

ENGL/LING 444F (Honors):

Language Matters in America

Course description <![endif]>

In this course, students will:

- Engage in active research to understand how we use **language** to construct and interpret **identity**
- Examine linguistic patterns typical of groups of various types (regional, ethnic, gender, age, communities of shared practice, etc.)
- Explore issues related to:
 - education
 - language use in politics
 - marketing and the media
 - English as a Second Language
 - American Sign Language
 - African-American English

This course engages students in **inquiry-based learning**: determining what questions are important in the field, figuring out how to find answers, pursuing these answers, and interpreting what you find out, following established practices in the social sciences.

The big questions:

- How do we use language to construct our identity?
- What identifies particular groups linguistically?
- Is there individual identity distinct from group identity?
- How are these represented in speech patterns?
- (Why) are they important in this country?
- (Why) should we worry about how we talk?
- How do sociolinguists study such issues?

The course is designated *Writing Intensive* and satisfies the Social Science General Education (Group 7) requirement, and is expected to satisfy the “Social science” and “Social identity and the individual” categories in the new Discovery Program.

In Fall 2007, it will be taught on Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:40-5:00 pm in Ham Smith 142.

Contact the professor: [Naomi Nagy](#), 209 Hamilton Smith Hall, 862-2783, ngn@unh.edu

[Return to list of courses offered in Linguistics at UNH.](#)

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