final Assignment of Grades:

Final grades will be calculated on a 100-point scale with the following breakdown:

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

Incompletes: Except in extreme circumstances & with proper documentation, no incompletes will be given.

Q Drop Policy: The State of Texas limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6).

Official Written (medical or legal) Excuses:

If you are unable to complete any course requirement due to a medical or other genuine emergency, please contact me as soon as possible to inform me of the situation, and consistent with university policy, please be prepared to provide an official written excuse (e.g. from a doctor, police department, etc.).

OFFICIAL INFORMATION, POLICIES, AND REQUIREMENTS

The University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom: The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

Unanticipated Distress: Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are

responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/.

Title IX Reporting: In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Students who report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct to faculty, instructors, and/or staff who supervise students, will be provided a list of University resources. If the incident is impacting the academic environment, a report will be provided to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may be found at <https://www.utexas.edu/student-affairs/policies/title-ix>.

Signature Courses (Core Component 090): This course fulfills 3 hours of the component area option of the university core curriculum and addresses three of the core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, and one additional objective (teamwork, personal responsibility, social responsibility, or empirical and quantitative skills).

Writing Flag: Providing experience writing in an academic discipline, this course carries the Writing Flag, fulfilling 3 hours of the communication component of the core curriculum and addressing 4 THECB-established core objectives: communication skills, critical thinking skills, teamwork, & personal responsibility.

Documented Disability Statement: Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Religious Holidays: By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students: Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Professional Conduct in Class: The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Classroom Civility: A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues.

Use of Course Materials: The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy: Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF COURSE ACTIVITIES[^] (^ symbol indicates final exam)

*****The instructor reserves the right to adjust readings and assignments for educational purposes.*****

In such cases, students will be alerted in advance of any changes and their implications for course grading.

Week 1: June 1

Thur. 6/1 Getting Started: Introductions, Bureaucratic Housekeeping, Charting a Path for the Semester

Activities: Lecture 1: Overview
Lecture 2: Language—The Innate Human Faculty/Capacity
Attend lecture and take notes
Preliminary analyses of examples of humor

DUE = N/A

Assignment: Read units 1-2 of textbook
Complete all homework associated those units
Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 2 for in-class presentation next week

Week 2: June 6, 7, 8

Tues. 6/6 Lecture 2: Language—The World's Many Different Languages

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes
Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 2

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 2

Assignment: Read Unit 3 of textbook
Complete all homework associated that unit
Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 3 for in-class presentation later

Wed. 6/7 Lecture 3a: Language Use

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes

Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 3

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 3

Assignment: Read Unit 4 of textbook

Complete all homework associated that unit

Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 4 for in-class presentation

Thurs 6/8 Lecture 3b: Language Use

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes

Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 4

Discuss and begin planning for final oral presentations and papers

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 4

Assignment: Watch PBS series, Do You Speak American? (DYSA?)

Begin preparatory assignment #1 for final oral and written projects (details TBA)

Read Unit 5 of textbook

Complete all homework associated that unit

Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 5 for in-class presentation

Week 3: June 13, 14, 15

Tues. 6/13 Lecture 3c: Language Use

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes

Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 5

Continue preparatory assignment #1 for final oral and written projects (details TBA)

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 5

Assignment: Read Unit 6

Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 6 for in-class presentation

Wed. 6/14 Lecture 4a Language Ideologies

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes

Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 6

Continue preparatory assignment #1 for final oral and written projects (details TBA)

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 6

Assignment: Read Unit 7

Collect 2 humorous examples of phenomena discussed in Unit 7 for in-class presentation

Thurs. 6/15 Lecture 4b Language Ideologies

Activities: Attend lecture and take notes

Present and discuss students' humorous examples of phenomena from Unit 7

Continue preparatory assignment #1 for final oral and written projects (details TBA)

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 7

Assignment: Read Unit 8 of textbook

Complete all homework associated that unit

Finish preparatory assignment #1 for final oral and written projects (details TBA)

Week 4: June 20, 21, 22

Tues. 6/20 Lecture 5a Transcription

Activities: Learn about different types of transcription

Practice micro-transcription

DUE = Homework associated with Unit 8

Assignment: Make first-pass transcript of stand-up comedy routine for final paper/oral presentation (details TBA)

Make first-pass analysis of stand-up comedy routine for final paper/oral presentation (details TBA)

Wed. 6/21 Transcription and Analysis

Activities: Discussion and review of first-pass transcripts and analyses

DUE = Present your first-pass transcripts and analyses for review by peers and instructors

Assignment: Revise transcripts and analyses in light of feedback from peers and instructors
Develop 2~3 draft thesis statements for your term paper
Develop preliminary outline of your term paper
Begin development of secondary source bibliography

Thurs. 6/22 Review of Thesis Statements, Bibliographic Citation and Other Essentials for a Term Paper

Activities: Discussion of working thesis statements and paper outlines

DUE = Present your draft thesis statements and paper outlines for review by peers and instructors

Assignment: Write first draft of your final paper by: 1) revising transcripts and analyses in light of feedback from peers and instructors; 2) revising working thesis statements for your term paper; 3) revising outlines of your term papers; 4) incorporating secondary source materials; and 5) develop bibliography using correct formal citation format.

Week 5: June 27, 28, 29

Tues. 6/27 Peer exchange and feedback regarding first-drafts of final papers

Activities: TBA

DUE = Bring copies of your first-draft

Assignment: Develop a second draft of your paper

Wed. 6/28 Individual meetings with instructor

Activities: Discuss in detail your final papers and oral presentations

DUE = Bring copies of second draft

Assignment: Continue revising final paper
Develop 10-min oral presentation related to your final paper (assignment details TBA)

Thurs. 6/29 Personal writing day

Activities: Develop your oral presentation and continue revising your final paper

DUE = N/A

Assignment: Complete final oral presentation for next week
Continue refining final paper

^Week 6: July 4, 5, 6

Tues. 7/4 = ***NO CLASS (4th of July holiday)***

Wed. 7/5 In-class oral presentations

Activities: Students give their individual oral presentations related to their final papers

DUE = *Hand hard copies of powerpoint presentations*

Assignment: Complete final revisions to final term paper
Study for final exam

Thurs. 7/6 In-class oral presentations (continued)

Activities: Students give their individual oral presentations related to their final papers

DUE = *Hard copies of powerpoint presentations*

****Hand in final papers****

Assignment: Study for final exam

^*Final Exam = Fri. 7/8 or Sat. 7/9 (TBA by UT Registrar)*****

COURSE PHILOSOPHY & EXPECTATIONS: CREATING COMMUNITY

This class is an intellectual community—one to which we all belong & are accountable. Community is an interactive, co-constructed space that is created, nurtured & maintained. Like learning, community takes genuine & sustained effort—a readiness & willingness to be present, prepared, & engaged.

To foster a positive classroom environment & to facilitate learning, member of this little community of ours should be prompt: arriving at class on-time, keeping scheduled appointments, communicating with the professor in a reasonable & timely fashion, & meeting deadlines for readings & assignments, etc. Community members are expected to be civil (in comportment, behavior, language, discourse, & interaction) & respectful of fellow students, the teacher as well as any guest speakers. Community members must meet the class requirements outlined in this syllabus.

Your attendance, preparation, participation, & dedication—like mine—are crucial to our mutual educational endeavor. This course will be as interesting, fun, challenging, & rewarding, as we make it. **Welcome and let's get started! ☺**