

**UCLA ESL 97A: Variable Topics Course –  
English Through Language, Culture & Society**

**Instructor:**

**Office:**

**Office Hours:**

**E-mail Address:**

**Class Meeting:**

**Location:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Lecture, four hours; thematic, content-based English language learning environment that surveys selective language structures through their occurrence within contemporary cultural and societal topics. Focuses on understanding and applying these structures to improve fluency while enhancing critical thinking skills. Uses meaningful discussions in conjunction with salient written/spoken assignments that situate language within authentic contexts. Potential topics for this course may include gender, sexuality, politics, humor, intercultural communication, media, environmental issues, local/regional identities, etc. Uses Letter grading or P/NP.

**CLASS MATERIALS**

Course Reader must be purchased at the UCLA bookstore. Additional course materials will be made available in class or through hyperlinks on the course website. Students will also need adequate supplies, including a 3-ring binder or folder, separators, highlighters, and a notebook.

**ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING**

Participation	20%
Blog Observation Reports	15%
Language and Culture Quizzes	20%
Group Presentation	20%
Text Analysis	25%

**COURSE COMPONENTS**

**Participation** – Attendance, participation, and punctuality are essential for this course, as in-class activities CANNOT be made up outside of class. Students need to be on time, prepared to learn, and willing to participate. Missing class or arriving late will affect your overall course grade. Sitting and listening does not equal full participation. In addition, talking for the sake of talking is not considered full participation. Instead, students need to come to class ready to give and receive thoughtful ideas that contribute to the learning process.

**Blog Reports** - Students will keep a language and culture blog designed to allow students to summarize and reflect on various cultural and linguistic practices. Students will complete 3 entries, each with a different focus. For each entry, students will select a context or genre (e.g., news media, sitcom, drama, live performance, conversation among friends, etc.) and write about the culturally salient features they identify (i.e., those features that align with the course's content focus). Entries should be 450 to 500 words, minimum. In addition, students will need to respond to one entry by their peers.

**Language & Culture Quizzes** – Students will take two quizzes designed to assess the course's content. What this means is that students will be asked short questions on cultural and linguistic practices covered in class lectures and readings. The quizzes are designed to ensure that students are actively engaged in all materials and discussion topics, and held accountable for their progress in speaking and writing on these topics. The

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quizzes will be given midway through the course and at the end of the course, as an informal midterm and final.

Group Presentation – Students will be placed into groups and will work together to create a short presentation on a topic that is related to the course’s overall cultural theme. Roles should be decided upon internally and distributed evenly among the group participants. In addition, groups will prepare a PowerPoint and short 1-page handout (to be distributed to the rest of the class) to complement their presentation. The overall structure of the presentation should be well thought out and balanced, with a clear introductory segment that situates the topic and establishes purpose, a body segment that reflects thoughtful choices in organizational principles and linguistic expression, and a concluding segment that reviews that overall presentation, ends the exploration, and encourages questions and discussion. Upon completion of the assignment, each participant will complete a self-evaluation and a peer-evaluation of their group members’ contributions.

Text Analysis - In the reader, students will find several texts that will be mined for cultural and linguistic patterns. Students will decide on a feature that has been represented in readings or talked about in class, and comparatively analyze how that feature is used in the chosen texts. The text analysis should include an introduction (e.g., state your argument, briefly introduce the feature that you have chosen, say why you chose this feature, etc.), a body (e.g., analysis of the text, examples of the feature in action, explorations of how one example differs or is similar to other examples, etc.), and a conclusion (e.g., briefly recap your argumentation, briefly describe what you found, link the analysis to the bigger issue of language and culture).

**POLICIES**

1. Please respect each other and your instructor. Surfing the internet, texting, or interacting with any electronic device is strictly prohibited. Likewise, acting or communicating in an inappropriate manner is also prohibited. If this occurs you will be asked to leave, but you will still be responsible for the content that you miss (which may ultimately reflect poorly on your grades).
2. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of section. This will help me to better gauge who is and who is not making a concerted effort to learn the content of the course.
3. Emails will almost always be answered within a 24-hour window. Questions that require extensive development in response will not be answered via email. For these questions, you will be asked to come to office hours so that they may be addressed appropriately. However, I do not want to discourage you from asking questions, so please use your judgment as to what can and cannot be answered through each medium, and act accordingly. As a general rule, specific questions can typically be answered via email in a timely manner; however, general/broad questions typically cannot and you should plan on attending office hours to address these types of questions.
4. E-mailing: Please include “**ESL 28**” in the subject line of all emails if you want them answered.
5. Late work will not be accepted. In the event of a documented emergency, you will be given extra time given the conditions of the documentation.
6. You will not be provided with make-up notes for films viewed, lectures, or discussions. You are responsible for getting the contact information of two fellow students to help you catch up (at their discretion) if you have to miss lecture or discussion.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Neither plagiarism nor cheating will be tolerated. UCLA's policy on academic integrity is available online at <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/>. Students caught engaging in either of these activities will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Tentative Course Schedule for English Through Language, Culture, and Society**

**SAMPLE: Focuses on Sex, Gender, and Sexuality as a Theme**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Syllabus Review Course Introduction</b>	<b>Understanding Key Terms &amp; Concepts Defining Sex, Gender, and Sexuality</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Nominalizations Pronoun Use</b>	<b>Modals Hedging</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Derogatory Language Slang</b>	<b>Sexual Identities Midterm Quiz</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Directives Collaborative Language</b>	<b>Politeness</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Women's Language Men's Language</b>	<b>Group Presentations Discussions</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Normativity Media Representations</b>	<b>Politics of Sex, Gender, &amp; Sexuality Final Quiz</b>