

## WMST 2501 / LING 2410: Language and Gender Fall 2005

**Instructor** Professor Ruth King  
South 553 Ross, 736-2100, x88731, rking@yorku.ca  
Office Hours: T 1-2, W 12-1, or by appointment

**Lectures** Monday & Wednesdays 2:30-3:30 VC 135

**Tutorials** Tutorials begin the week of September 12.

Tutorial 1:	Monday, 1:30	VC104	Jean Broughton
Tutorial 2:	Monday, 1:30	VC115	Kristin Hole
Tutorial 3:	Tuesday, 12:30	MC003	Mariko Tamaki
Tutorial 4:	Wednesday, 1:30	HNEB10	Kristin Hole
Tutorial 5:	Wednesday, 3:30	HNEB11	Jean Broughton
Tutorial 6:	Wednesday, 3:30	CFA322	Kristin Hole
Tutorial 7:	Thursday, 1:30	HNEB10	Kristin Hole
Tutorial 8:	Tuesday, 11:30	MC111	Mariko Tamaki

**Course Administration** All administration connected with this course is through the School of Women's Studies. The Women's Studies office is located at South 711 Ross, phone (416) 650-8144. While the course is cross-listed with Linguistics, the Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics plays no administrative role. Please note that enrolment in the course is through normal channels only: no special permissions are given nor is the course ever over-enrolled. However, tutorial switches may be done during the first two weeks of classes if and only if two students who want to exchange their slots with each other go together to the Women's Studies office to be manually switched. The Course Director will end the first two lectures early so that students who need to can try to find a partner to switch with.

**Course Description** This course explores the relationship between language and gender from the perspective of feminist linguistics. The communicative styles used by women and men in the performance of femininities and masculinities in a range of situational and cultural contexts will be examined, as will the interrelatedness of gender with other social identities (sexuality, race/ethnicity, class) in language use. In addition, the course will consider issues concerning language structure and ideology, including sexism in English and the relative success of gender-based language reform efforts.

This course will provide facts, theory and analytic tools for dealing with these issues. You will be required to go beyond stereotypes and so-called "common-sense" beliefs to evaluate claims about language and gender in an informed way. Our goals are for you to arrive at a basic understanding of the major issues in language and gender research, familiarity with the most important research in the field, and the ability to carry out some original research on selected topics.

**Lectures and Tutorials** You are required to attend both lectures each week and the one tutorial for which you are registered. You must attend and participate in this course to do well. Plan to come to every class, like you would a job. By participation, we mean not just speaking in class but being a good class citizen – speaking too much and dominating your tutorial is not considered an ideal form of participation. Your tutorial leader will call on students from time to time (based on a randomized class list) to encourage everyone to participate.

The lectures will both situate and expand on the course readings (see below). Most lectures will be accompanied by Power Point presentations which will present (in more legible form) information which would traditionally be written on the blackboard. They are not intended to replace class notes, which you will take yourself. One of the general skills that you are learning is the ability to distil the main points from a lecture or discussion on a topic, i.e. to pick out the most important information in an organized way. We encourage you not to attempt to write down every word, but to be selective in your note-taking. To assist you, every lecture will begin with a summary of the previous lecture and end with a summary of the main points of the present lecture.

Every Wednesday, a Tutorial Handout for the following week will be distributed in lecture (extra copies will be left in handout slots outside the Course Director's office, South 553 Ross). The weekly handout will typically contain discussion questions related to the lecture and readings. It will also contain information to guide your reading of the textbook and articles from the course kit. In most cases, you are to prepare the questions for discussion only; in a few cases, you will be told that you are to hand in material relevant to a particular question. However, during your tutorial, at any time your tutorial leader may request to see your rough notes that you have prepared for tutorial discussion.

Please try to get to lecture and tutorial on time. We recognize that the campus is large, and under construction, but late arrivals (and early exits) are disruptive to others. If you absolutely must keep your cell phone turned on, please set it to vibrate. (Note that it is forbidden by university policy to have cell phones turned on at all during tests and exams.)

**Contacting the Course Director or your Tutorial Leader** Both the course director and your tutorial leader will give you their office hours, office phone numbers and email addresses. Try to limit your emails to questions/information which cannot wait until the next lecture or tutorial or office hour (email will not be used as a replacement for class or tutorial attendance or to get responses to “eleventh hour” questions about tests or essays). Keep in mind that the instructors receive a lot of email and will not necessarily recognize you as one of their students from your email userid. Therefore, you should make your subject line transparent (e.g. write “Language and Gender question” rather than simply “Hi”). If you contact the Course Director, please have the following subject line: Language and Gender Student.

**Readings** (all are on reserve as well as being on sale at York University Bookstore):

- 1) Penelope Eckert & Sally McConnell-Ginet. 2003. Language and Gender. Cambridge.
- 2) Reading Package. (York University Bookstore)

There is reading to do every week. All reading for the week should be completed by the Monday of that week. You will get much more out of the lectures if you do the reading in advance.

<b><u>Evaluation</u></b>	Research Paper:	20% (October 17)
	Mid-Term Test:	25% (October 31)
	Research Paper:	25% (November 21)
	Final Test:	20% (December 5)
	Tutorial:	10%

**Missing a Test:** Students who miss the midterm or the final test due to illness or personal emergency may be given an opportunity to write a makeup. However, only people who contact the instructor or the WMST office within 24 hours of the test/exam will have their case considered. Students who do not make contact within the time frame will **not** be given a makeup exam. Students who are ill must have detailed medical notes (notes saying only that the student visited a clinic will not be accepted) dated within one day of the examination; students with other emergencies must supply appropriate documentation with 24-hour dating. Students must contact the instructor by leaving a phone message at 416-736-2100 (extension 88731; voice mail will record the time of the message) or by email at [rking@yorku.ca](mailto:rking@yorku.ca) or contact the Women's Studies office at 416-650-8144 (also voice mail). Please note that forgetting the instructor's email address or phone extension is not an excuse: all York employee email addresses are found on the university website and all employee/administrative offices are accessible 24 hours a day through voice mail.

**Paper Deadline:** The term paper topics will be given out well in advance of the due dates and considerable time will be spent in tutorial doing practice exercises related to these topics. There will be a penalty for late papers (i.e., papers not handed in the day they are due). Papers 1-3 working days late will lose one-half a letter grade, papers 4-6 working days late will lose a full letter grade, etc. (e.g. a paper 2 days late which receives a grade of B+ will be reduced to a B; a B+ paper 5 days late will receive a C+, etc). Students with a serious emergency which prevents them handing in their paper on time should follow the steps outlined above (under Missing an Exam) to have their case considered.

**Remember:** Paper due dates and test dates are firm: Extensions and make-ups are not automatic!

Grading: For your tests, your numerical score will be converted to a number out of 100 and assigned the corresponding letter grade according to the following scale:

90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
75-79	B+
70-74	B
65-69	C+
60-64	C
55-59	D+
50-54	D
40-49	E
0-39	F

Your essay will be graded using the following correspondences between letter grades and prose descriptions:

A+	(90-100)	exceptional
A	(85-89)	excellent
A-	(80-84)	bordering on excellent
B+	(75-79)	very good
B	(70-74)	good
C+	(65-69)	competent
C	(60-64)	fairly competent
D+	(55-59)	passing
D	(50-54)	barely passing
E	(40-49)	marginally failing
F	(0-39)	failing

Tutorial participation will be evaluated as a score out of ten based on attendance, participation, quality of participation, and one or two short homework assignments, to be handed in to your tutorial leader. Keep in mind that irregular and infrequent tutorial attendance will result in a failing tutorial grade.

For each piece of work (and for calculation of the tutorial grade) the course director and tutorial leaders will devise uniform grading schemes which apply the same criteria across all tutorials. That is, the entire teaching team will be evaluating work in the same way.

The final grade for the course is calculated using the numerical score for each component of the course, weighted appropriately, and assigned the corresponding official York grade. Thus a final grade in the 80-84% range will receive an A grade since York does not have an official A- final grade.

N.B. A numerical score within .5 of the next highest letter grade will be rounded up automatically (e.g. 64.1 = C, 69.6 = B). Individual requests to have grades “bumped up” will not be considered.

**Academic Integrity** Before your second tutorial, students should go to the university’s Academic Integrity website, complete the online Academic Integrity Tutorial and take the Academic Integrity Quiz. **You must hand in a copy of your completed quiz** (see instructions on the site) **to your tutorial leader at your second tutorial. An academic integrity checklist will also be included with each research paper.**

### Course Outline

- Week 1:        Introduction to Course  
Sept 7        Readings: Introduction, Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (hereafter E&M); Chapter 1, E&M “Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing Gender”
- Week 2:        Gender in Language  
Sept 12, 14    Readings: Chapter 2, E&M “Linking the Linguistic to the Social,” pp. 60-79
- Week 3:        Sexist Language & Discourse  
Sept 19, 21    Readings: King “Talking Gender”; Clark “The Linguistics of Blame”  
[Research Paper Topics handed out this week]
- Week 4:        Gender Ideology and Language Reform  
Sept 26, 28    Readings: Ehrlich & King “Feminist Meanings”; Chapter 2, E&M “Linking the Linguistic to the Social,” pp. 52-60
- Week 5:        The Organization of Talk  
Oct 3         Reading: Chapter 3 E&M “Organizing Talk”  
[Rosh Hashanah: No classes on Wednesday]
- Week 6:        The Organization of Talk, cont’d  
Oct 12        Reading: Cameron “Performing Gender Identity”  
[Thanksgiving: No classes on Monday]
- Week 7:        Making Social Meaning  
Oct 17, 19    Reading: Chapter 4 E&M “Making Social Moves”  
[**First research paper** due on Monday]
- Week 8        Social Attitudes & Positions  
Oct 24, 26    Reading: Chapter 5 E&M “Positioning Ideas & Subjects”

- Week 9: Popularization & Appropriation 1  
 Oct 31 Reading: Cameron "Gender and Language Ideologies" reading is optional  
 Nov 2 [**Midterm Test** is on Monday]
- Week 10 Popularization & Appropriation 2  
 Nov 7, 9 No new reading **NB: Last day to drop a fall course without receiving a grade is Nov 11**
- Week 11 Relating Text & Talk  
 Nov 14,16 Reading: Chapters 6&7 E&M "Saying and Implying" (pp. 192-213) and "Mapping the World" (pp. 228-231, 261-265). Note we will not cover Chapter 8 E&M
- Week 12 Performing Identities 1  
 Nov 21,23 Reading: Hall "Lip Service on the Fantasy Lines"  
 [**Second research paper** due on Monday]
- Week 13: Performing Identities 2  
 Nov 28, 30 Reading: Chapter 9 E& M "Fashioning Selves"
- December 5: **Final Test** is on Monday

### **Articles Contained in the Reading Package**

- (1) Cameron, Deborah. 2003. "Gender and Language Ideologies." In Janet Holmes & Miriam Meyerhoff, eds. The Handbook of Language and Gender. Oxford: Blackwell. (optional)
- (2) Clark, Kate. 1998. "The Linguistics of Blame: Representations of Women in the Sun's Reporting of Crimes of Sexual Violence." In Deborah Cameron, ed. The Feminist Critique of Language. Second edition. London: Routledge.
- (3) King, Ruth *et al.* 1991. Talking Gender (excerpt). Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1-29, 46-54, 81-84. [This material will provide useful background for the first research paper topic.]
- (4) Ehrlich, Susan & Ruth King. 1994. "Feminist Meanings and the (De)politicization of the Lexicon." Language in Society 3.2:151-166.
- (5) Cameron, Deborah. 1997. "Performing Gender Identity: Young Men's Talk and The Construction of Heterosexual Masculinity." In S. Johnson and U. H. Meinhof, eds. Language and Masculinity. Oxford: Blackwell
- (6) Hall, Kira. 1995. "Lip Service on the Fantasy Lines." In K. Hall and M. Bucholtz, eds. Gender Articulated: Language and the Socially Constructed Self. London and New York: Routledge.

