

# LING 2301: Introduction to the Study of Human Language

## Fall 2011

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**Section Information:** LING 2301-004

**Place and Time of Class Meetings:** Trimble Hall 110 — TuTh 2.00pm–3.20pm

**Description of Course Content:** LING 2301 provides an overview of an inarguably fundamental human capacity: language. Students will consider a variety of language-related topics in the context of the physical sciences, cognitive sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Course readings provide students with exposure to many of the basic concepts and terms used in the study of language and linguistics. Lectures complement the readings by further elucidating key concepts and exemplifying these notions.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- identify and explain many of the basic questions investigated by linguists, in order to situate the discipline of linguistics in the broader intellectual landscape;
- describe and illustrate the features shared by all languages, in order to distinguish those aspects of human language attributable to genetics/biology from those that are socially conditioned;
- analyse communicative signs (icons, words, sentences), in order to differentiate form, meaning, and function within a sign and to justify the use of a particular form in a specific context;
- compare the characteristics of normative and non-normative/developing language behaviors in order to recommend appropriate measures when interacting with language-limited individuals (especially children and aphasic adults);
- analyse the structure of interpersonal interactions, in order to assess the ways in which language both reflects and creates social relationships;
- identify major historical events that have shaped modern English, in order to explain contemporary patterns of language use and sociolinguistic attitudes; and
- debate the relative merits of monolingualism vs. multilingualism, in order to make more informed decisions about relevant social, educational, and legal policies.

**Requirements:** A desire to learn about human language.

**Required Textbook and Other Course Materials:** Clark, Virginia P., Paul A. Eschholz, Alfred F. Rosa, and Beth Lee Simon. 2008. *Language: Introductory Readings*. Bedford / St. Martin's. 7th edition. ISBN: 0-312-45018-4. Additional online readings (see below).

## Description of Major Assignments and Examinations:

1. **CLASS PREPARATION QUIZZES** ..... **10%**  
During the semester, there will be a series of brief in-class quizzes to be given on days when no exam is scheduled. Quizzes will be given in the beginning of the class. The format of each quiz may vary: generally they will be multiple choice and/or true/false. The material covered on any given quiz will come from the course reading(s) assigned for that day. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** will there be any make-up quizzes; instead, each student will be allowed to drop his/her lowest several quiz grades (depending on how many are actually given).
2. **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS** ..... **30%**
  - There will be homework assignments. The specific content of each assignment will be announced in class; due dates are noted in the schedule. If you complete all homework assignments, your lowest homework grade will be dropped.
  - Homework assignments will be collected at the **BEGINNING** of the class on which they are due.
  - Under **VERY FEW CIRCUMSTANCES** will any assignments be accepted late without penalty. If you know you will be gone the day an assignment is due, make arrangements to turn it in ahead of time. Late assignments will only be accepted up until a week past the due date and will be penalised one letter grade per class day late.
3. **IN-CLASS EXAMINATIONS** ..... **50%**
  - There will be three in-class exams, dates noted on syllabus. Each is worth 10% of the total grade.
  - Exams will cover material from course readings, class lectures, and any videos shown in class. Be sure to review homework assignments and quizzes as well.
  - The exam format may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay questions.
  - The final exam will be comprehensive and is worth 20% of the total grade.
4. **CLASS PARTICIPATION** ..... **10%**
  - The class participation grade is based in part on attendance and in part on participation in class discussion. If you miss more than 3 classes, your participation grade will be lowered half a letter grade per absence.

**Grading Policy:** The determination of a student's final percentage grade is described in the above section. The final grade percentage-to-letter-grade scale employed is:

A	90%–100%
B	80%–89%
C	70%–79%
D	60%–69%
F	0%–59%

**Attendance Policy:** Class attendance is required. If you miss more than 3 classes, your participation grade will be lowered half a letter grade per absence. You are responsible for the material presented in class lectures and for any handouts passed out in class; for your own benefit, come to class. But if you must miss a class, get notes and information from another student, do the reading, and do the assignments.

**Make-up Exam Policy:** You will be allowed to take a make-up only if your absence occurs as the result of an extreme and reasonably unforeseeable circumstance (e.g. sudden serious illness, major family crisis). Should you find yourself in such a predicament, you must contact the professor by phone or email before 8.00pm of the exam date to request a make-up. Students who miss an exam but do not notify the professor as specified herein will receive a grade of zero (0).

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**Course Objectives:** The goal of LING 2301 is to change students' relationship with language by challenging and enriching thinking about language and raising consciousness of the role that language plays in the minds and communities of humans. As the semester progresses, students should be increasingly prepared to enter into well-informed discussions about the primary themes of the course:

1. All languages are systematic, manifesting the complementary properties of rule-governance and creativity;
2. Language acquisition and use are rooted in both cognitive (internal) and social (external) factors;
3. Languages reflect both our collective humanity and our socio-historical diversity; as such, all languages are worthy of study and respect.

These course themes are supported by reference to specific topics as covered in the readings, lectures, and class discussions.

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## Classroom Policies

The following policies have been instituted to ensure an optimal learning experience for all students.

- Please arrive on time. If you arrive after class has begun, please enter as unobtrusively as possible.
- Please plan to stay for the entire class meeting. If you need to leave early, please let me know beforehand and sit near the door and exit as unobtrusively as possible.
- Please prepare for each class meeting by completing all writing/reading assignments beforehand.
- Please come to class prepared to engage your mind as fully as possible. To this end, I respectfully insist that you:
  - leave your cell phone off at all times;
  - use a laptop computer only for taking course notes:— no surfing the net, IM-ing, etc.; and
  - limit conversation to class-related topics.
- Please feel free to engage in classroom discussions. In doing so, keep your comments relevant and respectful to me, your colleagues, and the learning process.

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## Miscellaneous Things

**Please communicate with me.** If you are struggling in the course because of family difficulties, sickness, or simply because the material is difficult, let me know what is going on. If you do not communicate about why an assignment was late, etc., I will assume I should count off for it.

**Please do come see me if you are having trouble or simply wish to discuss what you are learning.** Feel free to ask for an appointment if my office hours are not convenient for you. That said, remember to check the class website for any handouts you may need.

**If you must miss class on the day an assignment is due,** either drop it off early during my office hours, turn it into the Linguistics Office (403 Hammond Hall) for them to put in my box and send me an email to say you have done so, or else email me the assignment by the due date & our class time.

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**Projected Course Schedule:** (dates are approximate; change is likely)

Wk	Tuesday	Thursday
0		<p><b>25 Aug: What is linguistics?</b></p> <p><b>Why does language matter?</b></p>
1	<p><b>30 Aug: Properties of Language</b></p> <p>Ch. 1, Ch 2. (pp. 21–24, 30–33)</p>	<p><b>1 Sep: Phonetics: the sounds of language</b></p> <p>Ch. 6 (pp. 87–97), Ch. 7</p>
2	<p><b>6 Sep: Phonology</b></p> <p>Ch. 6 (pp. 97–107), Ch. 8</p>	<p><b>8 Sep: Morphology</b></p> <p>Chs. 9 &amp; 10</p>
3	<p><b>13 Sep: Applied Morphology</b></p> <p>Chs. 11 &amp; 12</p>	<p><b>15 Sep: Syntax: the structure of sentences</b></p> <p>Ch. 13</p>
4	<p><b>20 Sep: Applied Syntax</b></p>	<p><b>22 Sep: Language Universals &amp; Typology/Language Myths</b></p> <p>Ch. 14 (pp. 235–247), Ch. 32</p>
5	<p><b>27 Sep: Writing</b></p> <p>Chs. 23 &amp; 50</p>	<p><b>29 Sep: Writing cont. &amp; Exam Review</b></p> <p>Ch. 52</p>
6	<p><b>4 Oct: EXAM 1</b></p>	<p><b>6 Oct: Semantics: Lexical Meaning</b></p> <p>Chs. 15 &amp; 16</p>
7	<p><b>11 Oct: Pragmatics: Meaning in Context</b></p> <p>Chs. 17 &amp; 18</p>	<p><b>13 Oct: Brain and Language</b></p> <p>Ch. 40</p>
8	<p><b>18 Oct: Aphasia: Language Breakdown</b></p> <p>Aphasia: 1st-Hand account [online]</p> <p>Aphasia: Broca &amp; Wernicke [online]</p>	<p><b>20 Oct: First Language Acquisition (Baby Talk etc.)</b></p> <p>Chs. 42 &amp; 43</p>

9	<p><b>25 Oct: The Tragic Case of Genie</b></p> <p><b>(Secrets of a Wild Child)</b></p> <p>Chs. 44 &amp; 45</p>	<p><b>27 Oct: Bilingualism/ESL</b></p> <p>Chs. 33, 25, &amp; 54 (pp. 842–853)</p> <p>“English First” article [online]</p>
10	<p><b>1 Nov: EXAM 2</b></p>	<p><b>3 Nov: Language &amp; Identity</b></p> <p>Chs. 24, 25</p>
11	<p><b>8 Nov: Language &amp; Identity cont.</b></p> <p><b>(American Tongues)</b></p> <p>Chs. 22 &amp; 26</p>	<p><b>10 Nov: Language &amp; Identity cont.:</b></p> <p><b>Ebonics, Spanglish etc.</b></p> <p>Ch. 28</p> <p>“Spanglish” article [online]</p>
12	<p><b>15 Nov: Historical Linguistics (The Story of English)</b></p> <p>Chs. 19 &amp; 20</p>	<p><b>17 Nov: A Brief History of English</b></p> <p>Chs. 21, Ch. 14 (248–250)</p>
13	<p><b>22 Nov: Languages in Contact: Pidgins &amp; Creoles</b></p> <p>Ch. 30</p>	<p>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</p>
14	<p><b>29 Nov: Language Ecology: Language Death</b></p> <p><b>(The Linguists)</b></p> <p>Chs. 29 &amp; 34</p> <p>Navajo “Wind-Talkers” [online]</p>	<p><b>1 Dec: EXAM 3</b></p>
15	<p><b>6 Dec: English as a Global Language</b></p> <p><b>Linguae Francae</b></p> <p>Ch. 47</p>	<p><b>8 Dec: Language Policy and “English Only”</b></p> <p>‘Why the US needs a lang. policy’ [online]</p> <p>Baron-‘Spanish, English, New Nativism’ [online]</p> <p>Baron-‘English spoken here?’ [online]</p>
16	<p><b>13 Dec: FINAL EXAM</b></p> <p><b>2.00pm–4.30pm</b></p>	

## University Policies

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

**Academic Integrity:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form, including but not limited to "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2). Suspected violations of academic integrity standards will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

While the Department of Linguistics and TESOL hopes to foster a sense of community in which students can enhance their educational experience by conferring with each other about the lectures, readings, and assignments, all work submitted must be the product of each student's own effort. Students are expected to know and honor the standards of academic integrity followed by American universities; ignorance of these standards is not an excuse for committing an act of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism). If you have questions, please speak with your instructor, your academic advisor, or the department chair.

Please be advised that departmental policy requires instructors to formally file charges with the Office of Student Conduct, following procedures as laid out for faculty (<http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/faculty.html>), as well as notify the department chair of the filing of the charges.

**Student Support Services Available:** The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources) for more information.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the course syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

**Librarian to Contact:** For linguistics-related help from a UT Arlington librarian, contact Jody Bailey at [jbailey@uta.edu](mailto:jbailey@uta.edu).

**Grade Grievance Policy:** Students who believe that they have grounds for a course-related grievance are advised to review the policies provided at [http://web.uta.edu/catalog/content/general/academic\\_regulations.aspx#10](http://web.uta.edu/catalog/content/general/academic_regulations.aspx#10).

**Auditors:** The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. However, with instructor permission, Department of Linguistics and TESOL faculty, staff, and students enrolled in a linguistics/TESOL program may be able to sit in on a course. These courses cannot be used to satisfy any degree or program requirements/electives, nor will any credit (including retroactive credit) be granted.