English 320: Grammar

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Office hours: M/W 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

Course time: MW 2:00-3:40

“Well, do you like sentences?” –author Annie Dillard, responding to a student who had asked, Do you think I have what it takes to be a writer?

Course texts

Mr. Schnelle’s English 320 Coursepack (Required)

Emphatically recommended: (1) a handbook such as *The Writer’s Harbrace Handbook* and (2) a comprehensive dictionary such as *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*

Course objectives
Whatever your academic major, English 320 can help you become a stronger writer and editor. If you’re a literature student, the course will equip you with tools for analysis. If you plan to teach writing, reading, or foreign languages at any level, the grammar we will study is also essential. Likewise, professional or creative writers can improve their fluency by studying grammar. But even if you’re majoring in chemistry or flight technology, this class can help you gain confidence in preparing well-written documents. With these points in mind, you will have the opportunity to do the following:

• learn to identify word classes, phrases, and clauses;
• describe the functions of words, phrases, and clauses;
• describe sentence patterns, sentence forms, and sentence types;
• correct common sentence-level errors;
• use your knowledge of grammar to revise and edit your own writing and to comment helpfully on the writing of others;
• describe at least three different approaches to the study of English sentences; and
• discuss the evolution of the English language and the historical influences on its various forms.

Evaluation
1. Ungraded exercise assignments (50 points)  
   A  930 and above
2. Seven quizzes (350 points)  
   A-  900-929
3. Midterm exam (200 points)  
   B+  870-899
4. Comprehensive final exam (300 points)  
   B  830-869
5. Revised applications paper (100 points)  
   etcetera . . .

Etiquette and advice
Please treat others as you would like to be treated: Arrive on time, don’t leave before I 
dismiss class, disable your lunch, don’t eat your cell phone, and refrain from chitchat 
during lectures and discussions. If you want me to take you seriously, complete all 
assignments, ask clarifying questions, and use electronics only with discretion. (Devices 
for the hearing impaired, dictionary aps, and so on, are welcome.) In your approach to 
learning, practice diligence, curiosity, sincerity, good humor, and respect. I’ll do the 
same.

Absence policy: Try to limit no-shows to one or two. Additional absences will certainly 
jeopardize your grade, and English 320 is not an undemanding course in the first place: 
why make it harder on yourself?

Homework: According to the CWU catalogue, “one credit represents a total time 
commitment of three hours each week of the quarter.” Since English 320 is a five-credit 
course, success depends on your allotting to it fifteen hours per week: four or five hours 
in class and tutorials + ten hours of homework or studying (about five per class meeting).

Tutorial Help: Each week, tutor Irene Donovan will meet for informal review of class 
material at a time and place TBA. Attendance will not be taken, but if you feel any 
reservations about grammar—or if you find yourself scoring poorly on quizzes—you 
should show up.

Revision of the Applications Paper will be ongoing during the quarter and through the 
final exam date.

Academic Dishonesty: “Plagiarism” derives from a Latin root meaning *kidnapping,* 
which is a capital crime. Offenders are not prosecuted at Central, but their misdeeds go on 
record for the sake of future employers and graduate school admissions officers.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Changes to the calendar will be announced in class. Detailed readings and practice 
exercises will be given every day and posted on Blackboard, where you can also access 
this syllabus. Note that each of the tests (including quizzes and midterm & final exams) 
may include both in-class and take-home portions. Note also: In most cases, tests will 
cover material presented in our text as well as in class lectures. *On rare occasions, a test 
question may refer to an item mentioned in the text but not in class.* Read and review 
conscientiously, assuming that attendance alone will not guarantee satisfactory grades.
**Words and Phrases**

**M Jan 6**
Introductions; grammar approaches and definitions
Homework: Complete student profile; draft applications paper (typed) for next class; Read *Rhetorical Grammar* (RG) Introduction, p. 1-3; write dictionary exercise according to directions.

**W Jan 8**
Words: form classes; prototype theory; features of good writing: paper exchange
Homework: Read RG chapter 12, read p. 212-22 & write exercises 38 & 39; applications paper (completed typed draft) due next class; complete RG chapter 12 (read p. 222-25) & write exercise 40; complete exercise in coursepack: Writing Applications (WA) 1

**M Jan 13**
Quiz; words: structure classes, pronouns
Homework: Read RG chapter 12 (p. 225-34) & write exercise 42 as well as the follow-up exercise in WA 2; RG chapter 12, p. 234-38 & exercise 43

**W Jan 15**
Words: pronouns; phrases
Homework: Read RG chapter 1 (p. 5-12) & write exercises 1 & 2; identify pronoun types used in a section of your applications paper, revising ineffective usages; read RG chapter 1 (12-17) & write exercise 3; take-home assignment

**W Jan 22**
Quiz; phrases
Homework: Read RG chapter 2—read p. 18-23 & write ex. 4 & dictionary exercise.

**The Structure of Sentences**

**M Jan 27**
Sentence Patterns
Homework: Complete RG chapter 2 & write exercises 5, 6, & 7; prepare for quiz.

**W Jan 29**
Quiz; verbs
Homework: Read RG chapter 3; exercises 9 & 10; write WA 8 (in coursepack), exs. 8 & 9, p. 35-36; strongly recommended: exercises 15 & 16 on p. 37

**M Feb 3**
Verbs; coordination; subordination
Homework: Read RG chapter 4, p. 51-71 & exercises 11-13 & exercise 15 as well as the exercise at the bottom of coursepack page 46 (“Survey the uses of compound sentences” . . . .); quiz prep; work on take-home assignment

**W Feb 5**
Review in class; quiz
Homework: Read RG chapter 5, p. 82-89; write RG exercise 16 & coursepack exercise 12, p. 54
Controlling the Message
M Feb 10  Cohesion & parallelism
Homework: Read RG chapter 5. p. 90-100 & exercise 17; prepare for midterm exam

W Feb 12  Midterm exam; parallelism
Homework: Read RG chapter 6; write RG exercises 18 & 19 and coursepack exercises 6 (p. 61) & unnumbered (p. 66).

W Feb 19  Sentence rhythm
Homework: Read RG chapter 8, p. 139-40 & 141-55; write exercises 25 & 26.

Making Choices: Form and Function
M Feb 24  Choosing adverbials
Homework: Complete RG chapter 8 & exercise 27; prepare for quiz; take-home assignment.

W Feb 26  Choosing adjectivals
Homework: Read RG chapter 9, 158-69; write exercises 28, 29, 30, 31, & 32.

M March 3  Choosing adjectivals; choosing nominals
Homework: Write exercise 11 in coursepack p. 75 (“Review a passage”); Read RG chapter 10, 179-88; write exercises 33 & 34; prepare for quiz.

W March 5  Quiz; choosing nominals
Homework: Read RG chapter 10, 189-93; write exercises 35 & 36; RG chapter 11 (194-210); write exercise 37.

Punctuation and an Introduction to the History of the English Language
M March 10  Other stylistic variations; punctuation
Homework: Read RG chapter 13 (239-50); write exercises 44 & 45; read Kemmer (coursepack p. 105-10).

W March 12  History of English in brief; review for final exam
Homework: Prepare revisions of applications paper according to directions

***Final exam: March 20, 12:00-2:00 P.M.***