

HOW LANGUAGE WORKS

LING A101 SECTION 001 CRN 36953

SPRING 2020

A FULLY ONLINE COURSE

THE OFFICIAL SYLLABUS: The official syllabus and schedule for this course can be found on the Blackboard site for the course, accessible via <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/classes/>. Please note that you are required to read and become familiar with this syllabus as part of taking this course. Course assignments and other information are available through that site, as well.

INSTRUCTOR: I am David Bowie, a professor in the Department of English. My office is in ADM 101P, and for general inquiries I can be reached by email at david.bowie@alaska.edu. However, for course-related inquiries, please *only* use the secure messaging function built into the Blackboard site for the class. Also, if I happen to be in my office I can be reached by phone there at 907.786.4359, but you should be warned that Blackboard's message system is a much more reliable way of getting in touch with me (outside of office hours, of course) than anything else. Because this course is online, I will be holding office hours simultaneously in person in my office and online using Zoom; the link to my Zoom office hours is <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/274616224>.

TIME ZONE: The time zone for this course is the time zone local to Anchorage, Alaska (that is, depending on the time of year, Alaska Daylight Time or Alaska Standard Time). It is your responsibility to make sure that you are working with an understanding of the correct course time at any given point in the semester.

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours this semester are 12:00 N to 1:30 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays (except for university holidays, when they are of course not held) or by appointment. I will be in my office at those times, and so they're a good time to catch me in person and via Zoom. Please note, though, that whether you come into my office or contact me using Zoom while I'm already in consultation with another student, I'll ask you to wait until I'm done with the other student before I confer with you so that I can focus on one student's needs at a time. Please don't take it personally if you're asked to wait a few minutes—doing so will let me avoid multitasking that part of my job.

EMAIL RESPONSE TIMES: As stated above, I ask you to avoid email and use Blackboard's secure messaging function for written contact about course-related topics. (Part of the reason for this is that it allows me, if there is a need, to discuss certain issues that would actually be, according to the university system's general counsel's office, a violation of federal law to discuss over regular email.) Once you have sent me a message, I may need some time to properly consider the questions that you have; therefore, I ask for up to a full day to respond. (Note: This is a full day not counting weekends and university holidays. I am likely to check my messages over the weekend, but I don't guarantee it.) Also, sometimes students send me messages and it's unclear whether they're actually making an inquiry or just pointing something out, so please make it clear in what you send me if you would like a response. Naturally enough, of course, if you requested a response but 24 non-weekend/holiday hours have gone by and I haven't responded, then you should feel free to start to nag me about whatever issue you brought up.

COURSE PREREQUISITES: This course has no prerequisites.

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OUTCOMES, AND OBJECTIVES: The university's description of this 3-credit course, in its entirety, states that it "introduces systematic analysis of human language and description of its phonological structure, grammatical structure, distribution, diversity, and historical development". Broadly stated, then, this course is intended to provide an overview of a number of the subfields of linguistics. As such, you will of course learn specifics about things such as the sounds used in human

languages, but you will also learn larger underlying principles underlying the structure of human language generally. There are specific outcomes listed in the university's curriculum guide for this course; these state that by the end of the course, you should be able to

- use linguistic concepts to analyze the structure of sounds, words, sentences/clauses, and interactions in language;
- discuss examples, reasons, and linguistic impacts of historical shifts in phonology, morphology, syntax, and social interaction;
- describe the impact of physiological, cognitive, and social factors on language development and use;
- and describe linguistic and non-linguistic factors that affect first- and second-language acquisition.

I also hope for this course to teach you principles underlying the use of objective evidence to provide support for claims about the world at large—or, in other words, how to think *scientifically*. This objective seems to frighten many students somehow—I guess it's very easy to tap in to the cultural vibe that holds that science is somehow a really, really difficult thing to understand and use. As you actually see the results of analyses of language in this class, though, you will find out that it's not really a hideously difficult thing to do, it's just a matter of looking at the world in a slightly different—and, surprisingly to some, very interesting—way. Also, since the course objectives listed above are rather broad, each unit of the course has specific outcomes and objectives designed to implement the broader course objectives, and these are listed in the introduction to each unit in the attached schedule.

Finally, this academic year the Department of English is, as a whole, focusing on one specific outcome for its baccalaureate program—specifically, that students will develop the ability to “interpret texts in context with reasoned evidence drawn from English Studies’ research methods”. This course has some assignments designed to assess that (with a linguistic spin on what things like *text* and *evidence* mean, of course). This shouldn't affect your experience much if at all, but I wanted to let you know about it.

TEXTS AND READINGS: This course has one textbook: *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics*, twelfth edition, produced by the Ohio State University Department of Linguistics (ISBN 9780814252703). (Note that the edition is important here—please make sure you get the twelfth.) There are additional required readings linked to the course homepage. Readings of a few pages are assigned for every class session.

The readings from the textbook are listed in the syllabus with LF (for *Language Files*, naturally enough), followed by the chapter number(s) and name(s) you are to read; other assigned readings (which are distributed online via the Blackboard site for the course) are listed as “Online” followed by the title of the link. So, for example, if you were assigned the sections of *Language Files* that deal with language teaching and speech pathology (which run from pages 653 to 657 of the book), that would appear in the syllabus as: LF 17.1 “Language education” to 17.2 “Speech-language pathology and audiology”. (*Language Files* refers to its subchapters as “files”; this is not expected to cause undue confusion.)

One quick but important note about the readings: While the readings do a good job of discussing general issues and providing specific examples of those issues, they will not tie it together into a coherent whole, and they give a minimal amount of information on many of the specifics of how English has changed over the course of time. That will generally come from the additional material that I post—but the required readings provide background I will assume in what I post, and that you will need to know to be able to successfully apply what I present to you. This means that to be completely successful in this course it is necessary to read all of the required readings *when they are assigned*.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS: This is a fully online course, and therefore you need access to a computer with an internet connection (a broadband connection is recommended, but not required) and the software

necessary to access Blackboard. You are also required to be able to read Adobe Acrobat (i.e., PDF) documents, and it is strongly recommended that you submit assignments in that format.

CLASS BEHAVIOR: Everyone in this course is expected to follow the guidelines outlined in the student handbook and other presentations of university policy. In order to allow everyone to participate in this course fully, you are asked to please be respectful of other students in discussions, and remember that there is sometimes a fine line between witty and caustic, and though I'm certainly a fan of lightheartedness in the educational context, you should be aware of that and actively try to stay away from the caustic side. (And to drive that home a bit more, I'll say this directly: Threatening or demeaning language will not be tolerated, and will be reported to the office of the Dean of Students for possible disciplinary action.)

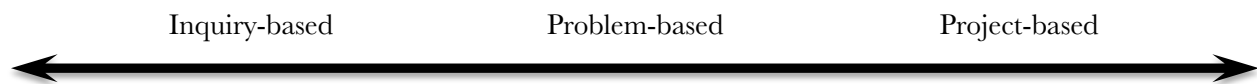
PET PEEVES: In general, I try to be a reasonable human being. Everyone, however, has a few pet peeves, and I am no exception—and it's always useful to be aware of the pet peeves of your teachers. I have three that are of importance to you in this class: lateness, neatness, and writing too much.

- **LATENESS:** All assignments are due by 4:00 PM Anchorage, Alaska local time on the day they are listed due in the syllabus. (Read that last sentence again. Yes, this is a mid-afternoon deadline, and *not* a midnight deadline. This is, without any doubt, the course policy of mine that students most hate. I am, however, firm about it.) Assignments will not be accepted late, even by a few seconds, except in verified cases of hospitalization or a death in one's family (please note the word *verified*). If you will not be able to turn an assignment in by the deadline for any other reason—including university-approved reasons for missing days such as religious observances or participation in certain sporting events—you should complete and submit it early. Note that such reasons as your internet connection not working or the printers on campus being broken or parking or traffic being horrible right before an assignment is due are not valid reasons for turning in an assignment late. (If Blackboard goes down at the deadline for an assignment you are to complete using that system, of course, that is beyond your control and the fault of the university, and so I will extend the deadline in such cases; the parameters of that extension will be announced via Blackboard and email. Please note, however, that this will only be done if Blackboard is actually down—problems resulting from connecting on your end will not result in a deadline adjustment.) I trust Blackboard's timestamps, by the way, so I'd suggest not waiting until the very last moment to submit your assignments—if you do so and Blackboard disagrees and says you're late, sorry, but I'm going with Blackboard. (Please note, relatedly, that I do *not* accept assignments via email, ever—there's too much that can go wrong that way.)
- **NEATNESS:** All assignments are required to be typed unless you are specifically authorized otherwise. Let me repeat that: All assignments are required to be typed unless you are specifically authorized otherwise. Anything you turn in that isn't typed will summarily receive a 0% (yes, that's a zero), with no exceptions made. In addition, if the formatting of your document comes through munged or otherwise illegible, you will not receive credit for what I can't read, and you will not be given an opportunity to correct it. Therefore, I suggest (but do not require) that you turn in your assignments as either plain text or Adobe Acrobat (i.e., PDF) format documents. (Of course, whatever format you use, it must be one that Blackboard understands—so, for example, you may *not* submit Apple Pages format documents. Particularly if you use a Mac, please reread the preceding sentence, because it creates problems for at least one student every semester.)
- **WRITING TOO MUCH:** The assignments may include length limits on answers, expressed in terms of the number of words you are allowed; these are strict limits and any text exceeding the limits will not be read (which may do severe violence to your grade). For your reference, there are about 300 words, plus or minus, on a single page of double-spaced typed text.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND SCHEDULE: The course is divided into seven topical sections: Administrivia, Sound, Structure, Meaning, Acquisition, Community, and Wrapping Up. There are assignments of several types due at various points relatively evenly spaced through the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS, TESTS, AND QUIZZES: As mentioned above, there will be several assignments spread out relatively evenly through the semester. There are a handful of brief assignments spread across the semester to make sure that you can complete the requirements for later, larger assignments; a quiz on the syllabus near the beginning of the semester (which you can take multiple times); and a brief multiple-choice reading quiz given each week after the period for freely adding the class ends. There is also a series of exams and a weekly set of assignments to be completed using Blackboard's discussion boards. Finally, there is a research paper due near the end of the semester designed to get you to think about specific issues in linguistics. (One of the exams is scheduled at the end of the term, but it isn't a traditional cumulative final exam; the energy you would normally put into that sort of test should be directed toward the research paper.)

Let me insert a note here on course assignments before moving on. In general, diagnostic assessments of student learning (or, put more simply, things you get graded on) fall along a continuum like this:



Inquiry-based assessments focus on the memorization of facts (and the most common inquiry-based assessments are quizzes and exams). Problem-based assessments, on the other hand, are focused on the use of facts and processes to analyze a problem (so they often take the form of, e.g., exercises presenting data and asking for a particular method to be used in coming up with a solution to a problem using that data), while project-based assessments focus on the acquisition and development of knowledge, without necessarily centering on assessing the knowledge that is involved (which often involves simulations and fieldwork projects). Of course, it is possible for an assessment tool to mix these methods, which is why they are placed on a continuum rather than being listed as categories.

This course uses a mix of these assessment types—since this is an introductory course many of the assignments are mostly inquiry-based, but the discussion board-based assignments are mostly project-based but to some extent also problem-based, and the research paper, if done correctly, is a mix of all three. When completing your assignments, you may find it useful to consider the type of assignment you are working on at the time, since each type calls for a somewhat different focus on your part.

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit opportunities may be offered during the semester, but they will be offered entirely at my option. (In fact, if I feel like I am being pestered unduly about the possibility of extra credit, I will be less likely to offer it, even if I feel it is warranted; this is simply a reflection of the contrarian nature of my personality.) Any extra credit that is offered will be offered to the entire class—there will be no extra credit possibilities offered only to any particular individual or subset of class members. Any extra credit opportunities will be announced in class along with guidelines for them, how much they are worth, their deadlines, &c. However, there is one type of extra credit that I'm announcing here and only here, in part as a way to reward students who actually read the entire syllabus and in part to improve my own course documents: The first student to inform me (in writing, via Blackboard's internal messaging system) of any typos or errors in my written course materials will receive extra credit in the form of an addition to the final grade; for a simple typo that doesn't change the meaning of anything this may be as low as a tenth of a percentage point for each typo caught, while an actual error of fact that would mislead students could be as high as a full percentage point. Of course, these must be actual errors (e.g., I use British punctuation style for quotation marks, so suggesting changing the sequence "*this thing*", to "*this thing*," isn't correcting an error), and I reserve the right to simplify my presentation of course material, which may mean important nuances are left to the side. In any event, if you point something out and it actually isn't an error, we can have an exchange about that, which could ultimately be useful for both of us.

GRADE ASSIGNMENT: Some assignments, as listed below, will be graded on a pass-fail basis (that is, you get full credit if you complete the assignment, no credit if you don't). All other assignments will be graded in the ordinary way. Grades are reported to the nearest tenth of a point; there will be no further rounding of grades. Note that, regardless of the grade you would have earned on an assignment, if I find evidence of academic dishonesty you will be awarded a 0% (and, therefore, an F) on the assignment. (More on that below.) Assignment grades are awarded according to the following scale:

SCORE	GRADE
90.0% and up	A
80.0 to 89.9%	B
70.0 to 79.9%	C
60.0 to 69.9%	D
below 60.0%	F

Final grades are awarded according to the same scale, and are calculated as shown below:

ITEM	EACH	TOTAL	NOTES
Syllabus quiz	2½%	2½%	Multiple attempts allowed
Academic integrity tutorial	2½%	2½%	Multiple attempts allowed
Research assignments #1 to #5	2%	10%	Multiple types of assessment
Posts #1 to #14	~.71%	10%	Grades reported with associated response
Responses #1 to #13	~.77%	10%	Grades reported with associated post
Reading quizzes #1 to #13	~.77%	10%	Multiple choice format
Exams #1 to #4	10%	40%	Mostly short answer format
Preliminary bibliography	—	—	Completion affects research paper grade
Research paper	15%	15%	Preliminary deadline affects grade

Speaking of grading, if you are unsure about the way I have arrived at a grade that I have given you, you should feel free to ask me for clarification. In addition, if you feel I have made an error in grading, please bring it up with me as soon as possible. I can honestly say that I make mistakes in grading very rarely, but mathematical errors are certainly an occasional possibility. In any event, even if you ask about a grade and there was no error made, you will learn more about the way grades were assigned and how to improve in the future.

If you wish to appeal a grade that you have been given, please make your case in writing and submit it via Blackboard's messaging function *within five calendar days* of the date the grades for that assignment were distributed to the class. Note that I ask for this to be done in writing so that I can properly weigh the points you bring up; I am willing to listen to oral arguments regarding grades, but I will not take action based on them.

INCOMPLETE AND NO BASIS GRADING POLICY: Incompletes may be given when requested by students, but they are given at my discretion. The guideline I will use on whether to give an incomplete is first, whether the student couldn't complete coursework due to one of the acceptable reasons for having coursework deadlines extended as listed elsewhere in the syllabus and second, whether the student has already completed at least half of the work for the class. (As you may have guessed, if the answers to both of those are yes, then an incomplete may be given; if either answer is no, then not.) However, if it is clear that a student wouldn't be able to receive a passing grade even with the time extension that an incomplete grade would allow, I reserve the right to summarily deny a request for an incomplete—might as well save us both the bother and paperwork, right?

You should also recognize that an incomplete grade will revert to a failing grade if it isn't changed within a certain amount of time, per university policy. I will not bug you about finishing your incomplete coursework—if you receive an incomplete, turning in the coursework (and making sure I know you turned it in) is your responsibility. I will, in any event, not change a grade of incomplete to a passing grade for any reason other than your fulfillment of the incomplete contract, even if that means you will lose a scholarship or you'll have to delay graduation or your family will be angry. I really am heartless that way—it ties in to my whole issue with lateness (for more on that, see the “pet peeves” section of this syllabus).

This course is ineligible for deferred grading. I do not award no basis (NB) grades for any reason.

COLLABORATION VS. PLAGIARISM: I very strongly urge you to set up study groups, whether virtual or face-to-face, to discuss the problem sets and research paper and so on. (If nothing else, it's useful to band together in common defense against me.) However, what you turn in must be entirely your own work. This is because I see collaboration as a good thing, but there are limits—and so if I find evidence of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty on any assignment, you will be awarded a 0% (yes, that's a zero) on it and the case will be referred to the appropriate disciplinary office for further action. Academic dishonesty that is in my opinion egregious, or multiple cases of academic dishonesty of any sort, will result in a failing grade for the course—and you should be warned that I have a very low bar regarding what sorts of academic dishonesty I consider “egregious”.

Given that, it seems reasonable to ask what, exactly, academic dishonesty is. Therefore, I refer you to <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/students/conduct/academic-integrity.cshtml>, the university's page on academic integrity, which contains the university's policies along with definitions and examples of academic dishonesty and ways to avoid it. In light of the information at that link, you should know that you have my permission to have others do simple copy-editing of your papers, but not editing for content. You are also allowed (encouraged, actually) to work with consultants at the Writing Center to improve your written work.

Finally, I reserve the right to submit items that you turn in to SafeAssign or other such services to check for plagiarism. I would say that it's not because I don't trust my students, but in the interest of being honest, I'll admit that it's actually because I don't trust my students. That is, most students are quite trustworthy, but I've been burned often enough by now to be realistic in recognizing that there's sometimes a bad apple in a class, and I don't want that one person to mess up life for the rest of you.

MY RESEARCH: My primary research focus is phonetic variation in English, with a particular focus on the role of individuals in language change. So that you know what I'm working on at the moment, here are the research projects that I'm conducting right now; in no particular order, they are:

- The historical development of Western North American regional dialects
- Language and (nonpathological) aging
- Regional variation in Alaskan English
- Language and religious identity

If you're interested in something related to these issues, or for that matter if you're interested in any other sort of research into language, feel free to ask me about it. I'll do what I can to help you learn how to find out more about it.

ON “BAD WORDS” AND RELATED LANGUAGE: This is a course about language, and will include discussion of some of the negative uses of language, including words that are considered not just impolite, but abhorrent. Therefore, you are forewarned that there may be some discussions of words and phrases

and their use which may make you uncomfortable or perhaps even offend you. However, in order to fully and accurately understand language and its use, sometimes we have to analyze uses of language that some may find wrong. When such cases come up I will attempt to handle them with as much sensitivity as possible. Even if you feel that such discussions have no place in the classroom, please be aware that I am not attempting to insult or attack you in any way, but rather that I am attempting to bring us all to an understanding of the ways language is used in real life, and you should recognize that not all language use in real life is entirely positive—but if such a situation occurs and you are disturbed by the language under discussion, please do approach me to discuss it. It would be a conversation I would welcome, and we may, in the best of all possible worlds, both learn something from the interchange.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, and activities, as well as student-to-student sexual harassment. It covers not only employees of the university but also students. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please contact the university's compliance coordinator. The campus compliance coordinator is located in the Office of Equity and Compliance, and can be contacted as listed at <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/about/equity-and-compliance/>.

Relatedly, you should be aware that I (like all faculty members in the University of Alaska system) am what is called a “mandatory reporter” for issues related to sexual harassment and assault. This means that if you choose to disclose such issues to me, I am required to report those to authorities empowered to enforce laws and policies related to sexual harassment and assault. (I will, of course, also help you gain access to appropriate counseling services and such, should you desire help with that. That's not so much because of university regulations, though, and more because that simply seems like a decently human thing to do.)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have a disability that may impair your ability to complete this course successfully without a reasonable accommodation, you are urged to contact Disability Support Services. (Please know that I have neither the expertise nor the authority to determine the presence or absence of a disability that would require accommodations.) Disability Support Services can be reached by phone at 907.786.4530, via text at 907.227.9609, in person in RH 112, or by hearing- or speech-impaired callers using the Alaska Relay service as listed at <http://www.alaskarelay.com/relay-services>. In particular, if you have a hearing or visual impairment, you are urged to contact both Disability Support Services and me about it as early as possible, because (given that this is a course about language and, to a great extent, its documentation through technical means) some necessary accommodations may require advance work on my part to give you the fullest opportunity for learning. (You should be aware that pregnancy is not considered a disability, and so issues relating to pregnancy should go through the university's Title IX compliance coordinator.)

STUDENTS WITH OTHER NEEDS: If you or someone you know needs support, is distressed, or exhibits behavior that concerns you, you can help by making a referral to the University of Alaska Anchorage Care Team. The Care Team's purpose is to promote a safe and productive learning, living, and working environment by assessing the needs of students and helping find support as needed. I encourage you to fill out a referral if you or a classmate may be in need of help. The Care Team can be contacted by phone at 907.786.6065 or via the web form at <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/students/care-team>. (Of course, if there is an emergency, you should call the University Police Department at 907.786.1120 or 911.)

A THOUGHT ON PLACES AND PEOPLES: This course is based in Anchorage, Alaska, which is located in the unceded lands of the Dena'ina Athabascan people, and particularly the Tribal Council of the Native Village of Eklutna. A recognition of that fact—and, since this is an online course, the historical peoples of

the lands on which you find yourself, if elsewhere—may be useful, because it provides a wider context to what you learn in this course. This is particularly the case given that the medium of instruction in this course is English, but English has not always been the language of this place, and English has in fact been used as a tool of oppression and cultural eradication. The content of this course is not value-neutral, and even if that fact isn't always at the foreground of our discussions, it should always at the very least be recognized in the background.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE: Some materials used in this course may be protected by federal copyright law and are only for the use of students enrolled in this course, and only for the purposes associated with this course; it is a violation of US copyright law to disseminate any such materials or to use them outside the course. Materials I have developed myself for this course are copyright ©1998–2020 David Bowie; the weekly lessons are distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International license (license terms available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>), and all other course materials I have created (e.g., this syllabus and the assignment outlines) are distributed under the same license but for those I waive the requirement to attribute me as the creator of the original work.

A FEW FINAL THOUGHTS THAT DIDN'T FIT ANYWHERE ELSE: In a legalistic turn, note that the assignment descriptions you receive during the semester should be considered authoritatively equivalent to this syllabus. This syllabus is subject to revision at my discretion; any revisions will, however, be announced on the Blackboard site for the course as a class announcement as early as is practical. Finally, this syllabus has listed a few behaviors that you are or are not to engage in for this class; please note, however, that my failure to list some particular clearly idiotic behavior as prohibited should not be read as giving you permission to behave in that particular clearly idiotic way. Thank you for your attention.

USING THIS SCHEDULE: Aside from the introductions to and objectives for each unit, there are four recurring entries in this schedule: readings, lessons, deadlines, and events. The readings are designed to work best if you go through them before completing any assignments that week. The lessons (which are available on the Blackboard site for the class) become visible on Saturday mornings by 8:00 AM Anchorage, Alaska local time, and the dates they each become visible are given. The deadlines are assignment deadlines (exams become available 72 hours before they are due, while all other assignments are visible at least one week before their deadlines), and events include such things as university holidays. Assignments consistently come due on Tuesdays or Thursdays (depending on the type of assignment). Important: Assignment deadlines are always at 4:00 PM Anchorage, Alaska local time on the date listed.

ADMINISTRIVIA

The somewhat cynical title for this section reflects the fact that at the beginning of every course there is an adjustment period in which there is little in the way of subject-matter content. During this adjustment period, students should become aware not just of the policies of the course they are taking, but also the expectations of the field they are learning about.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will: understand course policies and procedures; gain a basic understanding of the scope of linguistics

Week 1	Readings:	Online “Course syllabus & schedule”; LF 1.4 “Design features of language” to 1.5 “Language modality”
11 January	Lesson:	Lesson #0: Course overview and structure; A few bits of administrivia

SOUNDS

So if we’re going to talk about language, it works best to start small—and the smallest parts of language, so small they don’t even contain any inherent meaning, are individual sound. The study of the individual sounds people use to communicate is called *phonetics*; we will focus on the branch of phonetics that deals with classifying and describing those sounds. This is also the unit of the course that you learn to use the phonetic alphabet, a system for recording sounds clearly and unambiguously in writing—a task for which ordinary writing systems are spectacularly useless.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: identify relationships between speech sounds and distinctive features; read phonetic characters and transcriptions using the International Phonetic Alphabet; perform basic phonetic transcriptions; conduct phonemic analyses.

Week 2	Readings:	Online “IPA chart”; LF 2.0 “What is phonetics?” to 2.4 “Beyond English: Speech sounds of the world’s languages”
18 January	Lesson:	Lesson #1: Types of phonetics; Writing sounds; The articulation of consonants; Consonantal features
20 January	Event:	Martin Luther King Jr’s birthday (campus closed)
21 January	Deadline:	Syllabus quiz
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #1
23 January	Deadline:	Academic integrity quiz
	Deadline:	Research assignment #1
	Deadline:	Post #1

Week 3	Readings:	Online “IPA chart” [yes, again]; Online “Sounds: Consonants”; Online “Sounds: Vowels”; LF 2.5 “Suprasegmental features” to 2.6 “Acoustic phonetics”; LF 3.0 “What is phonology?” to 3.2 “Phonemes and allophones”
25 January	Lesson:	Lesson #2: The articulation of vowels; Vocalic features; Diphthongs; Transcription
28 January	Deadline:	Response #1
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #2
30 January	Deadline:	Post #2

STRUCTURE

Moving past sounds, we get to words, and we discover that words are weird—for example, you can combine words to create new words, but a *blackboard* isn’t necessarily a *black board*. In addition, we have things that aren’t quite words but still create meaning—the *s* at the end of *hats* and *books* has meaning (it tells us that there is more than one of each of those things), but should we call it a word? And once you combine words together, you get more oddities—for example, if someone said they saw some *wild wildebeests and sheep*, were the sheep and the wildebeests wild, or just the wildebeests? The answer is that we can’t tell just from that phrase—and you will learn why we can’t tell. You’ll also learn more about the importance of structure in language, and how different units of meaning relate to each other structurally.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: identify morphemes; identify grammatical categories; perform morphological analyses; identify phrases; syntactically analyze instances of ambiguity.

Week 4	Readings:	LF 4.0 “What is morphology?” to 4.5 “Morphological analysis”
1 February	Lesson:	Lesson #3: Patterns in language; Structure; Bracket notation
4 February	Deadline:	Response #2
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #3
6 February	Deadline:	Post #3
	Deadline:	Exam #1
Week 5	Readings:	LF 5.0 “What is syntax?” to 5.5 “Constructing a grammar”; LF 16.3 “Communicating with computers” to 16.4 “Machine translation”
8 February	Lesson:	Lesson #4: Morphology and syntax; Syntax and typology; Recursion; Grammaticality
11 February	Deadline:	Response #3
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #4
13 February	Deadline:	Research assignment #2
	Deadline:	Post #4

MEANING

Now we move from items that somehow contain meaning to meaning itself—semantics being the study of meaning. Meaning is more than just dictionary definitions, though, as you’ll discover, since meanings can be fuzzy—but oddly enough, communication works pretty well anyway. So semantics gives us an idea of how meaning works in language, but sometimes linguistic meanings don’t fully match the intended meaning. For example, the sentence *It’s cold in here* isn’t always just an observation, but sometimes it’s a command—*Close that window right now!*—and people understand it, anyway. How, precisely, does that second meaning come out of what was said, and how in the world can people make sense of it? This leads us to pragmatics—the study of meaning as people actually use it.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: describe set relationships in language; identify entailments; identify speech acts; identify and describe implicatures in terms of Gricean maxims.

Week 6	Readings:	LF 6.0 “What is semantics?” to 6.4 “Compositional semantics: Putting meanings together”; LF 17.4 “Language in advertising”
15 February	Lesson:	Lesson #5: Sets and subsets; Entailment, contradiction, and paraphrase
18 February	Deadline:	Response #4
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #5
20 February	Deadline:	Post #5
Week 7	Readings:	LF 7.0 “What is pragmatics?” to 7.5 “Presupposition”
22 February	Lesson:	Lesson #6: Thoughts about chairs; Entailment and implicature
25 February	Deadline:	Response #5
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #6
27 February	Deadline:	Post #6
	Deadline:	Exam #2

ACQUISITION

At this point we’ll take a slight detour and move from the way people use language to the way people learn language. We’ll talk a little bit about what’s called “second language acquisition”, or the way adults learn a language when they already speak one, but we’ll focus on “first language acquisition”, or the way small children learn language. It’s an amazing process—children are born with no language skills, and yet they somehow manage to learn to speak in a very short time. (Not only that, but they learn to speak despite being surrounded by slips of the tongue, sentence fragments, run-ons, and interruptions—a feat that’s comparable to a non-pianist learning to play Franz Liszt’s *Cantique d’amour* just by listening to it being played, and that while some unpredictable portion of the notes are played wrong!) Along the way, we’ll also deal with a bit of psycholinguistics, which isn’t a redundant way of referring to the study of language (think about it...), but a study of what’s actually going on in people’s brains when they use language.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: conduct an analysis of forms produced during language acquisition; identify areas of the brain involved in language use and their functions.

Week 8	Readings:	LF 8.0 “What is language acquisition?” to 8.5 “Bilingual language acquisition”
29 February	Lesson:	Lesson #7: First vs. second language acquisition; Dialect acquisition
3 March	Deadline:	Response #6
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #7
5 March	Deadline:	Research assignment #3
	Deadline:	Post #7

Week 9	Readings:	No readings for spring break!
7 March	Lesson:	Lesson #8: Current issues in linguistic research
9–13 March	Event:	Spring break (no office hours)
Week 10	Readings:	LF 9.0 “How do we store and process language?” to 9.6 “Sentence processing”
14 March	Lesson:	Lesson #9: Perception and production; Where phrenology went wrong (and why linguistics is a little bit to blame)
17 March	Deadline:	Response #7
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #8
19 March	Deadline:	Post #8
	Deadline:	Preliminary bibliography

COMMUNITY

A lot of what we’ve been talking about to this point involves language in isolation—but language doesn’t exist in isolation. Rather, it interacts with any number of social processes and events in everyday life, and this leads to some weirdnesses. One of the weirdest things that happens is that language isn’t constant—its form varies over time (English spoken now isn’t the same as English spoken in Shakespeare’s time), place (English spoken in Fairbanks isn’t the same as English spoken in London), and social circumstance (if you complained to me about this class you’d use language a bit differently than if you complained about it to a friend). This isn’t necessarily the most efficient way of going about things, but it seems to work pretty well for humans generally—there is no living language that doesn’t show such variation, and so we’ll spend the last few weeks of class investigating how people learn such variation, the ways these sorts of variation work, and how they get used by linguists. (Also, since we have to deal with such a sprawling variety of phenomena to really grapple with these issues, this unit is a bit longer than the rest.)

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: identify types of linguistic variation and change; identify the effects of sociolinguistic factors; use valid historical sources to trace the history of words; draw generalizations from a dialect atlas map.

Week 11	Readings:	LF 10.0 “What is language variation?” to LF 10.5 “Language and identity”
21 March	Lesson:	Lesson #10: Sociolinguistics; Salience; Ev(e)r(y){th,t}in(g) varies
24 March	Deadline:	Response #8
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #9
26 March	Deadline:	Post #9
	Deadline:	Exam #3
27 March	Event:	Withdrawal deadline
Week 12	Readings:	LF 11.0 “What is the study of ‘language and culture?’” to 11.5 “Ethnography”; Online “Anansi ben gi wan bigi tafra”
28 March	Lesson:	Lesson #11: Language and culture; Unexpected relationships
31 March	Deadline:	Response #9
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #10
2 April	Deadline:	Post #10
Week 13	Readings:	LF 12.0 “What is language contact?” to 12.7 “Case studies in language contact”; Online “Anansi ben gi wan bigi tafra” [again]
4 April	Lesson:	Lesson #12: Multilingualism and norms; Language and inherent contact
7 April	Deadline:	Response #10
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #11
9 April	Deadline:	Post #11

Week 14	Readings:	Online “How I got into linguistics, and what I got out of it”; Online “Linguistics as a profession”; Online “Why major in linguistics?”; LF 17.0 “What can you do with linguistics?” to 17.6 “Being a linguist”
11 April	Lesson:	Lesson #13: The <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> ; Linguistics and its applications
14 April	Deadline:	Response #11
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #12
16 April	Deadline:	Post #12
	Deadline:	Research paper

WRAPPING UP

By this point in the course, you’ve learned a bit about what linguists study. (Answer: A lot of different things.) This section of the course is kind of an appendix to everything else, but it’s not really any less important—it’s designed to pull everything together and give you some idea about how all these things get used in the “real world”, as well as tying up a few loose ends that might seem to be unrelated at first, but actually turn out to bring up rather important issues.

UNIT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: identify career paths for linguists; identify difficulties inherent in teaching language to non-humans; identify differences between spoken/signed and written forms of language.

Week 15	Readings:	LF 16.1 “Speech synthesis” to 16.3 “Communicating with computers”; LF 14.3 “Can animals be taught language?”; LF 15.0 “What is writing?” to 15.3 “The historical evolution of writing systems”
18 April	Lesson:	Lesson #14: The nature of language; How this happened; The take-home message
21 April	Deadline:	Response #12
	Deadline:	Reading quiz #13
23 April	Deadline:	Research assignment #4
	Deadline:	Post #13
Finals week	Readings:	No readings this week (take the time to study!)
25 April	Lesson:	Lesson #15: A few closing thoughts (or, How I got here)
28 April	Deadline:	Response #13
30 April	Deadline:	Research assignment #5
	Deadline:	Post #14
	Deadline:	Exam #4