Introduction to Linguistic Theory (01:615:201, Section H1)
Fall 2021

Lecture Time  
Tu/Thu 3:00-4:20pm
Lecture Location  
LSH-B267
Course Website  
Canvas

Instructor  
Troy Messick
E-mail  
troy.messick@rutgers.edu
Office  
18 Seminary Place Room 302
Office Hours  
Thursday 10am-noon (or by appointment)

About the course

This course is an introduction to the study of linguistics and contemporary linguistic theory. Linguistics is a broad term that encompasses basically anything having to do with the scientific study of human language. Linguists use mathematical systems (often called ‘formal systems’) to develop precise theories that help us understand the incredibly rich cognitive processes that allow us to use language to communicate with each other, conduct an internal monologue, and so much more.

In this course, we’ll focus on several key areas of modern linguistic theory: morphology (the study of words and word formation), syntax (the study of how sentences and phrases are built and structured), semantics (the study of how words and phrases are associated with meaning), and phonetics and phonology (the study of “speech sounds”, broadly — scare quotes because we can also study the phonetics and phonology of signed languages!).

Course learning goals

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

• Understand significant subfields within linguistics.

• Understand, create, and manipulate representations and analyses in phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, phonetics, and phonology.

Department learning goals met by this course:

• Students will reason about language; identify how incorrect or irrational assumptions and prejudices distort understanding of language; demonstrate knowledge about language in the world including a sophisticated understanding of linguistic and cultural variation, and evaluate popular views on the nature of human languages and their speakers.

• Majors and Minors will also demonstrate technical mastery over the tools of linguistic analysis in syntax, phonology and semantics and apply linguistic theory in these areas. They will investigate linguistic data and analyze it; demonstrate strong problem-solving skills; extend their understanding of theoretical linguistics into other domains of linguistic research; apply the techniques of linguistics that they have learned in the core courses to new topics; and access current research in the field. Some students will investigate language in a broader context, where it can be systematically and rationally explored using their sophisticated understanding how language works.
This course has been approved as a Core Curriculum Course and satisfies the following Core Curriculum learning goals:

- Understand the nature of human languages and their speakers. [AHq]
- Apply effective and efficient mathematical or other formal processes to reason and to solve problems [QR]

Readings

You do not need to buy a textbook for this course. Required readings are posted as pdf files on Canvas within the corresponding module (e.g., the Phonetics reading can be found in the Phonetics Module).

Grades

Your final grade for this course is based on a mix of homework assignments, midterm and final exams, and attendance/participation (both in lecture and recitation). The percentage-wise breakdown is below. You also have the opportunity to earn 2% extra credit by participating in experiments (more on that below)

I. 6 out of 8 assignments (lowest 2 dropped) 40%
II. 3 Honors assignments 20%
III. Midterm and Final Exam 30% (15% each)
IV. Participation 10%

Homework

Eight (8) homework assignments are distributed regularly throughout the semester via the course website on the Friday before it is due. The weeks during which homework assignments are due are indicated on the course schedule. Homework must be turned in no later than Friday of that week via the course website. Your lowest two assignments will be dropped from your final grade. Students must complete and submit their own original work for each assignment.

Homework assignments are used to gauge how well each student is absorbing the material. The assignments may at times seem difficult. If you find yourself struggling with an assignment, please contact your TA or the instructor or attend office hours.

Honors Assignments

Three (3) additional honors assignment will be due throughout the semester based on additional readings/media assigned in class. Students must work on these assignments individually. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage students to think about how what we are learning about language in the class can have wider implications out in the real world.
Exams

There are two (2) exams given throughout the semester: one midterm and one final. The midterm is given during our regularly scheduled class time in the same lecture hall. You will have all class period to complete the midterm. The final will be during the scheduled time for finals given out by the university and it is **not** cumulative. The midterm and final will be the same length and will consist of questions based on data sets, short answer and fill in the blank/multiple choice questions.

Participation

Students are encouraged to participate in class by asking and answering questions, completing in class work and contributing to ongoing discussions. Participation grades are determined by the rubric below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Participation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Student participates (asks questions, answers questions, contributes to discussion) multiple times each class.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Student participates at least once per class.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Student participates on a consistent basis, but not every class.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Student rarely participates.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Student never participates.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequent and unexcused absences will likely make it difficult for you to succeed in the course. If you need to miss a class, use the University absence reporting website (sims.rutgers.edu/ssra) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Given the circumstances, please stay home if you are feeling ill. All assignments and in class work can be made up. Health and safety is more important than attending class.

Extra Credit

- Some faculty and graduate students in the Department of Linguistics do experimental research on language. This research depends on the participation of undergraduate participants.

- You have the option of participating in Linguistics experiments during the semester. Each experiment usually takes between 20 and 45 minutes.

- Experiments are offered through the Linguistics department experiment management system (sona): http://rutgerslinguistics.sona-systems.com/. Towards the beginning of the semester, your name and email will be added to the experiment system. You will be issued an anonymous id to participate in experiments through this system. Once Linguistics experiments are posted, you can sign up online. Note that this system is different from the psychology pool, and you should not use a psychology ID to log in to the system.

- Any student enrolled in a Linguistics undergraduate course is eligible to participate in Linguistics experiments, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language status, or impairments, disorders, or disabilities (as long as his/her instructor provides the opportunity). You cannot be denied participation for any of these reasons.
• You have the right to not participate in experiments to earn extra credit. You may speak with me about possible research alternatives, such as reading a pre-approved scholarly article in linguistics and writing a 2-page paper summarizing it.

**Academic Integrity**

Please review the university’s academic integrity policy: academicintegrity.rutgers.edu. It’s unethical and unacceptable to pass off anyone else’s work as your own.

**Student Services at Rutgers**

**Disability Services**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order, to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

**Just In Case Web App**

http://codu.co/cee05e
Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

**Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

**Scarlet Listeners**

Mask Policy
In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the University community, masks must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks must be worn during class meetings; any student not wearing a mask will be asked to leave.

Masks should conform to CDC guidelines and should completely cover the nose and mouth: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-facecoverings.html

Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app.

Schedule (Tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Tuesday Class</th>
<th>Thursday Class</th>
<th>Friday Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sep 7-10</td>
<td>Phonetics I</td>
<td>Phonetics II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sep 14-17</td>
<td>Phonetics III</td>
<td>Phonetics IV</td>
<td>HW 1 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sep 21-24</td>
<td>Phonology I</td>
<td>Phonology II</td>
<td>HA 1 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sep 28-Oct 1</td>
<td>Phonology III</td>
<td>Phonology IV</td>
<td>HW 2 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 5-8</td>
<td>Phonology V</td>
<td>Midterm Review</td>
<td>HW 3 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 12-15</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Go over Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 19-22</td>
<td>Morphology I</td>
<td>Morphology II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 26-29</td>
<td>Morphology III</td>
<td>Morphology IV</td>
<td>HW 4 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 2-5</td>
<td>Syntax I</td>
<td>Syntax II</td>
<td>HA 2 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 9-12</td>
<td>Syntax III</td>
<td>Syntax IV</td>
<td>HW 5 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 16-19</td>
<td>Semantics I</td>
<td>Semantics II</td>
<td>HW 6 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>Semantics III</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Nov 30-Dec 3</td>
<td>Semantic/Pragmatics</td>
<td>Pragmatics I</td>
<td>HW 7 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Dec 7-10</td>
<td>Pragmatics II</td>
<td>Final Review</td>
<td>HW 8 due</td>
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</tbody>
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**Honors Assignment 3** is due Friday **December 17th** by midnight.

The final exam time is Tuesday **December 21st from 12:00PM-3:00PM**