

University of Jordan  
Faculty of Foreign Languages / Graduate Studies  
Department of English  
Course Description

Course Title: History of the English Language  
Course Number: 2201704

**I. Course Goals:**

A detailed analysis of the origins, development and varieties of English from Indo-European beginnings to the present time, with special emphasis on the earlier periods of English. Attention to: sources of language history, phonetic and phonological change, morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic development, foreign influences, language contact, comparative reconstruction, general principles and comparison with other languages, particularly Arabic.

**II. Classwork:** a. Lectures      b. Student presentations      c. Group discussion

**III. Textbook:** Baugh, Albert C. and Thomas Cable. *A History of the English Language* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Prentice Hall, 2002.

**IV. References:**

- Brook, G. L. *A History of the English Language*. Andre Deutsch, 1958.  
Burnley, David. *The History of the English Language: A Source Book*. Longman, 1991.  
Burrow, J. A. *A Book of Middle English*. Blackwell, 1996.  
Corns, Thomas N. *Milton's Language*. Blackwell, 1990.  
Freeborn, Dennis. *From Old English to Standard English*. Macmillan, 1992.  
Jeffers, Robert J. and Ilse Lehiste. *Principles and Methods for Historical Linguistics*. MIT Press, 1980.  
Jespersen, Otto. *Growth and Structure of the English Language*. Doubleday, 1955  
( and various other dates and imprints)  
Kokeritz, Helge. *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*. Yale, 1955.  
Marckwardt, Albert H. *An Introduction to the English Language*. OUP, 1966.  
Pei, Mario. *The Story of English* (rev. ed.), J.P. Lippincot, 1967.  
Moore, Samuel and A. H. Marckwardt. *Historical Outlines of English Sounds And Inflections*. George Wahr, 1951.  
Pyles, Thomas and John Algeo. *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1982.  
Redfern, Walter. *Clichés and Coinages*. Blackwell, 1989.  
Robert, Stuart and Frederic G. Cassidy. *The Development of Modern English* ( 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. ). Prentice Hall, 1954.  
Serjeantson, Mary, S. *A History of Foreign Words in English*. Dutton, 1963.

Smith, L. P. *The English Language* ( 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). OUP, 1966.  
Strange, Barbara M. H. *A History of English*. Methuen, 1970.  
Trudgill, Peter. *The Dialects of England*. Blackwell, 1992.  
Selected titles from bibliographical listings in Baugh and others.

**V. Course requirements:** One test, one term paper, class participation, final examination.

**VI. Distribution of Final Grade:** Test 30%, Term paper 20%, Class participation 10%, Final examination 40%.

### **Weekly Schedule:**

Week 1: Rationale; historical introduction; sources of knowledge; phonetics.  
Week 2: Definitions; Indo-European background.  
Week 3: Grimm's Law; Verner's Law; more definitions.  
Week 4: Old English.  
Week 5: Foreign influences on Old English; loss of the West Saxon standard.  
Week 6: Middle English.  
Week 7: Foreign Influences on Middle English.  
Week 8: Test.  
Week 9: Chaucer; Middle English dialects.  
Week 10: Emergence of a new standard.  
Week 11: Great Vowel Shift; loss of the final e.  
Week 12: Shakespeare's pronunciation and grammar (Term paper due).  
Week 13: Modern English syntax.  
Week 14: Recent trends.  
Week 15: Varieties of English; comparison and contrast.  
Week 16: Final examination.