

ANT 320L-4
American Indian Languages and Cultures
SAC

Instructor Information:

Anthony K. Webster

Office Hours: OR by appointment

Phone Number

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Course Description: This course explores the myriad of indigenous languages of the North America and how they are intertwined with culture. The focus of this course is both descriptive and anthropological. That is, the indigenous languages of the Americas will be considered with respect to their phonologies, complex morphologies, discursive structures, and historical relations as well as their place within the sociocultural milieu of speakers. Language is made real in use. We will look to the uses and users of language.

Requirements: Each student will lead discussion on a reading at least twice during the semester (this is dependent on the number of students in the class). A handout covering the reading should be prepared by the student(s). Each student not presenting that week will turn in a set of weekly questions on the assigned readings for that week.

There should be at least 1 (one) question per reading. The questions can range from the informational to the more theoretical. These questions compose 10% of your grade.

There are three longer writing assignments. There are **two book reviews** (15% each). These should be from 5-7 pages and should both describe and evaluate the work. Comparisons with class readings when relevant may also be included. The first book review is of Margaret Bender's *Signs of Cherokee Culture* and is due . The second book review will be chosen by the student in consultation with Dr. Webster from the list at the end of this syllabus. *No students will review the same book for their second book review.* During the final two weeks of class each student will present a book report in class on the book they have reviewed (15%). The order will be determined later in the semester. The written review is due (also 5-7 pages). There is **also a project**. This project is inspired by the article by Barbra Meek in week four. Each student will select a piece of popular culture (a film or television show) and following the methods described by Meek will analyze that piece for the ways that it represents the ways of speaking of Native Americans. This analysis should be from 5-10 pages long (15%). It is due

I will not accept late assignments. Please do not ask. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

All classes are works in progress, and, if the need arises, the current plans and objectives may need to be changed to enhance the learning opportunities in the class. This is to be expected and such changes will be clearly communicated.

Grading:

Project.....	15% of grade
2 book reviews.....	30% of grade (15% each)
Final presentation.....	15% of grade
Leading reading discussion.....	20% of grade
Weekly questions.....	10% of grade
Class participation.....	10% of grade

If it is not abundantly clear yet, let me make it clear here: the readings are a vital component of this class.

Articles that are indicated as on-line can be downed loaded via the University of Texas Library system and their ejournals collections. Articles that are not on-line will be available as pdfs on Canvas.

Required Texts:

Basso, Keith.

1990. *Western Apache Language and Culture*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Bender, Margaret.

2007. *Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah's Syllabary in Eastern Cherokee Life*.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Schedule**Week one: Introductions****Week two: thinking about languages**

Collins, James.

2004. "Language." In *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians*. (ed. Biolsi, Thomas). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. 490-505.

Mithun, Marianne.

2004. "The Value of Linguistic Diversity: Viewing Other Worlds Through North American Indian Languages." In *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. (ed. Duranti, Alessandro). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. 121-140.

McCarty, Teresa L.; Sheilah E. Nicholas, Kari A. B. Chew, Natalie G. Diaz, Wesley Y. Leonard and Louellyn White.

2018. "Hear Our Languages, Hear Our Voices: Storywork as Theory and Praxis in Indigenous-Language Reclamation." *Dædalus*. 147(2): 160-172. **(On-line)**

Film: *Finding My Talk: A Journey through Aboriginal Languages*

Week three: linguistic relativity

Whorf, Benjamin Lee.

1956 [1941]. The relation of habitual thought and behavior to language. In *Language, Thought, and Reality*. (ed. John Carroll). Cambridge: MIT Press. 134-159.

Whorf's paper can be found at the following website:

<http://languageandhistory-rz.wdfiles.com/local--files/dg05/1-4-whorf.pdf>

Basso: Chapter 1 ('Western Apache classificatory verb system')

Feb. Week four: American Indian Englishes

Leap, William.

1993. "Functions of Indian English." In *American Indian English*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press. 170-206.

Meek, Barbra.

2006. "And the Injun goes 'How!': Representations of American Indian in English in white public space." *Language in Society*. 35: 93-128. **(ON-LINE)**

Webster, Anthony.

2011. "Please Read Loose:" Intimate Grammars and Unexpected Languages in Contemporary Navajo Literature. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. 35(2):61-86. **(ON-LINE)**

Feb. Project assigned

Feb. Week five: *myaamiaki eemamwiciki*

Baldwin, Daryl and Julie Olds.

2007. "Miami Indian Language and Cultural Research at Miami University." In *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism since 1900*. (eds. Daniel Cobb and Loretta Fowler). Santa Fe: School of Advanced Research Press. 280-290.

Leonard, Wesley.

2011. "Challenging 'Extinction' through Modern Miami Language Practices." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. 35(2): 135-160. **(On-Line)**

Film: *myaamiaki eemamwiciki: Miami Awakening*

Week six: expert rhetorics, zombies, and survivance

Hill, Jane.

2002. "Expert Rhetorics in Advocacy for Endangered Languages: Who Is Listening, and What Do They Hear?" *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*. 12(2): 119-133. **(On-Line)**

Perley, Bernard.

2012. "Zombie Linguistics: Experts, Endangered Languages and the Curse of Undead Voices." *Anthropological Forum*. 22(2): 133-149. **(On-Line)**

Davis, Jenny.

2017. "Resisting rhetorics of language endangerment: Reclamation through Indigenous

language Survivance.” *Language Documentation and Description*. 17: 37-58.
(On-Line)

Project Due

Mar. Week seven: languages in contact

Basso: Chapter 2 (‘linguistic acculturation’)

Goodfellow, Anne.

2003. “The Development of ‘New’ Languages in Native American Communities.”
American Indian Culture and Research Journal. 27(2): 41-59. **(On-Line)**

Peterson, Leighton and Anthony Webster

2013. “Speech Play and Language Ideologies in Navajo Terminology Development.”
Pragmatics. 23(1): 95-118. **(On-Line)**

Week eight

Begin reading Bender: *Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah’s Syllabry in Eastern Cherokee Life*.

Week nine: SPRING BREAK (no classes)

Mar. Week ten: writing

Basso: Chapter 3 (‘writing system’)

Neely, Amber and Gus Palmer, Jr.

2009. “Which Way is the Kiowa Way? Orthography Choices, Ideologies, and Language
Renewal.” In *Native American Language Ideologies*. (eds. Paul Kroskrity and
Margaret Field). Tucson: University of Arizona Press. 271-297.

Bender: *Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah’s Syllabary in Eastern Cherokee Life*.

FIRST BOOK REVIEW DUE

April Week eleven: Western Apache doing things with words

Basso: Chapters 4 (‘Wise Words of the Western Apache’), 6 (‘stalking with stories’), and 7
(‘speaking with names’)

Week twelve: poetics

Mitchell, Blackhorse and Anthony K. Webster

2011. “‘We don’t know what we become:’ Navajo ethnopoetics and an expressive feature
in a poem by Rex Lee Jim.” *Anthropological Linguistics*. 53(3): 259-286.

Toelken, Barre and Scott, Tacheeni.

1981. “Poetic Retranslation and the ‘Pretty Languages’ of Yellowman.” In *Traditional
Literatures of the American Indians*. (Ed. Kroeber, Karl) Lincoln: Nebraska UP.
65- 116.

Woodbury, Anthony.

1998. “Documenting rhetorical, aesthetic, and expressive loss in language shift.” In
Endangered Languages. (eds. Grenoble, Lenore and Whaley, Lindsay).
Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 234-258.

April [REDACTED] Week thirteen: ways of speaking: politeness and values

Basso: Chapters 5 ('to give up on words')

Rushforth, Scott.

1981. "Speaking to Relatives-through-marriage." *Journal of Anthropological Research*. 37(1): 28-45. **(On-Line)**

Muehlbauer, Jeffrey.

2016. "Plains Cree pêyâhtikowêwin: The Ethic of Talking Softly." *Anthropological Linguistics*. 58(1): 79-98. **(On-Line)**

[REDACTED] Week fourteen: languages and publics

Debenport, Erin.

2011. "As the Rez Turns: Anomalies Within and Beyond the Boundaries of a Pueblo Community." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. 35(2): 87-109. **(ON-LINE)**

Leza, Christine.

2018. "Representing indigenous lifeways and beliefs in U.S.-Mexico border indigenous activist discourse." *Semiotica*. 224: 223-48.

Peterson, Leighton C.

2017. "Reflections on Navajo publics, "new" media, and documentary futures." In *Engaging Native American Publics: Linguistic Anthropology in a New Key*. (edited by Paul Kroskrity and Barbra Meek). London: Routledge. 169-183.

April [REDACTED] Week fifteen: presentations

May [REDACTED] Week sixteen: presentations

May [REDACTED] Final Book Review DUE

Special Needs

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to me at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. See following website for more information: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

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 of the classroom and the building.

Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building. If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not

re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.