

LING-101-080: Introduction to Linguistics (Honors)

Syllabus for 2016 Fall

1 General Information

LECTURE: Mon. & Wed. & Fri. 09:05 – 09:55am Memorial Hall 107

INSTRUCTOR: Mai Ha Vu

OFFICE: 125 E Main Street

E-MAIL: maiha@udel.edu

OFFICE HOURS: TBA
Other times by appointment

2 Course Description

Linguistics, the systematic study of human language, is different from many other scientific subjects in that its focus (language) is accessible to everyone. Unlike in biology or physics, we all have intuitions and knowledge about at least one language that we have acquired as toddlers. We can easily gather linguistic data from those around us, including even ourselves.

Because of the prevalence of language in our species, many of us take our linguistic knowledge for granted. However, once we study a foreign language, teach our own to someone else, or encounter someone with developmental disabilities that prevents them from acquiring language, we realize the infinite complexities that lie in our linguistic intuitions. Think about it: it is an ongoing, almost impossible struggle to program a computer to understand and speak any human language, yet it is perfectly acquired by any normally developing toddler by the age of three. How do we come to such a complex knowledge so easily?

In this course we will survey how language can be scientifically studied, and how it relates to other disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, and sociology. We start with the introduction to the core subfields of linguistics that are organized by the different levels of language: the study of sounds and their production (phonetics), the mental representation and pattern of sounds (phonology), the structure of words (morphology), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaning of sentences and words (semantics), and the use of language (pragmatics).

In the second half of the course, we will apply our knowledge of linguistic analysis to understand how language varies, changes, and gets acquired. We will learn about the diversity of language as well as the generalizations that must be universal to all human language. Through this course, we will challenge and question our preconceived beliefs about what a language is, and how it connects to other aspects of being human, both from a social and from a personal perspective.

3 Course Materials

Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics. 11th Edition. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.

Other materials will be posted on Sakai (<https://sakai.udel.edu/portal>).

4 Grading

Homework: 6 homework assignments, each worth 4%	24%
Reading responses	5%
Paper	10%
Quizzes: 2 quizzes, each worth 10%	20%
Midterm: in class	15%
Final exam: cumulative, during finals week	26%

93–100%	A	74–76%	C
90–92%	A–	70–73%	C–
87–89%	B+	67–79%	D+
84–86%	B	64–66%	D
80–83%	B–	60–63%	D–
77–79%	C+	0–59%	F

- Grades can only be discussed in person due to privacy laws (they cannot be discussed on the phone or via e-mail).
- Grades will be posted to Sakai. At any given time grades might not be completely accurate, as extra credit is added in the end.
- Extra credit opportunities will be announced during the semester.

5 Policies

5.1 Readings and Participation

- The textbook is meant to be a reference for class discussions.
- I will assign additional readings that we will discuss in class. You must read them and submit a short reading response on sakai prior to the class that they were assigned for.
- Good participation in class includes regular attendance, asking questions and participating in discussions in class, and coming to office hours if needed. Participation will not be strictly graded, but will be a deciding factor for borderline cases when I assign final grades.
- Make-up quizzes and exams are given for excused, documented absence only. You have to notify me about your absence **before** the class you are missing.

5.2 Homework

- Homework assignments will be collected in the beginning of class on the day they are due.
- Late homework assignments can be submitted up to **24 hours** after they are due at a penalty of 50% off the homework grade, unless otherwise noted.
- Homework assignments can be submitted in e-mail or hard copy. Be advised that a number of assignments will be difficult to complete in Microsoft Word or similar text editors due to special symbols and figures that you will have to produce.
- If you choose to e-mail your homework assignment, use the following format for the e-mail subject line: **LING101-Homework[NUMBER]-[LAST_NAME]**. For example, *LING101-Homework1-Vu*. I cannot guarantee seeing homework assignments sent with a subject line in a different format.
- If you choose to submit the homework assignment in hard copy either late or early, put them in my box at the Linguistics Department at 125 E Main Street.
- If you miss time due to an excused absence, contact me early to make arrangements, and expect to have to document that the absence is excused (at Undergraduate Academic Services, 109 Mitchell Hall, <http://www.cas.udel.edu/uas/>).
- You can work together on homework, but write-ups must be done individually.

5.3 Academic Integrity

- Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a zero on the assignment or test in question, and possibly a failing grade for the course.
- If you are not sure what plagiarism is look up the rather brief section on academic honesty in the Academic Code of Conduct: <http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/1314/code.html#honesty>

5.4 Use of Electronic Devices

- You are welcome to use laptops or tablets for **note taking only**.
- All electronic devices must be silenced.
- No cell phones are to be used in class.
- No electronic devices may be used (or even visible) during quizzes and exams.
- Be courteous to your fellow students: do not walk in and out of the classroom unless absolutely necessary, consume food and beverages discretely, do not carry on side conversations, etc.

5.5 Academic Accommodations

- Students with documented disabilities receiving services this semester should talk to me in person so we can discuss your needs.

6 Schedule

Schedule is tentative and will be updated during the semester. Check Sakai for all updates.

Dates	Topic	Textbook chapters	Assignment
08/31	Introduction	Chapter 1	
09/02	Introduction		
09/07	Animal Communication	Chapter 14	
09/09	Language and Thought	Chapter 11.2	Pullum (1991)
09/12	Phonetics	Chapter 2	
09/14	Phonetics		
09/16	Phonetics		
09/19	Phonology	Chapter 3	HW1 due
09/21	Phonology		
09/23	Phonology		
09/26	Review		HW2 due
09/28	Quiz 1		
09/30	Morphology	Chapter 4	
10/03	Morphology		
10/05	Morphology		
10/07	Syntax	Chapter 5	HW3 due
10/10	Syntax		
10/12	Syntax		
10/14	Semantics	Chapter 6	HW4 due
10/17	Pragmatics	Chapter 7	
10/19	Review		
10/21	Midterm		
10/24	Language Contact	Chapter 12	Jones (2016)
10/26	Pidgins and Creoles		
10/28	Multilingualism		
10/31	History of English	Chapter 13	HW5 due
11/02	Dialects of English	Chapter 10	
11/04	Case study: AAVE		
11/07	Case study: AAVE		Rickford (2004)
11/09	Endangered languages		
11/11	Language Documentation in Class		
11/14	Review		HW6 due
11/16	Quiz 2		
11/18	Language and Brain	Chapter 9	
11/28	Language and Brain		
11/30	Language Acquisition	Chapter 8	
12/02	Language Acquisition		
12/05	Sign languages		Paper due
12/07	Computational linguistics	Chapter 16	
12/09	Review		Chiang (1998)
TBA	Final Exam		