

**MAS 374 · Sociolinguistics in Mexican American and Latina/o Studies (35315)**  
**T-TH 11am-12:30pm; GWB 1.130**

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**Instructor:** Dr. Belem G. López

**Office:** GWB 2.316

**Office Hours:** T-TH 9:30-11:00 AM or by appointment

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***Course Description***

Sociolinguistics is the study of the interaction between language and society. In this course, students will learn about a variety of sociolinguistics topics, but with particular focus on sociolinguistic phenomenon in Latina/o communities. “Sociolinguistics in MALS” examines the presence and use of English, Spanish, Portuguese, and other indigenous languages in the US, by focusing on those aspects that characterize Latina/o communities, such as language acquisition; bilingualism/multilingualism, language maintenance, language change, and loss; language contact phenomena such as code-switching, lexical borrowing, language brokering; linguistic identity and ideology, linguistic attitudes, and the intersections of language, gender, race, ethnicity, politeness, and social class. Students will explore the different linguistic aspects that help shape identity, identify and illustrate historical developments relevant to the presence of Latina/o populations in the US, discuss the diversity of US Latina/o communities and its linguistics implications, discuss and analyze important language policy challenges posed by the presence of various language-speaking communities in the US (mainly those involving Hispanic and Latina/o populations).

**\*\* DIVERSITY IN THE US FLAG \*\***

Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

***Course and Learning Objectives***

This is an interdisciplinary course that will draw on methodologies from different disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, Latina/o studies, cultural studies, and psychology. This course will:

- Provide an overview of sociolinguistic research in how language and society shape language attitudes, language acquisition, bilingualism, policy, education, and identity, etc.
- Provide students with the ability to identify, analyze, and criticize arguments in sociolinguistic research with an emphasis on Latina/o communities.
- Provide experience in creative thinking, critically reading and evaluating sociolinguistic research.

***Required Readings***

*Introducing Sociolinguistics*, by Miriam Meyerhoff (2nd Edition). London: Routledge, 2011. This book is available at the University Co-op. \*\*\*Additional articles will be available on Canvas\*\*\*

Optional readings:

*Sociolinguistics. A Very Short Introduction*, by John Edwards. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013

## ***Course Requirements and Policy***

**Attendance:** Students are permitted up to **two unexcused absences**. Every excused absence needs to be adequately justified with a doctor's note for illness, family emergencies, or other documentation. Students will be responsible for knowing class materials. **Religious Holidays:** University policy requires that you notify your instructor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of a religious holy day. You will be given an opportunity to complete missed work within a reasonable time after an absence due to the observance of a religious holiday.

**Readings and Participation:** (200 points; 20% of your grade). Students are expected to finish each assigned reading *before* the class. Students are expected to participate in class discussion *regularly*, especially in discussion special sessions. You will also *learn the most* by actively participating in class discussions and by asking questions when you do not understand something. In fact, many cognitive psychology studies demonstrate that actively engaging in discussion of to-be-learned material can dramatically improve your ability to remember the material. So, speak up and participate whenever you can! Class participation will be rewarded.

**Reflection papers:** (200 points (50 points each X 4); 20% of your grade). Students will be required to turn in a total of **4 reflection papers** throughout the semester. In these papers you will give your reflections in the form of comments, critiques, questions, etc. raised from that week's readings. Page length requirement is 1 page single spaced **due at the beginning of each Thursday** class, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. Each reflection paper is 50 points and you may only turn in **one reflection per week**. This assignment is intended to get students thinking critically and actively about course material. Be sure to spread these out in the semester so you are not cramming your reflection papers into the last four weeks of class.

**Internet Meme:** (200 points; 20% of your grade). You will have the opportunity to create your own sociolinguistics meme! You will be able to use memes off of the internet, but will need to create a new punchline in the meme that relates to something related to the course. This may be a sociolinguistic concept, theory, phenomenon, famous study/experiment, or any material covered in class, in the book, and, the readings. You must send me a file of this meme and a brief paragraph explaining how it is related to the class because it demonstrates XYZ concept, theory, or phenomenon, etc. We will be covering a lot of material in this class so you will be able to turn in your sociolinguistics meme during ***anytime throughout the semester***; however the **last day** to turn in your internet meme to receive credit will by **April 26, 2016**. The point of this assignment is to get you to think creatively about course topics and themes. ***Important Note:*** *Do not use* inappropriate memes, pictures, or taglines. I will **not accept** memes that are questionable, crude, or intolerant toward people based on their gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, political views, etc.

**Internet Meme Presentation:** (50 points; 5% of your grade) As part of the assignment, **students will orally present their meme** to the class. Presentations ***will be the following class day after they have submitted*** their meme to the instructor unless otherwise instructed. The last day to present your internet meme will be **April 28, 2016**.

**Final Paper:** (250 points; 25% of your grade) Students will develop a research paper that explores in-depth one or more topics related to sociolinguistics (i.e., language attitudes, identity, language acquisition, code-switching, language policy, education, etc.). This will be done in the form of a research proposal where students will propose a sociolinguistic study with an emphasis on Mexican American and Latina/o communities. Students may also raise questions and ideas as

well as any reflections stemming from class discussion, readings, and presentations. The paper will require a classical essay or research paper structure, including an introduction, body (with textual evidence), method, results, and conclusion/discussion sections. To accomplish the final goal, the instructor will monitor the paper topic, its development, and its integration of feedback. **Final Papers are due April 28, 2016 by 5PM. Must be turned in electronically to me at [bglopez@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:bglopez@austin.utexas.edu).** Required length is 8-10 pages *not including* sources/references. More details to follow.

**Final Paper Presentation:** (100 points; 10% of your grade) You will be required to present your predicted results and conclusion/s of your final research paper by the last week of class. You will be assigned a day and time, so be prepared to speak during 8-10 minutes about your research on the assigned day. You are welcome to employ whatever resource will help you to communicate your thoughts better, including PowerPoint or other multimedia software, Internet resources, video, or sound tracks

**\*\*Late policy:** As a rule, **no extensions** will be given and **no late work** will be accepted. Procrastination is an art, but it could cause you to fail the course. Under extreme circumstances, requests for extensions will be entertained if requested well in advance of the due date. If granted, a penalty might be assessed for every calendar day the assignment is extended.

**Points and Letter Grades**

• Reading and Class Participation	200 points (20%)
• Reflection Papers (4 total)	200 points (20%)
1. Reflection Paper 1 (50 points)	
2. Reflection Paper 2 (50 points)	
3. Reflection Paper 3 (50 points)	
4. Reflection Paper 4 (50 points)	
• Internet Meme	200 points (20%)
• Internet Meme Presentation	50 points (5%)
• Final Paper	250 points (25%)
• Final Paper Presentation	100 points (10%)
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

A = 900-100	B = 800-899	C = 700-799	D =600-699	F = below 600
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**Grade Disputes**

If you wish to dispute a grade on an exam, you must submit a written rationale to justify the change **within 1 week** of receiving the score from us.

**Extra credit**

**YouTube video:** You will have the opportunity to turn in a video clip from a movie, show, music video, etc. that demonstrates a concept/theory we have discussed in class. These clips can be turned in throughout the semester, but all clips are due by the **last day of class, May 5, 2015**. You will need to email me the link to the video, a paragraph describing why the clip is a good example for (XYZ), and you will need to directly relate the link to something **covered in class or the textbook**. If you do not directly relate your clip to the course you may only be awarded partial extra credit points. The clip will be **worth up to 3 points** to your final course total points.

### ***Classroom environment:***

1. Please be on time; late-comers are frowned upon.
2. Don't pack up your belongings early; I promise to end class promptly at 12:20. If you anticipate having to leave class early, as a courtesy to me and your fellow classmates, please let me know *before* class begins.
3. Unless you are expecting an emergency phone call, **please turn off cell phones and other devices that might disturb class.** If I see a phone out, then the entire class will get a pop quiz.

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259, or visit the website <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

### ***Respect for Diversity***

It is my intent that ALL students, regardless of backgrounds or perspectives, are well-served by this course. I view the diversity that different students bring to the class as a resource, strength, and benefit to the ideals of a university education. Therefore, our classroom is a designated safe zone of respect, including toward diversity in gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, political views, etc. Please let me know if you have suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course; your comments will be welcomed.

### ***A note on plagiarism***

You are encouraged to work with your peers—however, plagiarism of your peers (or other sources) will not be tolerated. Any violations may result in a failing grade for the course.

**ONLINE WRITING RESOURCES:** NOTE- plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional; you are responsible for understanding both so that you can avoid this serious academic offense.

Plagiarism tutorials: <http://plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/overview/> short video explanation

Paraphrasing skills: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgMJ16WUEPg> short video explanation

If you think that you will need help to avoid plagiarism when writing a paper, please check with the Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

### **Additional Remarks and Assignments Description**

#### ***Final Research Paper Assignment:***

Course grades will mainly consist of the composition, writing-development, and public defense of a final research paper of about 8-10 pages. The composition of the paper will be the 25% of the final grade. To accomplish the final goal, students will write a research paper on a trending topic in sociolinguistics focusing on Latina/o communities, and the instructor will assist in the progress of the paper topic, its development, and its integration of feedback. **One important note:** You should start to think about the topic of your research paper the first day of class, and start to write it no later than *March 8th*. If you need help to select your topic, you are most welcome to make an appointment to check it with me. Please, keep in mind that a research paper

requires you to read other's people work, and often use it to provide evidence of your own thoughts. Direct or indirect quotes are welcome, but remember to cite the original source adequately. **Final Papers are due April 28, 2016 by 5PM** For additional assistance you may visit <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

**Tentative Lecture Schedule and Readings**

**\*\*changes to the syllabus will be made at instructor's discretion and will be announced in class, through email, or CANVAS\*\***

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>1</b>	T 1/19	Syllabus, Course Introduction		
	TH 1/21	What is sociolinguistics?	Chapter 1	
<b>2</b>	T 1/26	Language variation	Chapter 2 Lippi-Green (1997)	
	TH 1/28	Spanish varieties in the US	Lipski (2004)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>3</b>	T 2/2	Language variations and style	Chapter 3	
	TH 2/4	Speech styles in Mexican American and Latina/o communities	Erard (2006) Fought (1999) Torribio (2002)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>4</b>	T 2/9	Language attitudes	Chapter 4	
	TH 2/11		Lipski (1976) Green (1986)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>5</b>	T 2/16	Politeness	Chapter 5	
	TH 2/18	Terms of address and pejoratives	Lantto (2014) Dewaele (2004)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>6</b>	T 2/23	Bilingualism, multilingualism, and language choice	Chapter 6 (Wells, 2011) Aguirre (1984)	
	TH 2/25	Language shift and language maintenance	Hidalgo (2001) Mora et al. (2006)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>7</b>	T 3/1	Language acquisition and change throughout the life span	Chapter 7	

	TH 3/3		Genesee (2009)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>8</b>	T 3/8	Language status, social class	Chapter 8	<b>Final paper topics due.</b>
	TH 3/10		Barnell (2008) Rosa (2016)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>March 14-19 SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES</b>				
<b>10</b>	T 3/22	Social networks and community	Chapter 9	
	TH 3/24	Language brokering	Villanueva & Buriel (2012)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>11</b>	T 3/29	Gender and Sexuality	Chapter 10	
	TH 3/31		Eckert (2004)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>12</b>	T 4/5	Language contact	Chapter 11	
	TH 4/7	Creoles and pidgins	Matras (2007)* McConvell & Meakins (2005)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>13</b>	T 4/12	Code-switching	Gumperz (1977)* Poplack (1980)	
	TH 4/14		Anderson & Torribio (2007) Koike (1987)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>14</b>	T 4/19	Mock Spanish	Zentella (2003) Hill (1995)	
	TH 4/21	Humor	Nilsen (1981) Otto Santa Ana (2009)	Reflection papers due at beginning of class
<b>15</b>	T 4/26	Psycholinguistics	TBA	<b>Last day to turn in Internet Meme Assignment</b>
	TH 4/28	Class wrap up		<b>Last day to present Internet Meme Assignment</b> <b>Last day to turn in reflection papers.</b> <b>Final Papers Due by 5 PM</b>
<b>16</b>	T 5/3	<b>Final Paper Presentations</b>		
	TH 5/5	<b>Final Paper Presentations</b> <b>**Last day to turn in YouTube Extra Credit**</b>		

