

FYSE 1405: Language and Social Justice

Fall 2021

Dr. Shawna Shapiro

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Office Hours (in Carr Hall 201- or Zoom if preferred): Mon 11am-12:30pm
Tues 3:00-4:30pm, or by appt.

Course Description

In this seminar, we will explore questions such as the following: What is the relationship between language and power? How does linguistic prejudice contribute to social inequality? Is language a human right, and if so, what are the implications? We will engage with scholarly, journalistic, and literary works, including writing by Julia Alvarez, James Baldwin, John Baugh, Lisa Delpit, Rosina Lippi-Green, Jamila Lyiscott, Richard Rodriguez, Amy Tan, and others. Students will develop a range of reading, writing, and oral presentation skills, and will receive feedback on their work throughout the semester. (AMR, SOC).

NOTE: Class meets **T/Th 9:30-10:45am in Chateau 109.**

We may occasionally have additional meetings in the evenings as well.

Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will develop...

- A deeper understanding of how language, identity, power, and privilege are interconnected (i.e., Critical Language Awareness!)
- Critical skills deriving from thoughtful engagement with course topics, readings, and media
- The ability to write and revise various kinds of academic writing
- Improved confidence with oral expression, including discussion and oral presentations
- The ability to find, evaluate, synthesize, and cite secondary sources
- Facility in collaborating with peers and giving constructive feedback
- Familiarity with academic culture at Middlebury
- Increased self-awareness as a scholar and community member

Reading List **Please see Course Calendar below for the schedule of reading assignments.

1. Lippi-Green, R. (2011). *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology & Discrimination in the United States (2nd Edition)* – (available at Bookstore or other online seller- also on reserve via the [Middlebury Library](#)).
2. Rodriguez, R. (1982). *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (available at Bookstore or other online seller).
3. Additional electronic readings/media will be available on Canvas—Visit [go/coursehub](#) and log on to our Canvas page for links.

Expectations

In this seminar, we are building a community together, and each member of this community is essential. Therefore, I expect you to attend classes on time, complete all assigned readings, and turn in your work on time. **Communication is key!** There may be penalties for late papers, multiple absences, or lack of preparation for class, unless we have made arrangements in advance. If you do need to miss class, please notify me (email or text message) before class that you will be absent. Extended absences may require approval from a Dean and could have an adverse effect on your final course grade. I often send reminders and notes via email, so please check your email at least once every 24 hours.

What does it mean to “participate” in this course? Course participation includes discussion (both speaking and active listening), oral presentations, and a good deal of reading and writing. In addition, you will meet with me and with our embedded course writing tutor (Nathaly Martinez) on a regular basis, to receive feedback and support for your writing. Your course grade will include the quality of your work, as well as your engagement, effort, growth, and reflection (see Grading Breakdown, below).

Being an **active participant** in class also requires you to be organized. This includes:

- Keeping track of assignments and commitments in an electronic or paper calendar (see [handouts from the Office of Learning Resources](#) for more)
- Having a folder/notebook in which to keep course handouts and other materials
- Using multiple strategies to **back up your work** (Note: *Expect a computer crash* at some point in the semester! It happens to the best of us)
- Being selective about the number of extra-curricular commitments you make in your first year. Make sure to build in “**breathing room**” for when the crunch times happen! You won’t regret it! ☺

Finally, you will have opportunities for **community engagement** connected to this course. I’ll be sharing more about that in class!

Formatting for Written Work

Unless specified otherwise, written assignments should be double-spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman), with 1-inch margins. APA citation style will be used. Major papers should include a statement of the Honor Code: *"I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment,"* with your signature.

In class and online, we learn about academic integrity, including ways to use sources appropriately. For now, please remember that **plagiarism** usually involves using someone else’s words or ideas as if they were your own. It can have very serious consequences, including academic suspension or even expulsion. For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, please visit https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/index.html. You will be completing an online tutorial early in the semester on academic integrity, available at our Course Hub ([go/hub](#)).

Assignments and Grading Breakdown

You will complete a total of four papers, as well as some shorter reflection assignments. For major papers, you will write multiple drafts. Much of the work will be due to me electronically via Canvas, although you may be asked to bring hard copies to class for peer review.

- ❖ 50% of your grade will be based on the final drafts of the four papers (see descriptions on p. 4), to be submitted in portfolios (10%, 10%, 15%, 15%).
- ❖ 20% of your grade will be based on the evidence of growth and reflection in the midterm and final portfolio, as expressed in your cover letters and in the writing you submit (10% for each portfolio).
- ❖ 10% of your grade will be based on an oral presentation of your research paper
- ❖ 20% of your grade will be based on class preparation and participation, including attending meetings, engaging during class, and presenting/sharing at the First-Year Symposium during finals week.

Communication and Support

Communication and respect are very important to our course. I attempt to return all phone calls and emails within 24 hours and appreciate the same from my students. Your feedback is essential to the success of this course. I will give you opportunities to reflect on the course, both in class and anonymously, but I appreciate hearing from you **at any point** about your needs and experiences.

If you have a disability or learning issue of any kind that might impact your studies, please communicate with me as soon as possible. For formal accommodations, please be sure to contact the Disability Resource Center (formerly “ADA Office”), directed by Jodi Litchfield- (litchfie@middlebury.edu) See <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/disability-resource-center> for more information. All conversations with the Center are confidential.

Although I will be meeting with you frequently, I hope you will also make use of support from the following:

***The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Research** ([go/CTLR](#)) offers peer tutoring for nearly every academic subject, including drop-in writing tutors, prescheduled study groups, and professional staff. The Office of Learning Resources ([go/LR](#)) within CTLR offers support with time management, study skills, and other learning goals and challenges, including via [peer ACEs](#).

*A **Peer Writing Tutor** has been matched specifically with our class: **Nathaly Martinez-**njmartinez@middlebury.edu. You will be required to meet with Nathaly at least once for most major assignments. (NOTE: You may also work with other peer or professional writing tutors at any point. See [go/WC](#) for more info.)

***Library Liaisons** can help with finding, evaluating, and incorporating secondary sources, using library resources, and much, much more!. Our two liaisons are **Carrie Macfarlane-**

cmacfarl@middlebury.edu (x 5018) <http://go.middlebury.edu/carrie> and **Douglas Black-**
dblack@middlebury.edu (x3635).

***Oratory Now ([go/oratorynow](#))** is a group of peer coaches for oral presentations and other forms of public speaking. You will be required to meet individually with a coach at least once for our class, but you are encouraged to meet with them for other assignments as well.

***DLINQ** (the Office of Digital Learning and Inquiry—[go/DLINQ](#)) offers support with all sorts of technologies and digital tools. You can request a consultation with their staff (peer and professional) here: <https://dlinq.middcreate.net/request-a-dlinq-consultation/>

***Counseling Services ([go/counseling](#)):** Can help with emotional and social challenges, including stress, anxiety, and adjustment to Middlebury. A great place to learn more about yourself and to work on personal goals! There are usually same-day in-person appointments available, and we have 24/7 support available via MidTelehealth.

***Anderson Freeman Center ([go/afc](#)):** Intercultural Center in Carr Hall, designed to provide a ‘home’ for students who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized in higher education. Great place to relax, make new friends, cook, etc. My office is there as well ☺

***Scott Center for Religious and Spiritual Life:** Offers programming and resources to support your contemplative and spiritual life, including a list of [meditation spaces](#) on campus. Atheist and “non-affiliated” students are welcome!

Overview of Major Assignments

**Note: See calendar for due dates. More details on all of these papers will be forthcoming in class.*

Paper 1- Summary/Response (3-4 pp.)

You will choose Lippi-Green Ch 3, 4, or 5 as the focus for this paper. Write a short, formal paper that a) **summarizes** the author’s main points, using occasional examples/ quotations from the text (with appropriate citation) and b) **offers** your own evaluation of the argument (i.e., Is it valid/logical/well-supported? Is it clear? What are the implications?) *NOTE: The “response” section of this paper is academic, rather than personal.. We’ll talk more about this in class.

Paper 2- Sociolinguistic Analysis Using Theoretical Framework (4-5 pp.)

In this paper, you will analyze a novel, film, television show, or other media (i.e., a cultural artifact), focusing on how it illustrates or challenges key concepts related to language and social justice. You will develop an argumentative essay in which you reference at least 2 outside sources in your Intro/Rationale, explaining why this cultural artifact is worth analyzing. You will also reference at least 1 course reading as the theory/framework for your analysis. (In class, we will identify specific concepts you might use in your analysis and practice employing them together.) We will learn how

to find relevant secondary sources and how to develop a structure that best facilitates your argument, including evidence from the work you are analyzing.

Midterm Portfolio- Revision of Papers 1 and 2, plus Cover Letter

Paper 3- Library Research Paper (7-8 pp.)

For this paper, you will develop a narrow research question to explore related to our course theme. Your goal will be to synthesize (not just summarize) the research on that question, and to discuss why the findings are significant to our understanding of language and social justice. Possible topics for this assignment will be provided in class. This project will allow you to build up your research skills, including skills in finding and evaluating sources, incorporating quotes and examples effectively into your writing, and citing appropriately (APA style). You will complete a number of smaller assignments to help “scaffold” the writing process, including a project proposal, an annotated bibliography, an outline or planning draft, and a Writer’s Memo. You will also give a short (8-10 min) oral presentation on your findings.

Final Project: Public Humanities as Synthesis of Learning

There are at least 3 options for your final project. All of them are public-facing, meaning that you are writing for an audience beyond our class and you will likely share your work with other Midd students or even community members in a semi-public (but not too scary!) venue. More info on this will be provided in class, but here is a brief synopsis of each option:

Option 1: Community Engagement Service Project: For this project, which can be individual or small group, we will collaborate with the heritage language programs in Burlington School District. We will apply our skills in writing, research, digital design, etc. to benefit the program and deepen our learning. This can include, for example:

- Interviewing/surveying program students or instructors about their experiences with the program
- Creating publicity documents/media for the program
- Researching and purchasing (with College funds) materials for the program

Option 2: Writing Beyond the Classroom: This project involves individual writing in a style and genre different from the ‘typical’ academic essay or research paper. This could include creative writing (poetry, spoken word, plays, short stories) multimodal writing (hyperlinked essays, posters, websites), writing that incorporates code-switching and/or style-shifting (we’ll see examples in class), and writing for specific audiences (e.g., children, your family/community members, or even the administration of Middlebury College!). This assignment allows you to take some rhetorical risks, and perhaps to use or build your skills in writing beyond academic genres.

Option 3: Critical Reflection: This option is for students who want or need more practice with academic writing, or who worry about the time commitment or support needed with one of the other two options. In this reflective essay, you will draw on your course learning to critically examine your own thoughts and experiences regarding language and social justice. You will incorporate

examples from your life, as well as from course material or other sources, to illustrate your key point(s). Possible guiding questions include:

1. How are language and social justice connected—in ways I did not realize prior to this class?
2. How have I experienced and/or perpetuated language-based discrimination?
3. What is one question or tension from class that remains unresolved for me? Why is it so difficult to resolve?
4. What is a problem related to language and social justice, for which I would like to propose or critique a solution?

Final Portfolio- Revision of Paper 3 and Final Project, plus Cover Letter.

We will also participate in the First-Year Symposium during Finals Week.

COURSE CALENDAR

Sept 8 (Wed, 8am-9:15am): Introductions, overview, begin exploring course material. In-class, preview Lippi-Green Preface and Introduction. Discuss academic reading strategies. Discuss reading and HW 1, due for next class at 9:30am on Tues 9/11.

HW 1 Prompt, for next class: What is *one way* that language and social justice are connected, based on what you have observed, learned, or experienced. As you explain the connection, please provide specific examples (e.g., from your life or from media, news, literature, etc.) as illustration. If you cite external sources (e.g., a definition of “social justice”) be sure to cite them appropriately in APA style or using footnotes! (~2pp, double spaced- bring paper copy on Tues 9/14)

Sept 14 (T): Lippi-Green Ch 1 (Basics of Linguistics- see [Qs/terms list](#) in Canvas).

Due: HW #1 (2 pp.) hard copy in class; revision on Canvas by midnight.

Sept 16 (Th): Lippi-Green Ch 2 (Linguistic variation). Continue discussing Ch 1.

Visit from Carrie MacFarlane and Douglas Black (our library liaisons) last 15 min.

Due by Sun 9/19 (midnight):

1. Complete academic honesty tutorial (approx. 30 min). Link at [go/hub](#)).

NOTE: Don't worry about “score.” Remember: “*We're here to learn and grow*” 😊

2. Watch *American Tongues* with 2+ classmates via Kanopy streaming (<https://middlebury.kanopy.com/video/american-tongues>)
3. Read and add to online discussion about both #1 and #2.

Sept 21 (T): Lippi-Green Ch 3 and 4 (“Non-accent” and Standard Language Myth). Continue discussing online tutorial and *American Tongues*.

Possible time management workshop this week with ACEs/peer mentors- DATE/TIME TBD.

Sept 23 (Th) Lippi-Green Ch 5. (Language Subordination) and Ch 6 (Language Discrimination in Education). Preview HL websites.

NOTE: *Sept 24 (Fri) is last day to add classes. Please talk to Prof S ahead of time if you need add card.*

Sept 23-25: [Clifford Symposium](#)- Extra Credit opportunity!

Over the weekend:

- Work on Paper 1- Summary/Response (3-4pp). Optional meetings with Nathaly.
- Do some self-guided exploration about heritage language (HL) programs, starting with links on Canvas and in class notes.

[All week: Meetings with Nathaly about Paper 1]

Sept 28 (T): Peer review workshop for Paper 1 (bring 3 paper copies to class). Continue discussing HL websites.

End of class: Zoom with Prof. Ellen Serafini (George Mason University)

*Sept 29 (Wed), 4:30pm virtual panel: “Black Language in Public Spaces”

Sept 30 (Th): Lippi-Green Ch 10 (Black Language) and Delpit article (on Canvas).

Due Sun Oct 3 (midnight): Revised draft of Paper 1 (on Canvas).

[All week: Meetings w/ SS to discuss Paper 1 and general check-in.]

Oct 5 (T): CLASS ONLINE

Lippi-Green Ch 7 (Linguistic prejudice in media) and listen to Codeswitch podcast episode “[Talk American](#)”. Explore other links online. Post Paper 2 plan to online discussion.

Oct 7 (Th): Everyone watch Baugh’s [TEDx Emory talk on linguistic profiling](#) (or read Lippi-Green Ch 17). Then **CHOOSE 1:** Lippi-Green Ch 8 (Language and politics/public discourse) **OR** Ch 9 (Language disc in workplace and judicial system). Be prepared to share highlights from your selected chapter with classmates. In class, we will also continue discussing Paper 2 ideas—thesis workshop.

Due Oct 8 (Fri): Post revised thesis and outline for Paper 2 to Canvas discussion.

Oct 12 (T): Meet in Wilson Media Lab. Research Workshop: Finding credible and relevant sources for Paper 2. Also read [Tannen](#) and [McBee](#) (gender and linguistic prejudice)- also available as pdfs on Canvas.

Oct 14 (Th): Writing Workshop- practice with integrating and citing sources in an introduction. Also read Lippi-Green Ch 11 (“Southern” American English). *Optional* additional reading w/ highlights: Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015 (Linguistic insecurity among Appalachian college students).

Over weekend: optional meetings available with Nathaly re: Paper 2

Oct 19 (T) – NO CLASS- FALL BREAK

[Starting Wed: meet with Nathaly about Paper 2. Optional meetings w/ SS].

Oct 21 (Th) – Peer review for Paper 2 (bring 3 copies to class). Also preview Alvarez poetry (on Canvas).

Due by Sun Oct 24 (midnight): Revised draft of Paper 2, via Canvas.

NOTE: *The rest of the schedule below is subject to minor changes, based on how the class has been going. All major due dates will remain the same.*

[All week: Meetings w/ SS re: Paper 2]

Oct 26 (T)- Read Ch 14 (Linguistic prejudice and Latinx Americans) and Alvarez poetry. Discuss Midterm Portfolio and look at sample cover letters.

Oct 28 (Th)- No assigned readings, but (**bring device to class!**). In-class editing workshop. Also briefly discuss Paper 3 (Research Paper) and brainstorm ideas. Preview Rodriguez and choose discussion days/topics.

Due Mon Nov 1 (midnight)- Midterm Portfolio: final drafts of Paper 1 and 2, plus cover letter (Canvas).

[Over weekend: Start reading Rodriguez]

All week: Short meetings w/ SS about research topics.

Nov 2 (T)- Rodriguez Ch 1-2 (student-led discussion). More discussion of research paper (crafting research questions).

Nov 4 (Th)- Rodriguez Ch 3-4 (Student-led discussion). Rodriguez Ch 5-6 (student-led discussion.)

Due Sun Nov 7th (midnight): Research question, rationale, and annotated bibliography of 3-5 sources for Paper 3, via Canvas.

All week: Meet with Nathaly about Paper 3. Also check-in meetings with SS.

Nov 9 (T)- (Meet in Wilson Media Lab!) Research Workshop #2: Broadening your search/outlining sub-questions, followed by work session.

Nov 11 (Th)- Follow-up from research workshop. Read Lippi-Green Ch 15 (Linguistic prejudice and Asian Americans) and Tan essay (Canvas).

Due Sun Nov 14: Update on research paper (post on Canvas or set mtg w/ Prof S.). Also [book appointment](#) with Oratory Now coach (in-person or Zoom).

All week: Meet with Nathaly or Prof S. about Paper 3. Also meet with Oratory Now coach.

Nov 16 (T)- Workshop for Paper 3. (Bring 3 copies of intro + outline or full draft for peer review). Discuss expectations for oral presentations—**possible visit from Oratory Now?**

Nov 18 (Th)- Oral presentations I.

Due Sun 11/21 at midnight: Draft of Paper 3 (Canvas).

Nov 23 (T)- Oral presentations II.

Nov 25 (Th)- NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING

Due Mon 11/29 (midnight, on Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 3, via Canvas. Also post initial idea(s) or signup meet w/Prof S. re: final project.

[All week: Optional meetings w/ Nathaly or Prof S. re: final project.]

Nov 30 (T)- No assigned readings. In class: synthesis and building on learning (e.g., will revisit Lyiscott and other readings/media). Talk through ideas for final projects.

Dec 2 (Th)- Topic/readings TBD. Possible workshop related to final project.

Due by Sun Dec 5th at midnight (or earlier!!)- Draft of Final Project (or sign up for mtg w/ Prof S.).

[All week: Meetings w/ Nathaly or Prof S. as needed.]

Dec 7 (T)- Share session for Final Project (4-5 min each). Course response forms.

Dec 9 (Th)- Course wrap-up, including “warm and fuzzy” activity.

Due Mon, Dec 13th (midnight)- End-of-term Portfolio (final drafts of Paper 3 and Final Project), via Canvas.

During Finals Week: Public presentation of Final Projects for First-Year Symposium (date/time TBD when finals schedule comes out)