2014 Winter Session (2014-2015 Academic Year)

**ENGL 320: History of the English Language (6 credits)**

**Instructor:** Dr. Laurel Brinton  
**Section:** 001  
**Term:** 1-2

**Course Description:**  
The purpose of the course is to provide students with an understanding of how the English language has changed in its 1200 years of recorded history with a view to understanding how it came to be the language it is today.

The course begins with discussion of attitudes towards language change and the nature and mechanisms of linguistic change. It then embarks upon a survey of the historical development of English from its Indo-European past to the present.

Considering first the prehistoric changes from Proto-Indo-European to Germanic, we will then study the structure and vocabulary of the earliest English and subsequent changes in sounds (phonology), forms of words and their endings (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), spelling (orthography), meanings of words (semantics), and vocabulary through the major periods of the English language: Old English (449-1100), Middle English (1100-1500), Early Modern English (1500-1700), and (Late) Modern English (1700-1920). These changes are deemed the "internal" history of the language. There will be discussion of the "external history" of the language, that is, the historical, political, and social events as they have shaped the language.

**Prerequisites:**  
Third-year standing and completion of the Writing Requirement. No formal background in language or linguistics is required.

ENGL 321 satisfies requirements for the English language major (Category 2, "Structure of the English Language"), the English language minor, and the English literature major ("Optional Restricted Courses"), but not the English literature minor. It (partially) satisfies admission requirements for the secondary teaching programs in English Education and English as a Second Language in the Faculty of Education.

**Required Texts:**

Course Requirements:
The work required in this course includes:

- FOUR in-class tests: 64%
- EIGHT online quizzes: 24%
- Word project: 12%

The four tests are non-comprehensive. The second and fourth tests will be held during the December and April examination periods, but will be no different in kind, length, or value from the mid-term tests. You must sit every test to pass the course.