

Introduction to Linguistics

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LING 301

College of Staten Island, CUNY

Spring 2021

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* Please include “LING 380” in the subject line of any emails to me.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the scientific study of human language, a prerequisite for further study in linguistics/speech-language pathology. We will cover the basic areas of linguistic grammar: phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax. Students may also have the opportunity to explore applications of linguistic theory to questions about language change (historical linguistics), first language acquisition (how children learn language), second language learning (how adults learn a second language), sign languages, language and the brain (psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics), and computational linguistics.

Class Meeting

Class meets on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 9:50pm over Zoom.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5545397081?pwd=NVZjd3hKQzhWcXJlZU5BbnNCaVhpUT09>

Meeting ID: 554 539 7081

Passcode: linguist

Office Hours

Office hours are held on Tuesdays from 12 noon through 2:00pm using the same Zoom link as we use for class. Please email me ahead of time to set up an appointment.

Website

The course website hosts readings, as well as up-to-date links to the syllabus, Zoom meeting room, quizzes, exams, and supplementary materials. It is suggested that you bookmark this site. Some pages are password-protected. The password is “linguist” (without the quotation marks).

URL: <https://ling301spr2021.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>

Course Requirements

Required readings:

Readings for this course are drawn from a few different sources. Most come from *Language Files* (12th edition), but others come from elsewhere. All readings are (or will be) available on the Readings page of our course website, along with information on when they must be read by.

Grade breakdown:

- Quizzes (30%)
- Exams (40%)
- Participation & Attendance (30%)

Grade key:

A	93%+
A-	90–92%
B+	87–89%
B	83–86%
B-	80–82%
C+	77–79%
C	70–76%
D	60–69%
F	<60%

Quizzes:

You will be assigned six quizzes with questions relevant to the preceding few weeks' readings and class discussions. Each quiz is worth 5% of your overall grade. Quizzes will be emailed to you and posted on the course website. Quizzes will be submitted before class on the date indicated in the calendar below.

Exams:

There will be two exams: a midterm and a final, each worth 20% of your overall grade. Note that the final is not cumulative; it will only cover materials from after the midterm.

Participation:

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussions. In each class, we will work through discussion questions, some pulled from the readings. Participation makes up 30% of your overall grade.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend each class meeting. If you know that you will need to miss a class (due to illness, a family emergency, etc.), please let me know ahead of time or as soon as possible so that you will be granted an excused absence. In addition, you are permitted up to two unexcused absences without being penalized; after your second unexcused absence, you will lose 5 points per subsequent unexcused absence. In the case of any absence, excused or otherwise, you will be responsible for doing any readings you missed, and turning in any quizzes or exams.

Class Policies

Plagiarism:

CSI's 2020–2021 undergraduate catalogue has this to say on plagiarism:

“Integrity is fundamental to the academic enterprise. It is violated by such acts as borrowing or purchasing assignments (including but not limited to term papers, essays, and reports) and other written assignments, using concealed notes or crib sheets during examinations, copying the work of others and submitting it as one's own, and misappropriating the knowledge of others. The sources from which one derives one's ideas, statements, terms, and data, including Internet sources, must be fully and specifically acknowledged in the appropriate form; failure to do so, intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes plagiarism.

Violations of academic integrity may result in a lower grade or failure in a course and in disciplinary actions with penalties such as suspension or dismissal from the College. For more information please visit the [CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity](#).”

Statement on accommodations for students with disabilities:

Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Center for Student Accessibility. Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of the student's eligibility from the Center for Student Accessibility. It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the Center for Student Accessibility and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor. More information is available on the [Center's webpage](#).

Course Calendar

The below calendar includes information on topics we'll cover, along with the dates of quizzes and exams. Readings are not listed on the below calendar, but will be given weekly in class, emailed to you, and posted on the website before they are due.

The following is subject to change. Any changes will be emailed out to the class along with an updated syllabus.

1	3 February	Course introduction. What is language? What is linguistics? Prescriptivism vs. descriptivism. Language, dialect, & variety.
2	10 February	The sounds of language I. The International Phonetic Alphabet. Quiz 1 assigned.
3	17 February	The sounds of language II. More on the International Phonetic Alphabet. Phonotactics. Quiz 1 due.
4	24 February	The sounds of language III. Review. Quiz 2 assigned.
5	3 March	The sounds of language IV. Phonemes and allophones. Quiz 2 due.
6	10 March	Morphology. What's in a word? What kind of words are there? How do we know what a word means? Quiz 3 assigned.
7	17 March	Morphology II. How are new words formed? Quiz 3 due.
8	24 March	Review of topics covered so far. Midterm assigned.
No class on 31 March. (Spring Break.)		
9	7 April	Syntax I. Basic ideas of syntax. Midterm due.
10	14 April	Syntax II. Syntactic properties. Quiz 4 assigned.
11	21 April	Syntax III. Syntactic constituency and syntactic properties. Quiz 4 due. Quiz 5 assigned.
12	28 April	Historical linguistics I. What does it mean for languages to be related? How do we know what we know about languages that aren't spoken anymore? Quiz 5 due.
13	5 May	Historical linguistics II. How do new varieties of a language arise? What are some contemporary language varieties? Quiz 6 assigned.
14	12 May	Review. Quiz 6 due. Final exam assigned.
	19 May	No class, but final exam due.