

## Preliminary Web Course Description

\*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

### School of English and Theatre Studies

|                           |  |   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Course Code:<br>ENGL*3080 | Course Title:<br>History of the English Language | Date of Offering:<br><b>WINTER 2019</b> |
|---------------------------|--|---|

|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Course Instructor: S. D. Powell | Course Format: Lecture |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|

#### Brief Course Synopsis:

Why do we talk the way we do? Why do we write the way we do? This course addresses these large questions, surveying the development of language from the earliest prehistoric ancestors of English to the modern language spoken today in Guelph and around the world. Along the way, we'll consider many of the profound changes that have shaped the language--and the social, historical, and linguistic reasons for those changes. No prior knowledge of linguistics is expected, but students should be prepared to learn new ways of thinking about language.

If you've ever been curious about the First Germanic Consonant Shift or the Great Vowel Shift, this course is definitely for you. But you should also consider taking this course if you've ever wondered why "ain't" is frowned upon by English teachers (but maybe shouldn't be); why spelling is such a chore; why French, German, and Spanish all seem to have lots of things in common with English (but not everything); why it's so hard to put commas in the right place; and why Canadians say "eh."

#### Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Homework:                   | 25% |
| Quizzes (4x5%):             | 20% |
| Midterm exams (2x15%):      | 30% |
| Final exam (comprehensive): | 25% |

#### Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Laurel J. Brinton and Leslie B. Arnovick, *The English Language: A Linguistic History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford)

#### Other information that you wish share about the course (optional):