This sequence has two goals: first, to introduce you to fundamental humanistic themes regarding language, and second, to introduce you to college-level writing in the humanities. Each of the three quarters will focus on a different theme as it relates to language: power, identity, and thought. In the winter, we discuss language and identity.

**Your responsibilities**

You have two major kinds of responsibility in this course: the first pertains to your participation with the course material, and the second pertains to the writing of three short papers, which is your primary assignment over the course of the quarter.

> **Participation**

> **Reading and attendance**

Discussion section will occur over Zoom, once a week for both Group A and Group B, on the listed day and times above. The join link, as well as meeting ID and passcode, are also listed above: all meetings will take place in this same room. You’re expected to attend all meetings, which will take place on each week of the quarter. You’re also expected to read the material for the week (listed in the schedule below) prior to discussion for that week (except for week 1). Come to discussion ready to participate.

> **Discussion comments**

Each week (except for week 1), you must make a post on the course’s Canvas page, under ‘Discussions,’ pertaining to that week’s readings. Please select two passages from the readings that you would like to see discussed, because they puzzled you, you found them
interesting, you took issue with them, etc. Quote them in full, and leave a brief response to them with your comments and questions (these don’t have to be long – a paragraph or two will do – but try to focus on something that you’re genuinely interested in talking about). Discussion comments should be in by Monday, 24 hours prior to your discussion section on Tuesday, so that everyone has a chance to read them. Please make an effort to read your classmates’ comments as well, and feel free to respond to each other to continue discussion outside of the meetings.

› Discussion leading

Once a quarter, you’ll be expected to lead one of the discussion sections. Your job will be to provide a brief summary of the week’s readings, and collect a series of questions for discussion, from your classmates’ comments or on your own, to present in order to spark and curate discussion. This should be an informal thing, not a big project in its own right, but it will help to prepare slides to screen share with notes on the readings and questions. Feel free to meet with me to discuss ideas prior to your discussion if you’d like help or direction. Sign-ups for discussion leading will be hosted on the Canvas site. [I will host the discussion for the first week].

› Papers

› Writing

You’ll write three short papers over the course of the quarter, each 1,000 - 1,500 words in length. They will pertain to a focused question based on the course readings. Prompts will be distributed with questions (according to the schedule below), and the paper will give a focused answer to one of those questions, supported by textual evidence and argumentation. You have the freedom to design your own prompt if you like, but please clear it with me first. Each paper will be written in two drafts. The first draft will be commented on by both me and Cheryl, and I’ll assign you a grade with some final comments and justification after you turn in the second draft. Drafts will be submitted via Canvas, under ‘Assignments.’ Due dates for all drafts are also on the schedule below.

› Seminars

You are also registered for a separate writing seminar course, which is assigned a separate Pass/Fail grade. There will be three writing seminars over the course of the quarter, to be taught by Cheryl. You must attend the writing seminars; they are required to pass the class, and so to graduate. Details on scheduling will follow.

Other materials

Aside from the course readings, there will be some other asynchronous material hosted on the Canvas site. The rest of the material is for your own interest, and may help with understanding some of the obligatory reading material, but it is not obligatory.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments, seminars</th>
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| Week 1: meet Tues., 1/12 | • **Mary Bucholtz & Kira Hall**: Language and Identity  
                  • **Penelope Eckert**: Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation | Thu., 1/14:  
                  • Paper 1 prompts distributed                                      |
| Week 2: meet Tues., 1/19 | • **Zora Neale Hurston**: *Mules and Men*  
                  • Preface [Franz Boas]  
                  • Foreward [Arnold Rampersad]  
                  • Introduction  
                  • Part I: Folk Tales  
                  • Afterword [Henry Louis Gates, Jr.] | Thu., 1/14:  
                  • Paper 1 prompts distributed                                      |
| Week 3: meet Tues., 1/26 | • **Dante Alighieri**: *De Vulgari Eloquentia*  
                  • Book I | Thu., 1/28:  
                  • Paper 1 draft 1 due  
                  Writing Seminar 1                                      |
| Week 4: meet Tues., 2/2 | • **Lu Xun**: An Outsider’s Chats About Written Language | Thu., 2/4:  
                  • Paper 1 final draft due  
                  • Paper 2 prompts distributed                                      |
| Week 5: meet Tues., 2/9 | • **Sumathi Ramaswamy**: One Language, Many Imaginings [Ch. 2 of *Passions of the Tongue*] | Thu., 2/18:  
                  • Paper 2 draft 1 due  
                  Writing Seminar 2                                      |
| Week 6: meet Tues., 2/16 | • **Richard Rodriguez**: *Hunger of Memory*: The Education of Richard Rodriguez | Thu., 2/18:  
                  • Paper 2 draft 1 due  
                  Writing Seminar 2                                      |
| Week 7: meet Tues., 2/23 | • **Lucy Jones**: *Dyke/Girl*: Language Identities in a Lesbian Group  
                  • Ch. 3: Approaches to Language and Sexuality  
                  • Ch. 5: *Dyke* and *Girl*  
                  • **Lal Zimman**: Pronouns and Possibilities: Transgender Language Activism and Reform | Thu., 2/25:  
                  • Paper 2 final draft due  
                  • Paper 3 prompts distributed                                      |
| Week 8: meet Tues., 3/2 | • **Junot Díaz**: *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* |                             |
| Week 9: meet Tues., 3/9 | • **Gerald Roche & Yudru Tsomu**: Tibet’s Invisible Languages and China’s Language Endangerment Crisis: Lessons from the Gochang Language of Western Sichuan | Thu., 3/11:  
                  • Paper 3 draft 1 due  
                  Writing Seminar 3                                      |
| Finals week   | -                                                                         | Thu., 3/18:  
                  • Paper 3 final draft due                                      |
**Grade breakdown**
Your grade will be weighted as follows:
- Discussion posts: 15%
- Other participation: 10%
- Paper 1: 20%
- Paper 2: 25%
- Paper 3: 30%

The letter grade is assigned on an ordinary scale: 93%+ = A, 90-92% = A, 87-89% = B+, 83-86% = B, 80-82% = B-, 77-79% = C+, 73-76% = C, 70-72% = C-, 67-69% = D+, 60-69% = D, below 60% = F.¹

**Texts**
The course will make use of the following texts:


These are also available for purchase at the Seminary Co-op Bookstore. Purchase the correct editions, using the provided ISBN, so that page numbers are in common. All other readings are available on Canvas.

**Special accommodations**
If you have need of any special accommodations, please talk to me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.² It’s my job to make sure you’re able to participate fully in the course, and I want all of you to do well. It is entirely up to you whether you want to disclose a disability status to me.

**Etiquette and technology**
Given that this course is taught remotely, it’s not possible for me to ask, as we often do for this course, not to use electronics during discussion. But I do ask that during discussion, you keep your attention focused and close out of distractions unrelated to the course material. This is something I can’t enforce (and obviously I have no desire to monitor anyone’s behavior), but that is my request.

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¹ Scores are rounded to the nearest percentage point, rounded up at the half. The college doesn’t make use of A+ or D-.

² If you haven’t already, you may register with SDS as well: [https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/](https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/).
**Academic integrity**

Please read and take to heart the statement on academic honesty found here:

http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/academicintegrity/

Cite the work of others when you appeal to it, and don’t pass off another’s work as your own. If you have any doubts, ask me. Suspicions of plagiarism or other forms of cheating will be taken very seriously.

**Miscellaneous**

You should feel free to contact me at any time with any other worries you have about the course: forms of address (name / pronoun), worries about an assignment, questions about participation, and things of that nature, or even if you just want to discuss some of the material.