

# History of the English Language

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## Registrar information

- Course number: ENGL 300-01W (4913)
- Meeting time: MWF 1:40PM - 2:30PM
- Location: Mundelein Center - Room 407

## Course description and objectives

The English language originated in migration and settlement. The area of settlement was subsequently named “England,” a region with a complex linguistic ecology where English developed into a kaleidoscope of local dialects. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the language began to spread beyond the British isles; during the same period the language contracted into a standard written form. Today, after a long period of standardization, English is diversifying again, on account of its worldwide use by some 2 billion people, most of whom are multilingual.

In this seminar we study the development of the English language from Indo-European to the internet and Loyola’s own Literacy Center. Topics include speech sounds and writing systems; words as units of meaning and structure; concepts of variation, standardization, dialect, and register; diachrony and synchrony; language contact and multilingualism; socio-linguistic status and domains of use; technologies of communication (writing, print, audio broadcast, messaging apps); and tools for language study (the International Phonetic Alphabet, the Oxford English Dictionary, the Historical Thesaurus of English, linguistic corpora). Assessment is by regular short written assignments, midterm and final essays, and a class presentation.