

Syllabus: LING 5001

Introduction to Linguistics

University of Minnesota
Fall 2017

Course

LING 5001 Introduction to Linguistics

Tuesday and Thursday, 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Elliott S225

<http://www.dustinalfonso.net/teaching/2017gintro>

Instructor

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Office hours: Wednesday 1:00 – 3:00

Please let me know in advance if you plan on coming to office hours Elliott Hall S313

Course description

This course is an introduction to linguistics at a graduate-level. The focus of this class is to learn basic techniques of linguistic analysis, and to learn about the “big issues” that animate research in linguistics. Students should leave with an understanding of how linguistics fits into cognitive science more generally, and the philosophy underlying the generative approach to linguistics, as well as the perspectives of some of its critics.

Workload and grade calculation

- Participation 10%
- Homeworks 30%

- Journals 20%
- Final Paper 40%:
 - Proposal 10%
 - Final Draft 30%

Your **letter grade** for the class will be assigned on the following scale.

A	93–100%	B	83–87%	C	73–77%	D	60–65%
A–	90–93%	B–	80–83%	C–	70–73%	F	0–60%
B+	87–90%	C+	77–80%	D+	65–70%		

Policies and other remarks

Final paper. At the end of the semester you’ll be asked to write a final paper examining one of the issues that we addressed in class. This paper should be 8–10 pages. You may either critically review the literature on some phenomenon that we discussed in class, or find some other topic in language that you are interested in.

I will ask that you turn in a proposal on days specified in the schedule. The proposal due date is to force you to have started investigating some topic earlier in the semester, and the rough draft is intended as a way for me to give you feedback. I will also give you feedback on your writing style, formatting conventions, etc., in addition to the argument. I expect a “linguistics” writing style – numbered sections, properly formatted examples, concise introduction and conclusions, foreshadowed conclusions, etc. I will give a handout on recommendations for writing style, and provide a rubric for how I will grade the final papers in due time.

Participation. Participation and attendance are crucial. Although there is no participation grade or attendance grade, much of the material is not based on any textbook or any resource outside of class. For that reason, the lectures and the handouts are the definitive authority on the class material. Additionally, I expect that students come to class prepared to discuss the readings in detail, when readings are assigned. I will post the handouts on the course website in case you miss a class, but it is your responsibility to understand it. If you need something clarified, your first course of action is to e-mail me, and your second course of action is to come to office hours.

Homework. There will be three homeworks in this class – syntax, semantics, and phonology. You will have two weeks to complete each homework. My official late policy is that you will lose a letter grade per day, i.e., if your homework is late but turned in on the same day, you will receive a B. If your homework is turned in the next day, then you will receive a C, etc. My unofficial late policy is **don’t turn in homeworks late**. You won’t win any favors by turning in something late. I will try to make the homeworks available before they are assigned, if you would prefer to get a head start on them. Homeworks must be submitted by e-mail in pdf format.

Journal. You will be asked to write two journal entries. You will be asked to find and read a paper on that topic that we did not assign in class, and write a 1–2 page summary of their findings or argument. This is intended to get you a reading primary literature. The first journal entry will be due around midterm time, on the same date as the final paper proposal. The second journal will be due during the 13th week of classes. A recommended strategy would be to find two papers that argue against one another, and design a final paper around this debate.

Tentative Schedule:

This schedule is tentative.

Wk	Date	Topics	Readings	Notes
1	09/05	Introduction	Chomsky (1965); Dąbrowska (2015)	
2	09/12	Syntax		
3	09/19	Poverty of the Stimulus I	Lasnik & Lidz (2016); Crain & Nakayama (1987)	
4	09/26	Poverty of the Stimulus II	Perfors <i>et al</i> (2006); Ambridge <i>et al</i> 2014	HW1 Due
5	10/03	Semantics		
6	10/10	Syntactic Bootstrapping I	Naigles (1990); Syrett & Lidz (2016)	Proposal Due
7	10/17	Syntactic Bootstrapping II	Harrigan <i>et al</i> (2016); Pinker (1994)	HW2 & J1 Due
8	10/24	Phonology		
9	10/31	Speech Perception I	Werker & Tees (1984); Werker (1995)	
10	11/07	Speech Perception II	Yee & Sedivy (2006); Allopenna <i>et al</i> (1998)	HW 3 Due
11	11/14	Language Variation I	Senghas <i>et al</i> (2004); Goldwin-Meadow & Brentari (2017)	
12	11/21	Language Variation II	Everett (2005); Nevins <i>et al</i> (2009)	
13	11/28	Islands I	Ambridge & Goldberg (2008); Hofmeister & Sag (2010)	
14	12/05	Islands II	Phillips (2013); de Villiers & Roeper (1995)	J2 Due
15	12/12	(Spillover Region)		Final Paper Due

Bibliography

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