

# BAD WORDS AND TABOO TERMS

LING 1069

Spring 2019

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Hours: T,H, 1:00-2:00

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## Course Description

This class is an introduction to linguistic study through the lens of taboo language, a pervasive part of all languages. We will survey topics in modern linguistics by studying taboos in various languages. Students sensitive to obscene words are discouraged from enrolling, as are students with only a prurient, non-scholarly interest in taboo language.

## Intellectual Explorations-Humanities Requirement Designation

This class is designated as fulfilling the Humanities Exploration requirement, and is thus designed to “help students achieve a critical understanding of human thought, culture, and society through the study of big questions, both contemporary and enduring” (<http://ugs.utah.edu/general-education/requirements/hf.php>). As part of this designation, the course has the following Essential Learning Objectives:

1. Inquiry and analysis
2. Critical thinking

### 3. Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

#### Specific Course Objectives

All of language is uniquely human, but taboo language can tell us even more about what it means to be human. Linguists use language as a window to the mind, and that is my primary goal with this class. More specifically, by the end of the course you should be able to

- **Identify**
  - What parts of vocabulary taboo words are most likely to be drawn from
  - How taboo words are used to swear
  - The three aspects of meaning
  - The processes that create and change taboo words
  - Where in the brain language in general is processed
  - Where in the brain taboo words are processed
  - The three parts of a speech act
- **Describe**
  - The social and emotional aspects of a word that identifies it as taboo.
  - How taboo words are similar to other words.
  - How taboo words differ from other words.
  - How taboo words are created
  - How taboo words cease to be taboo
  - What swearing does to a person physiologically
  - How one's sociological background can shape how one swears
  - How society and culture can shape what is or is not taboo
  - How swearing in one's first language is different from swearing in one's second language
  - How context affects whether swearing is acceptable
- **Explain**
  - What makes a word taboo
  - Why taboo words exist in a language
- **Analyze**
  - Questions about language from an objective point of view

#### Required Course Materials

Eggert, Randall. 2011. *This Book is Taboo*. Kendall-Hunt. Available as an e-book at <http://www.kendallhunt.com/eggert/>

## Course Policy

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook; this extends to the online classroom. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

[http://catalog.utah.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=633#Attendance Policy](http://catalog.utah.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=633#Attendance_Policy)

<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

## Grading

Your Grade will be based on quizzes (25%), two exams (25% each), and class participation (25%). There will be **no deadline extensions**, except in the case of a severe illness, a death in the family, or a catastrophic act of nature or nation. In all cases, I expect a letter explaining the situation. The same goes for incompletes. Unless you make special arrangements with me to receive an incomplete, I will not give one. Special arrangements should be in the form of a statement that we write up and sign. University regulations prohibit the use of the "INC" grade unless the student has completed 80% of the course work. **Plagiarism is not tolerated** and may result in a zero for the plagiarized assignment. You are not to use--or even read--other students' exams (from this semester or from previous semesters) when working on your exam; doing so may result in a zero for the assignment. Late exams **may be accepted at my discretion**, but up to 10% of the grade will be deducted for each day it is late.

[http://catalog.utah.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=351&hl=%22grading%22&returnto=search#Grading Policies](http://catalog.utah.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=351&hl=%22grading%22&returnto=search#Grading_Policies)

## Posses

The word *posse* comes from Latin and originally meant 'to be capable', or, as a noun, 'capability, power' (the word *possible* comes from the same root). In order for you to be capable—or for you to have power—you will be assigned to a posse with other students. You will work with each other and learn from each other throughout the semester.

## **Modules**

The class is divided into two-week modules. During each module, you will need to complete reading assignments from the text-book, watch multi-media presentations, take quizzes, and participate in class discussions. All course material is intended to be accessed through [Modules](#).

## **Exams**

The two exams are essay based. The first exam should be two pages long. The second exam builds on the first exam and should be four pages long. You should provide examples to illustrate your points and cite any sources that you use in your answer.

## **Class Participation**

You are expected to contribute to discussions within your posse. You are expected to contribute examples from your own observation of phenomena, suggest possible analyses of data, and help design hypothetical studies that would help to resolve any outstanding questions that come. Class participation points are calculated based on active participation within your posse and completion of assignments. Contributions that do not contribute meaningfully to assignments will not receive credit.

## **Equal Access**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

## **Canvas**

Canvas is our classroom. You can access it through the CIS ([gate.acs.utah.edu](http://gate.acs.utah.edu)) or through [utah.instructure.com](http://utah.instructure.com). At the beginning of the semester, you need to familiarize yourself with the intricacies of the site (it is a powerful course tool and, therefore, complicated); if you need help navigating Canvas the kind folks at TLT ([classhelp@utah.edu](mailto:classhelp@utah.edu) or (801) 581-6112)

can help you. You need to set aside several hours during the week that you dedicate to participating in our class, just as you would in a face-to-face class.

## Course Summary:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Sun Jan 6, 2019	<a href="#">Read Preface</a> <a href="#">Read Chapter 5</a>
Mon Jan 7, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Tue Jan 8, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Wed Jan 9, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
	<a href="#">1.4 Student Information</a>
	<a href="#">1.5 Data Collection: Tabooness</a>
Thu Jan 10, 2019	<a href="#">1.6 Get to Know Your Posse</a> <a href="#">1.7 Name Your Posse</a> <a href="#">1.8 Do You Have to Use Words Like That?</a> <a href="#">1.9 What's Your Threshold?</a>
Fri Jan 11, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Mon Jan 14, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Tue Jan 15, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Wed Jan 16, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
Thu Jan 17, 2019	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>

Date	Details
	<a href="#">1.11 Sounds are just sounds</a>
	<a href="#">Introduction to the Class: You Can't Use Words Like That</a>
	<a href="#">Last day to add/drop classes</a>
Fri Jan 18, 2019	<a href="#">1.13 Data Collection: Functions of Language</a>
	<a href="#">1.14 Data Collection: Infixation in States</a>
	<a href="#">1.15 Data Collection: Slurs for Men and Women</a>
	<a href="#">Read Chapter 1</a>
Sun Jan 20, 2019	<a href="#">Read Chapter 3</a>
Mon Jan 21, 2019	<a href="#">Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</a>
Tue Jan 22, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
Wed Jan 23, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
Thu Jan 24, 2019	<a href="#">2.2 Taboos</a>
	<a href="#">2.4 Notation for the 3 Types of Mention</a>
	<a href="#">2.5 Stroop Test</a>
Fri Jan 25, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
	<a href="#">2.6 Mention, Mention, Mention Quiz</a>
Mon Jan 28, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
Tue Jan 29, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>
Wed Jan 30, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Thu Jan 31, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words &amp; Swearing</a> <a href="#">2.11 Practice for Quiz 1</a> <a href="#">2.9 Tabooness</a>
Fri Feb 1, 2019	<a href="#">Taboo Words and Swearing</a> <a href="#">2.12 Quiz 1</a>
Sun Feb 3, 2019	<a href="#">Read Chapter 4</a> <a href="#">Read Chapter 14</a>
Mon Feb 4, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Tue Feb 5, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Wed Feb 6, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Thu Feb 7, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a> <a href="#">3.3 Functions of Language Survey Results</a> <a href="#">3.4 Response Cries</a>
Fri Feb 8, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Mon Feb 11, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Tue Feb 12, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Wed Feb 13, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a>
Thu Feb 14, 2019	<a href="#">Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</a> <a href="#">3.10 Practice for Quiz 2</a> <a href="#">3.8 The Context of a Slur</a>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Fri Feb 15, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Meaning, Meaning, Meaning</u></a> <a href="#"><u>3.11 Quiz 2</u></a>
Sun Feb 17, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Read Chapter 12</u></a>
Mon Feb 18, 2019	<a href="#"><u>President's Day</u></a>
Tue Feb 19, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and the Brain</u></a>
Wed Feb 20, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and the Brain</u></a>
Thu Feb 21, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and the Brain</u></a> <a href="#"><u>4.3 Tourette Syndrome</u></a> <a href="#"><u>4.6 The Taboo Stroop Test and the Brain</u></a> <a href="#"><u>4.7 Practice for Quiz 3</u></a>
Fri Feb 22, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and the Brain</u></a> <a href="#"><u>4.8 Quiz 3</u></a>
Sun Feb 24, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Read Chapter 2</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Read Chapter 8</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Read Chapter 9</u></a>
Mon Feb 25, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</u></a>
Tue Feb 26, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</u></a>
Wed Feb 27, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</u></a>
Thu Feb 28, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</u></a> <a href="#"><u>5.3 Prescriptivists</u></a>



<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
	<a href="#">5.6 Results from Infixation of States</a>
	<a href="#">Honor Pledge: Exam 1</a>
Fri Mar 1, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
	<a href="#">Exam 1</a>
Mon Mar 4, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
Tue Mar 5, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
Wed Mar 6, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
Thu Mar 7, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
	<a href="#">5.8 Linguistic Versatility</a>
	<a href="#">5.9 Practice for Quiz 4</a>
Fri Mar 8, 2019	<a href="#">Grammar, Grammar, Grammar</a>
	<a href="#">Last day to withdraw</a>
	<a href="#">5.10 Quiz 4</a>
Mon Mar 11, 2019	<a href="#">Spring Break</a>
Tue Mar 12, 2019	<a href="#">Spring Break</a>
Wed Mar 13, 2019	<a href="#">Spring Break</a>
Thu Mar 14, 2019	<a href="#">Spring Break</a>
Fri Mar 15, 2019	<a href="#">Spring Break</a>
Sun Mar 17, 2019	<a href="#">Read Chapter 6</a>

Date	Details
	<a href="#">Read Chapter 7</a>
Mon Mar 18, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Tue Mar 19, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Wed Mar 20, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Thu Mar 21, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a> <a href="#">6.10 Asterisks</a> <a href="#">6.2 Euphemisms</a> <a href="#">6.6 X-phemism triplets</a>
Fri Mar 22, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Mon Mar 25, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Tue Mar 26, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Wed Mar 27, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a>
Thu Mar 28, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a> <a href="#">6.13 Oxford English Dictionary</a> <a href="#">6.16 Degeneration</a> <a href="#">6.17 Practice for Quiz 5</a>
Fri Mar 29, 2019	<a href="#">Adapting and Changing Language</a> <a href="#">6.18 Quiz 5</a>
Sun Mar 31, 2019	<a href="#">Read Chapter 11</a> <a href="#">Read Chapter 10</a>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Mon Apr 1, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Tue Apr 2, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Wed Apr 3, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Thu Apr 4, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a> <a href="#">7.4 ESL swearing</a> <a href="#">7.6 Teaching about taboo words in the classroom</a>
Fri Apr 5, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Mon Apr 8, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Tue Apr 9, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Wed Apr 10, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a>
Thu Apr 11, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a> <a href="#">7.12 Taboo words in a foreign language</a> <a href="#">7.13 Practice for Quiz 6</a>
Fri Apr 12, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing in Other Languages</a> <a href="#">7.14 Quiz 6</a>
Sun Apr 14, 2019	<a href="#">Read Chapter 13</a> <a href="#">Read Chapter 15</a>
Mon Apr 15, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing and Society</a>
Tue Apr 16, 2019	<a href="#">Swearing and Society</a>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Wed Apr 17, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and Society</u></a>
Thu Apr 18, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and Society</u></a> <a href="#"><u>8.4 Appropriateness of women swearing</u></a> <a href="#"><u>8.5 Slurs for Men and Women</u></a>
Fri Apr 19, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Swearing and Society</u></a>
Thu Apr 25, 2019	<a href="#"><u>8.11 Practice for Quiz 7</u></a> <a href="#"><u>8.9 Censorship Online</u></a>
Fri Apr 26, 2019	<a href="#"><u>8.12 Quiz 7</u></a>
Tue Apr 30, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Honor Pledge: Exam 2</u></a>
Wed May 1, 2019	<a href="#"><u>Reading Day</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Exam 2</u></a>