

ENGL 7/8501

History of the English Language

Dr. Leah Windsor

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English has ancient origins, descending from a language called Indo-European. English shares commonalities with Bengali, Persian, Spanish, Dutch, and Albanian. Modern Englishes exist because of mass migration, trade, conquest, and the development of civilizations and cultures. Many of the words we use today, such as those for family members, like mother, father, sister, and brother, are all thousands of years old and have remained remarkably unchanged over time. Modern English has taken many twists and turns to arrive at its contemporary forms spoken worldwide. In this class you will learn about the development of the English language from its earliest Celtic origins and Germanic influences, to the effect that William the Conqueror had on modern English. We will also look at how English has changed through modern globalization, what influenced those changes, and how our language is continuing to evolve.