HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
ENG 490/590
4 credits
No co- or prerequisites

Rationale for conversion: The conversion will give students more exposure to primary
texts, secondary texts and/or online resources. It will also give students greater
opportunity to practice critical thinking and writing and to develop research skills by
increasing the length and complexity of analytical writing assignments and raising research
expectations. For both ENG 490 and ENG 590, two additional texts have been added. For
ENG 490, the final paper has been expanded to 10-12 pages and a requirement of at least
four outside research sources has been added. For ENG 590, the final paper has been
expanded to 14-16 pages and the research requirement has been increased to at least eight
outside research sources.

The four credit version will:
• Add instruction in research methodology (digital and print sources) appropriate to the
  advanced study of linguistics and the history of the language;
• Add two texts;
• Expand the final research and writing assignment to incorporate digital resources.

The core syllabus reflects a four credit version.

Course Description: A study of the origins, changes, and reasons for changes in the grammar,
sounds, and vocabulary of English from its earliest stages through its modern forms.

ENG 490 Student Learning Outcomes:
• Identify the different stages in the development of the English language
• Account for and explain linguistic and social influences on the development of the
  English language
• Demonstrate highly developed critical reading, thinking, and writing skills necessary for
  advanced work in the Humanities

Additional ENG 590 Student Learning Outcome:
• Analyze and appraise contemporary critical discourses and theories concerning the study
  of the development of the English language

Evaluation of Student Performance (ENG 490): Attendance & participation; workbook
exercises; midterm and final exams; a series of writing assignments, including a 10-12 page
paper with at least four outside research sources, that will examine the origins and developing
usages of one word and that will be graded on use of close reading skills, specificity and
originality of argument, and mechanics. Final grades will be determined as follows: 10%
attendance/participation, 25% midterm exam, 40% writing assignments, and 25% final exam.

Evaluation of Student Performance (ENG 590): Attendance & participation; workbook
exercises; midterm and final exams; an extended research paper (14-16 pages, including at least
eight outside research sources) that will be graded on use of close reading skills, use of
secondary sources, specificity and originality of argument, and mechanics. Final grades will be determined as follows: 10% attendance/participation, 25% midterm exam, 40% paper, and 25% final exam.

Required Texts: Simon Winchester, The Meaning of Everything*
David Crystal, Think on my Words: Exploring Shakespeare’s Language*
C. M. Millward, A Biography of the English Language (2nd ed.)
Workbook for A Biography of the English Language

*These texts represent additional readings added to the syllabus to justify the fourth credit hour.

Statement Regarding Disability Access Services:
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct:
http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm

Course Content:
Week One: Introduction to the Study of Language
BEL chs 1 & 3;
Week Two: The Tools of Language Study
BEL ch 2; The Meaning of Everything
Week Three: The Prehistory of English
BEL ch 4;
Week Four: Old English
BEL ch 5;
Week Five: Middle English I
BEL ch 6, pp. 141-195;
Week Six: Middle English II
BEL ch 6, pp. 195-222; midterm exam
Week Seven: Early Modern English
BEL ch 7; Think on my Words
Week Eight: Present Day English
BEL ch 8;
Week Nine: English Around the World
BEL ch 9; final papers due**
Week Ten: The Future of English

**This assignment has been expanded from the current syllabus to justify the fourth credit hour.