LINGUISTICS 240
LANGUAGE CONFLICT AND LANGUAGE RIGHTS

BULLETIN INFORMATION
LING 240 – Language Conflict and Language Rights (3 credit hrs)
Course Description:
Examination of linguistic conflict and rights, as well as centrality of language rights to human rights and personal/cultural identity. Basic facts about language related to identity, culture, attitudes, dialects, bilingualism. Case studies (local, national, international) with particular attention to nationalism, language revitalization, language planning.

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW
All languages are equal in theory; they all have systematic rules of sound and grammar and can be used to convey complex, precise, and novel meanings. However, in practice, languages are necessarily intertwined with the politics of power and social difference. The importance of language rights to basic human rights cannot be overstated. Whether through conquest, colonization, immigration, enslavement, or the simple fact of ignoring ethnic distinctions, linguistic minorities have always existed, as have language conflicts and the infringement of minorities' rights to use their languages without prejudice. This course will explore language rights and relate them to human rights in general, surveying language conflicts worldwide between those trying to secure and those trying to deny language rights.
An understanding of linguistic conflict and competition requires a basic understanding of linguistics, the study of phonology (sound systems), morphology (word building systems), lexica (inventories of words and word parts), sentence grammars, and sociocultural conventions and ideologies of use. By using linguistics to understand the systematicity and value of language, we can identify how popular ideas about language, such as characterizations of particular languages as 'broken', 'illogical', 'ugly, or 'inauthentic', are often not merely misinformed but also misleading; they are a reflection of ideological interests rather than scientifically based claims. Accordingly, the course will present a non-technical introduction to analytical tools of linguistics, so as to provide a deeper understanding of language structure and the mechanics of linguistic conflict. By also examining specific cases of language conflict, it will illustrate a range of policy decisions in the areas of education, government, and media.

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of LING 240, students will be able to:
1. Explain how language is a key symbol of identity and resource for cultural maintenance;
2. Discuss how linguistic differences can result in political and personal conflict;
3. Identify different cultural and moral values that underlie debates about language conflicts and rights;

4. Discover sources of information about these ideological conflicts, and evaluate them for credibility, reliability, bias, and currency;
5. Discuss language rights struggles in the larger context of human rights issues across the world; and
6. Apply concepts of formal linguistics and sociolinguistics to analyses of language rights cases.

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this course. Links to all course readings will be provided on Blackboard (https://blackboard.sc.edu).

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS

1. **Data Mining Assignments (4)**: During the course of the semester, you will identify four (current or historical) issues touching upon linguistic conflict and language rights, and will find information about these on the internet. You will be required to find one formally "objective" article (e.g. newspaper/news wire articles, academic journal articles, etc.) and one polemically oriented piece (e.g. advocacy websites, opinion columns, official government websites, etc.) You will submit (along with the two articles) a 1-2 page report on what you have found.

1. **Introspective/Observational Journal Assignments (2):** Two times during the semester you will be asked to record one- to two-page observations (either introspectively or outwardly focused) on some aspect of language related to the current class topic. The observations will sometimes be based on examples from newspapers, from the radio, from the speech of others around you, or from introspection into your own language use. In writing your observations, you will reflect on the cultural and moral values that underlie the observations and issues that you are reporting on. You will articulate why and in what ways community values, ethics, and notions of social responsibility matter to the issue at hand. And you will consider how values shape personal and community ethics and decision-making.

2. **Blackboard Question/Comments:** Students are required to submit at least one discussion question or comment prior to each lecture, based on the readings for that lecture. The entry should be concise, and make an insightful point or critique or raise a thought-provoking question, while also showing that you've read the material carefully

3. **Midterm Exam:** The midterm exam will consist of short-answer questions (e.g. multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, write a sentence or two) that test students' knowledge of terms and concepts introduced in the first seven weeks.

4. **Final Exam:** The final exam will also have a number of short-answer questions, and will ask students to write short essays on one or more of the case studies that were presented in class.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

Week 1	**What are language rights?**
	- *How do language rights relate to human rights?*
	- *How do policies protect rights? How do they restrict them?*
	Readings:
	- Hornberger, Nancy H. 1998. Language policy, language education, language rights: Indigenous, immigrant, and international perspectives. *Language in Society*27.4:439–458.
	- Document with links to human rights conventions and declarations.
Week 2	**What is language?**
	- *What is the structure of language?*
	- *What are its "moving parts"?*
	Readings:
	- Dubinsky, Stanley, and Christopher Holcomb. 2011. *Understanding language through humor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [chapters 3-5]
	- Lippi-Green, Rosina. 2012. Linguistic 'facts of life'. *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States*, pp. 5-26. London: Routledge.
Week 3	**Language variation: What is dialect?**
	- *How do varieties of a language differ?*
	- *How does one measure the difference between dialects and languages?*
	Readings:
	- Chambers, J. K. & Peter Trudgill. 1998. Chapter 1: Dialect and language.*Dialectology*, 3-12: Cambridge University Press.
	- Dubinsky, Stanley, and Christopher Holcomb. 2011. Variety is the spice of life: Language variation [chapter 9]. *Understanding language through humor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 4	**Dialect case studies:**
	Norway-(Danish)-Norwegian / African-American English
	Readings:
	- Berdichevsky, Norman. 2004. Norway's

	schizophrenia: New Norse vs. Dano-Norwegian. *Nations, language, and citizenship*. Ch3 (55-65). London: McFarland & Company. • Morgan, Marcyliena. 2002. The African American speech community: Culture, language ideology, and social face. Chapter 1 in *Language, discourse, and power in African-American culture*, 10-29. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. • Rickford, John. 1997. Suite for Ebony and Phonics. *Discover*. • Weldon, Tracey. 2000. Reflections on the Ebonics Controversy. *American Speech*75: 275-77. • Pullum, Geoffrey. 1997. Language that dare not speak its name. *Nature* 386: 321-322.
Week 5	**Language Attitudes: Accent, stereotype, and ideology** • *What are accents?* • *Why do we have stereotypes of accents?* • *What is a standard language?* • *What is a language ideology?* Readings: • Lippi-Green, Rosina. 2012. Chapter 3: The myth of non-accent. English with an Accent: Language, Ideology and Discrimination in the United States, 44-54. New York: Routledge. • Lippi-Green, Rosina. 2012. Chapter 4: The standard language myth. English with an Accent: Language, Ideology and Discrimination in the United States, 55-64. New York: Routledge. • Dubinsky, Stanley & Chris Holcomb.. 2011b. Chapter 11: The language police: Prescripitivism and standardization. Understanding Language through Humor, 166-83. **Language attitudes case study: Alabama vs. Michigan** Readings: • Preston, Dennis R. 2004. Language with an Attitude. *The handbook of language variation and change*, ed. by J.K. Chambers, P. Trudgill & N. Schilling-Estes, 39-66.
Week 6	**Conflict in communication style**

	• *Why does miscommunication occur?* • *Are there culturally acceptable forms of conflict in language?* Readings: • Dubinsky, Stanley & Chris Holcomb. 2011. Chapter 10: Cross-cultural gaffes: Language and culture. Understanding Language through Humor, 153-164. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. • Tannen, Deborah. 1984. The Pragmatics of Cross-Cultural Communication. Applied Linguistics 5.189-95. **Cross-cultural communication conflict case studies: Korean-Americans and African-Americans / Women and men** Readings: • Bailey, Benjamin. 2000. Communicative behavior and conflict between African-American customers and Korean immigrant retailers in Los Angeles. Discourse & Society 11.86-108. • Tannen, Deborah. 1989. Interpreting interruption in conversation. *CLS 25: Papers from the 25th Annual Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society. Part Two: Parasession on Language in Context*, 266-287. Chicago, IL: Chicago linguistic Society.
Week 7	**Language ownership** • *Do speakers own languages?* • *What are the consequences of language appropriation?* • *Can language be reclaimed?* Readings: • Bucholtz, Mary, and Qiuana Lopez. 2011. Performing blackness, forming whiteness: Linguistic minstrelsy in Hollywood film. Journal of Sociolinguistics 15: 680-706. • Hill, Jane H. 1998. Language, race, and White public space. American Anthropologist 100: 680-89.
Week 8	**Review and midterm exam**

Week 9	**National languages**
	  • *What is a nation?*
	  • *What function is served by having a national language?*
	  • *How are national languages developed and decided upon?*
	Readings:
	  • Coulmas, Florian. 1988. What's a national language good for? In Florian Coulmas (ed.), *With forked tongues: What are national languages good for?*, 1-24. Karomas Publishers.
	  • Anderson, Benedict. 1983. Introduction. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, 1-7. London: Verso.
	
	Language & Nationalism Case Study: Indonesia and India
	Readings:
	  • Sengupta, Papia, and T Ravi Kumar. 2008. Linguistic diversity and disparate regional growth. *Economic & Political Weekly* (August 16, 2008).
	  • Sneddon, James. 2003. *The Indonesian language*, 4-21 (chapter 1). Sydney: UNSW Press.

Week 10	**Official English and U.S. Spanish**
	  • *Should the United States have a national language?*
	  • *What language(s) should be used in schools, media, and government?*
	  • *What is the history of language rights in the US?*
	  • *How do debates about Spanish involve beliefs about race and class in the United States?*
	Readings:
	  • King, Robert D. 1997. Should English be the law? In The Atlantic Monthly.
	  • Lee, Chang-Rae. 1996. Mute in an English-Only World. In The New York Times.
	  • Porter, Rosalie Pedalino. 1998. The Case Against Bilingual Education. In The Atlantic.
	  • TESOL.org. Position paper on English-only legislation in the United States.
	  • *U.S. English*. Why Is Official English Necessary? http://www.us-english.org/view/10

Week 11	**Language revitalization** • *Why should languages be preserved?* • *How can we save languages?* • *Why does it matter how we talk about endangered languages?* • *Can a language be preserved without speakers?* • *Who has the right to determine which language forms are "authentic"?* Readings: • McWhorter, John. 2009. The Cosmopolitan Tongue: The Universality of English. In World Affairs Journal. • Wallace, Lane. 2009. What's Lost When A Language Dies. In The Atlantic. • Hill, Jane H. 2002. "Expert Rhetorics" in Advocacy for Endangered Languages: Who Is Listening, and What Do They Hear? Journal of Linguistic Anthropology 12.119-33. • Bull, Tove. 2002. The Sami Languages(s), Maintenance and Intellectualistion. Current Issues in Language Planning 3.28-39.
Weeks 12-14	**Case Studies** ***Typology of cases:*** *I. Indigenous minorities (Ainu, Sami, Native American)* *II. Geopolitical minorities (Hispanics in Southwest US, Hungarians in Slovakia)* *III. Minorities of migration (Mexicans in the US, Koreans in Japan, Roma in Europe)* *IV. Intra-linguistic (dialectal) minorities (African-American English, Okinawan)* *V. Competition for linguistic dominance (Belgium, Sri Lanka, Canada?)* ***Japan (I/III/IV): Ainu, Korean, Okinawan*** • Davies, William D., and Stanley Dubinsky. 2013 [to appear]. Language Conflict and Language Rights: The Ainu, Ryūkyūans, and Koreans in Japan. *Japan Studies Review* 16. ***Case study (I): Norway, Sámi*** • Magga, Ole Henrik. 1994. The Sami Language Act. In Tove Skutnabb-Kangas & Robert Phillipson

(eds.), *Linguistic human rights: Overcoming linguistic discrimination*, 219-233. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Sandvik, Gudmund. 1993. Non-existent Sámi language rights in Norway 1850-1940. In Sergij Vilfan (ed.), *Comparative studies on governments and nondominant ethnic groups in Europe, 1850-1940. Volume 3: Ethnic groups and language rights*, 129-150. New York: NYU Press.

Case study (II): Slovakia, Hungarian

- Daftary, Farimah, & Kinga Gál. 2000. The new Slovak language law: Internal or external politics. *ECMI Working Paper # 8*. European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI).
- Kontra, Miklos. 1997. On the right to use the language of one's choice in Slovakia.*Canadian Centre for Linguistic Rights* 4.1: 5-8.

Case study (V): Belgium, Flemish/Waloon

- Casert, Raf. 2010. King accepts resignation of Belgian government. *Associated Press*.
- Daley, Suzanne. 2010. The language divide writ small in Belgian town. *NY Times*.
- *Languages of the World Blog*. 2010. Language laws: necessary or ridiculous?http://languages-of-the-world.blogspot.com/2010/07/language-laws-necessary-or-ridiculous.html
- O'Neill, Michael. 2000. Belgium: Language, ethnicity and nationality. *Parliamentary Affairs* 53.1: 114-134.

Case study (II/V): Wales, Welsh

- *BBC*. 2010. Groups' open letter on 'threats' to Welsh language.
- Berdichevsky, Norman. 2004. Wales, Welsh, and Plaid Cymru. *Nations, language, and citizenship.* Ch11 (139-145). London: McFarland & Company.
- Mercator-Education. 2001. *The Welsh language in education in the UK.*Ljouwert/Leeuwarden: Mercator-Education – European Network for Regional or Minority Languages and Education.
- Trewyn, Hywel. 2008. Welsh language group targets supermarket. *Daily Post*. http://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/2008/05/06/welsh-language-group-targets-supermarket-55578-20865644/

	• Welsh Language Society. 2008. *New Welsh Language Act 2008.*
	Final exam according to University exam schedule

SPECIFIC (CAROLINA CORE) OUTCOMES:

Students will learn to *"examine different kinds of social and personal values, analyzing the ways in which these are manifested in communities as well as individual lives"*:
- To examine sources of cultural and moral values. In particular, they will learn about language ideologies, or shared beliefs about the relative value of languages, and be able to identify language value/ideology as a socio-historical product. This will involve the examination of historical events (colonization, immigration, enslavement) that have shaped hierarchies of language value, institutions (government, education, media) that maintain these value systems, and discourses (everyday talk and internet media) that contest them.
- To demonstrate the importance of values, ethics, and social responsibility. Students will learn how language ideologies can be used to justify (i) silencing of linguistic minorities by making their language illegitimate in public space, (ii) oppressing and diminishing the status of endangered language groups, and (iii) causing educational, cultural, and psychological harm by devaluing a group's mode of communication.
- How values shape personal and community ethics and decision-making. Students will learn how linguistic inequities can be addressed. They will learn about (i) linguistic methods of listening to, and recording, the perspectives of linguistic minorities, and (ii) ways to revalorize and maintain languages, such as the codification of endangered and oral languages, bilingual education, media/literature presented in a minority language, language campaigns, and language laws, etc.