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: ENGL 3080-01	Course Title: History of the English Language	Date of Offering: **FALL 2017**

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 the English language from its prehistoric linguistic ancestors to the modern language spoken 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:	20%
Quizzes (3x5%)	15%
Group research project:	15%
Midterm exams (2x12.5%):	25%
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):

List the distribution requirements that this course fulfills: Medieval/Early Modern