The point of 4010 is to introduce students to theories and practices of what “writing” in “English” means as English continues to evolve as an international language of commerce and of daily interaction. English is “spoken” by around 1.5 billion people worldwide, but it’s not usually spoken the way I, for instance, speak it: in some places, it has clear cultural and historical significance for speakers who have emotional investments in it. (Ever hear of “English only” debates in the US? Ever learn about arguments over whether to establish national language academies?) In other places, English is a key language for getting things done—but GTD doesn’t necessarily imply a lot of reverence for “correctness.” What’s correct often takes a back seat to what’s pragmatic, and you’ll learn what that means and what it sounds and looks like.

You’ll also learn at least one approach to strategizing how to “globalize” and “localize” English for the benefit of potential readers across the world. You’ll learn how to write in kinds of English at the levels of overall organization, paragraph, sentence, and word that can be translated (often by machines) into other languages. Even in the practical exercises, though, you’ll still be thinking theoretically and historically about whether there can ultimately be a stable set of “rules” for a language that is changing even as we speak it.

Assignments include

- Grammar and style exercises that uncover specifics of English’s simultaneous stability and evolution
- A case study of an English-using context outside the US
- Critical responses to readings/other media about English as an international language
- A revision of an electronic or print document that “translates” it for an international English-using audience

Books to buy include*

- *Global Englishes: A Resource Book for Students* by Jennifer Jenkins
- *The Global English Style Guide* by John Kohl

*You’ll have other materials to read, view, listen to, and interact with as well, but you won’t have to buy those. Stay tuned.