

LING 201 H - Honors Introduction to Linguistic Theory

Rutgers University Department of Linguistics | Fall 2023
(01:615:201:H1)

INFO

Schedule: Mondays & Thursdays, 8:30 - 9:50 a.m.
Location: Scott Hall (SC), Room 116
Canvas Site: <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/240380>

Instructor: Gérard Avelino
E-mail: gerard.avelino@rutgers.edu
Office Hours: In person, Mondays, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., 18 Seminary Place Basement;
Additional times (and online meetings) available by appointment.

THE COURSE

This course serves as an introduction to linguistics and contemporary linguistic theory. Linguistics, broadly, encompasses anything to do the scientific study of language. In this course, the focus will be on the basics of formal linguistic theory, which involves the application of mathematical systems to develop precise theories to help us understand the complex cognitive processes that allow humans to communicate and reason using language.

The course will cover the following subfields of linguistics: **morphology**, the study of how words are formed; **syntax**, the study of the structure of phrases and sentences; **semantics**, the study of how words and sentences are composed to obtain meaning; **pragmatics**, the study of how meaning arises in interactional contexts; **phonetics**, the study of the physical component of spoken and signed languages, such as speech sounds and hand movements; and **phonology**, the study of the patterns and perception of speech sounds and their signed counterparts.

This course is a requirement for Linguistics Majors and Minors, as well as a prerequisite for all 300- and 400-level Linguistics courses.

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 morphology, syntax, semantics, phonetics, and phonology

This course meets the following department learning goals:

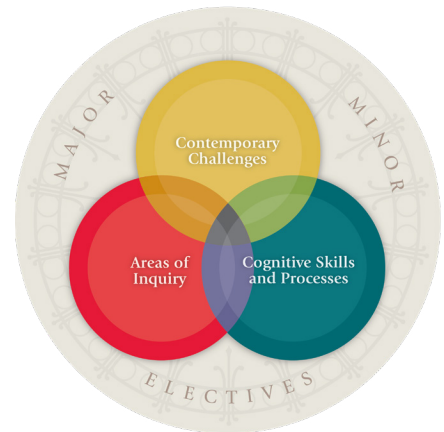
- Students will be able to reason about language scientifically; demonstrate knowledge of crosslinguistic variability and universal patterns in language; evaluate a range of views on the nature, origin, and/or structure of language; and identify what someone knows when they know a language.

- Majors and minors who complete the core courses in Linguistics will demonstrate technical mastery over the tools of linguistic analysis in syntax, phonology, semantics and pragmatics and apply linguistic theory in these areas. They will be able to investigate and analyze linguistic data; demonstrate strong problem-solving skills; extend their understanding of theoretical linguistics into other domains of linguistic research; apply the techniques of linguistics to new topics; and access current research in the field.

This course is an approved **Core Curriculum Course**. As such, it satisfies the following Core Curriculum learning goals for which, upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

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

More information about the Core Curriculum can be found at the following site: <https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/core>



COURSE MATERIALS

Course Website

This course has a website, which can be accessed on [Canvas](#). After logging in with your NetID, find this course listed on your Dashboard or under the Courses tab. **Please check the Canvas site periodically.** Weekly announcements, readings, homework assignments, and other course materials will be made available only through Canvas.

For specific technical requirements or support in using the course website, please visit the Canvas [Getting Started](#), [FAQ](#), or [Help](#) pages.

Readings & Course Materials

You do not need to buy a textbook for this course. Any required readings or course materials will be provided in digital format via the course Canvas site. The course will include readings from the following sources:

- Anderson, C. (2018). *Essentials of Linguistics*. <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/essentialsoflinguistics/>
- Carnie, A. (2007). *Syntax: A generative introduction* (2nd ed.). Blackwell Publishing.
- Department of Linguistics. (2011). *Language files: Materials for an introduction to language and linguistics* (11th ed.). The Ohio State University Press.
- Griffiths, P., Cummins, C. (2017). *An Introduction to English Semantics and Pragmatics*. Edinburgh University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g09x36>
- Hayes, B., Curtiss, S., Szabolcsi, A., Stowell, T., Stabler, E., Sportiche, D., Koopman, H., Keating, P., Munro, P., Hyams, N., Steriade, D. (2000). *Linguistics: An introduction to Linguistic Theory* (V. Fromkin, Ed.). Blackwell Publishing.
- O'Grady, W., Dobrovolsky, M., and Arnoff, M. (Eds.), *Contemporary linguistics: An introduction* (3rd ed.). St. Martin's Press

Evaluation & Required Work

Your success in this course will depend on a combination of homework assignments, class attendance and participation, a midterm exam, and a comprehensive final exam. The final grade will be composed and given a letter grade as follows:

		A	≥ 90%
Assignments	45%	B+	85–89.9%
Honors Projects	15%	B	80–84.9%
Midterm Exam	15%	C+	75–79.9%
Final Exam	15%	C	70–74.9%
Participation	10%	D	60–69.9%
		F	≤ 59.9%

Assignments - 45%

There will be eight homework assignments throughout the semester. For each week with an assignment, the problems will be made available on the course Canvas site after the Monday class. They will then be due one week later, before the next Monday class. Consult the schedule in this syllabus for the weeks when homework will be given.

Late work will not be accepted; any late homework will be given a grade of zero.

Only six of the eight homework assignments will count for your final grade, each weighted equally. **Your lowest two assignment scores will be dropped** at the end of the semester.

Honors Projects - 15%

Two additional assignments will be assigned for this Honors section based on material beyond the main readings. Students must work on these assignments individually. These projects aim to encourage you to think about the wider implications of the study of linguistics and the diversity of the world’s languages.

A. English in North America

You will be asked to write a short report about the [Yale Grammatical Diversity Project’s](#) catalog of phenomena in North American English.

B. Languages of the World

You will be asked to prepare a 5-minute presentation about an understudied language. After a brief introduction to the cultural and geographic context of the language, you must describe one or two features in that language that differ from English.

Midterm and Final Exam - 15% each

The **Midterm Exam** will be distributed online on the course Canvas site on **Thursday, Oct. 19**. It will be available on Canvas until the end of the day (11:59 p.m.). It will cover material from the first half of the semester.

The **Final Exam** will be held in person on **Monday, Dec. 15**, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. It will mostly cover the material discussed in the second half of the class, with a few items from the first.

For both exams, you may consult your notes and class material, but you may not discuss the problems or collaborate on the answers with anyone.

Without proof of illness, religious observance, or other previously-discussed accommodation, **missed exams will result in a score of zero.**

Attendance & Participation - 10%

Active participation is key to success in this class. This includes attending each class session, listening attentively to the lecture material, asking questions, completing in-class practice exercises, and collaborating with your peers for discussions and activities.

Attendance will be recorded. For any reason that you cannot make it to class, **please both use the University absence self-reporting site (<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>) and send me an e-mail.**

Please do not come to class if you are unwell. This goes for any illness or adverse condition whether physical or mental. Rest assured that there will always be ways to make up for in-class participation and any missed material; please send me an e-mail to discuss your options.

If you do not communicate with me at all about an absence, that absence will be marked as unexcused. Each unexcused absence will incur a 10% reduction in your participation grade. Every three unexcused absences will incur a further 10% reduction in your overall grade.

For more information on the Rutgers policy on attendance and class cancellation, please visit the SAS policy page here: <https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/policies/attendance-and-cancellation-of-classes>.

Extra Credit

Up to 2% extra credit can be earned in this class.

Primarily, extra credit can be earned through participation in experiments conducted by faculty and graduate students at the Department of Linguistics. All students enrolled in Linguistics undergraduate courses at Rutgers are automatically added into the [SONA](#) online experiment system and are eligible to participate. Keep an eye out for e-mail notifications for available studies to participate in. (Please note that this system is separate from the Psychology Department's.)

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. You cannot be denied participation for any of these reasons.

You have the right to not have to take part in an experiment to receive extra credit. Please get in touch with me for alternatives (e.g., a short research paper or article review).

Other opportunities for extra credit may be announced in class if and when they are made available.

Warning Grades

If, by the Midterm Exam, a student has not been performing adequately in class, either due to poor homework grades or poor attendance, a Warning Grade may be assigned to them. These are not permanent; they are simply a signal that a student should speak to the instructor to make sure that any problems could be addressed and any expectations clarified.

SCHEDULE

Weekly Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change; always check the course Canvas site for the most up-to-date schedule.

During each week marked with a homework assignment, that week's assignment will be made available after the Monday class. It will then be due one week later, before the next week's Monday class. Feedback and grades will be made available, to the best of my ability, before the Thursday after the homework is due.

Honors Projects, as well as any make-up work, must be completed by **Dec. 11**. Presentations will be scheduled throughout the semester.

Please note the following dates:

Oct. 19, Thu | **Midterm exam**. This will be distributed online on Canvas and will be available until the end of the day. We will not meet in person that day.

Oct. 23, Mon | **Class will not meet**. Office hours will also be canceled for the day. You can use this time to work on your Honors Projects.

Nov. 21, Tue | **Thursday schedule**. All your Thursday classes will meet on this day, instead, as Nov. 23 is Thanksgiving.

Dec. 18, Mon | **Final exam**. This will be held in person in our regular classroom. Note that the timeslot won't be our usual one; the exam will run from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Don't be late.

Week	Mon	Thu	Topic	HW
1		7 Sep	Introduction	
2	11 Sep	14 Sep	Languages & Linguistics	
3	18 Sep	21 Sep	Morphology	HW1
4	25 Sep	28 Sep	Morphology	HW2
5	2 Oct	5 Oct	Syntax	HW3
6	9 Oct	12 Oct	Syntax	HW4
7	16 Oct	19 Oct	Review / Midterm	
8	23 Oct	26 Oct	Semantics	
9	30 Oct	2 Nov	Semantics	HW5
10	6 Nov	9 Nov	Semantics / Pragmatics	HW6
11	13 Nov	16 Nov	Pragmatics	
12	20 Nov	21 Nov	Phonetics	HW7
13	27 Nov	30 Nov	Phonology	
14	4 Dec	7 Dec	Phonology	HW8
15	11 Dec		Review	
16	18 Dec		Final Exam (8:00 to 11:00 a.m.)	

Office Hours

I am available for individual and group meetings to discuss the course material, any questions related to (but not specifically in) the homework, or any other topic regarding linguistics and academia, such as your personal projects or career plans. Please note that I will not completely re-teach the material during office hours.

Drop-in, in-person office hour will be held every Monday from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. You will find me in one of the basement offices Linguistics Department at 18 Seminary Place. If you are unavailable during that time, please e-mail me. We can set an appointment for either an in-person or Zoom meeting depending on my availability.

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.

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 website at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>.

Student Support & Mental Wellness

The University has provided a number of resources to you and your fellow students to support not only success in your academic endeavors but also your safety and wellbeing.

- **Student Success Essentials:** A portal with links to resources for financial assistance, academic support, and health services, among others. <https://success.rutgers.edu>
- **Student Support Services:** Here find links to academic advising, learning and writing support, career services, and other resources available to you. <https://www.rutgers.edu/academics/student-support>
- **The Learning Centers:** The Learning Centers offer free services such as peer tutoring, academic coaching, writing tutoring, professional development, and other programs for enhancing your academic career. <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>
- **Rutgers Libraries:** The University Libraries are a great resource for finding information to improve your research. <https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/>
- **Bias Incident Reporting:** If you are a victim or witness of a bias incident, please report it to the Office of Student Affairs here: <https://studentaffairs.rutgers.edu/bias-incident-reporting>
- **Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services:** If you are a veteran of the United States Armed Forces, resources and support is available here for you. <https://veterans.rutgers.edu>
- **Student Health Services:** Take advantage of your Student Health Center! If you need any medical services or mental health assistance, give them a visit: <http://health.rutgers.edu/>
- **Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS):** <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>
- **Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance:** <http://vpva.rutgers.edu/>

Academic Integrity

Rutgers University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. By enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for familiarizing yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy (<http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>) and the possible penalties (including suspension and expulsion) for violating the policy. As per the policy, all suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: copying homework answers, cheating on exams, plagiarism, failure to cite sources, fabrication, using ideas or words without attribution, sabotage, and aiding others in committing a violation.

Communication & Civility

If you have any questions, comments, concerns, suggestions for improvement, or any other message regarding something that involves this class, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. For our mutual security, e-mails must be from your rutgers.edu addresses. Please expect a reply within the next two working days, and within normal working hours.

All communication in this class, whether in person or online, must be civil and polite. We should all expect professionalism, courtesy, and honesty from each other. Should you encounter ideas in class that are difficult or controversial, please feel free to raise the issue in a respectful manner. Harassment, intimidation, coercion, and any other abusive or prejudicial behavior is unacceptable. Our class is a space where respect for the diverse backgrounds, identities, and perspectives of each individual is paramount.