

**Linguistics/Classics 0510 SDE (2017):  
An Introduction to Etymology – Course Outline  
Dr. Rhonda Dubec**

**A. Course Overview**

Intended to give students a foundation in etymology (the study of origin and development of words), this course explores the sources and strategies of word formation as well as the most common Latin and Greek roots/stems and affixes that underpin much of the vocabulary of the Romance and Germanic languages.

- While part of the Classics and Linguistics course offerings, this course is of immediate and practical value to students in all fields of study and especially those students wanting to improve their vocabulary before they write standardized tests (e.g. MCAT, LSAT, PCAT, GRE).
- NOTE: While there are a lot of chapters in the text -- and so chapter-based units in D2L -- most of the D2L units are quite short (around a page or less) and, essentially distill the related chapter for you. Do not be intimidated by the number of units!

**B. Why Is This Course Useful?**

Most simply, this course will improve your word-awareness and vocabulary.

- It will give you the tools you need to unpack new words and to better understand familiar ones.
- In practical terms, it should increase your reading, comprehension, and writing skills as well.
- Finally, it also helps speakers of English to improve their vocabulary quickly and effectively.

**C. Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

- Identify, understand, and correctly use the parts of speech
- Understand the derivation of many modern words, especially those from Latin and Greek language roots

- Analyze word structure and meaning through the study of prefixes, roots/stems, and suffixes
- Differentiate between etymological and modern definitions of words
- Understand and recognize different word-formation/word-change patterns and processes
- Distinguish homonyms, homographs, synonyms, and various confusing words to correctly use them in their own writing
- Use word games and puzzles to enhance their use and enjoyment of language.

#### **D. How Are the Students Evaluated?**

Students' mastery of the word roots/stems and affixes presented in the course (as well as both the etymological and contemporary definitions of words) is tested with three online tests.

1. These will be held on the following dates:

- Test #1: **May 12** (covering Part I [Latin], chapters I-XVII, 30%)
- Test #2: **May 26** (covering Part I [Latin], chapters XVIII-XXV and Part II [Greek], chapters I-X, 30%)
- Test #3: **June 9** (covering Part II [Greek], chapters XI-XXV and overall course review, 40%)

**NOTE: NO MAKEUP TESTS/DATES WILL BE PERMITTED  
except in the most dire and documented circumstances  
(not a note from a parent or partner).**

**In almost all cases, tests not done on the dates specified will receive zero.**

2. Tests will open at 12:01 a.m. on the testing date and close at 11:59 p.m. of the same date to accommodate students' different schedules.

- Tests will normally be one to two hours long, (depending on the number and weighting of questions included), so you can choose a time slot of that period on the testing day in which to do your test.
- The test format and questions will be modeled on the questions from the text and workbook (i.e. multiple choice, true and false, ordering, match-up, etc.), with terminology added as a supplemental topic.

- So, if you are able to answer everything in the text and workbook for each section, you should do very well on the test.

## E. Instructor Information

- **Office Hours:** By appointment only
- **Office Location:** BB 0029 E (Find it before you need it, if you are in Thunder Bay.)
- **Telephone:** 343-8529 (During office hours only. After my office hours, leave messages with the English department at 343-8292)
- **Email:** Either through D2L or rdubec@lakeheadu.ca. Email is the best way to contact me.

## F. Required Texts

- Donald M. Ayers, *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements*, 2nd edition.
- Helena Dettmer and Marcia Lindgren, *Workbook to Accompany the Second Edition of Donald M. Ayers's English Words from Latin and Greek Elements*.

## G. Key Dates

### 1. Administrative Dates

- May 1 -- First day of classes: course begins
- May 3 -- Final day to register (add) courses
- May 10 -- Final day to withdraw (drop) courses
- June 12 -- Last day of classes

### 2. Test Dates

- **May 12** -- Test #1 (30%) -- Covering Part I [Latin], Chapters I-XVII
- **May 26** -- Test # 2 (30%) – Covering Part I (Latin), chapters XVIII-XXV AND Part II (Greek), chapters I-X
- **June 9** -- Test #3 (40%) -- Covering Part II (Greek), chapters XI-XXV and overall course review

<p><b>NOTE: NO MAKEUP TESTS/DATES WILL BE PERMITTED except in the most dire and documented circumstances</b></p>
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**(not a note from a parent or partner).**

**In almost all cases, tests not done on the dates specified will receive zero.**

## **H. An Ideal Study Schedule**

### **1. What should a student's study schedule look like?**

This is a compressed course for the Spring session, covering twelve weeks of work in six weeks. As such, it demands close and constant attention.

The material is not so much intellectually rigorous as cumulatively abundant.

You want to “stay on top” of each week’s work and learn the roots/stems and affixes as they come up in order that the sheer number of them does not become overwhelming.

Remember: Most chapters are quite short, so do not be intimidated by the number of them.

### **2. An Optimal Study Schedule**

Below is an optimal outline of your work schedule.

- Depending on your current vocabulary and facility with words, the work may be quite time-consuming.
- Accordingly, I suggest you divide up the designated number of pages of reading and work (both textbook and workbook) by the number of days per week you plan to work on the course and set an individualized schedule to ensure everything is covered in time.
- Assume, too, one to two pages of online instruction/direction in D2L from me for each chapter.
- The supplemental material from me is posted in D2L. It is primarily a distillation of each chapter's important terms, concepts, and resources -- though I also include occasional supplemental links, interesting factoids, etc.
- Be sure to work through the online content as well as the material in the textbook and the workbook for each chapter.

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Chapter s</b>	<b>Number of Chapter s</b>	<b>Text Pages Read, Work Through</b>	<b>Workbook Pages</b>	<b>Test Dates</b>
<b>1-2</b>	May 1-12	Intro, Pt I.I-XVII	18	1-112	xxii-104	Friday, May 12, I.I-XVII, 30%
<b>3-4</b>	May 13-26	Pt I.XVIII-Pt II.X	18	113-215	105-212	Friday, May 26, I.XVIII-II.X, 30%
<b>5-6</b>	May 27-June 9	Pt II.X-XXI	14	215-280	213-255	Friday, June 9, II.XI-XXV & overall course review, 40%