

LINGUISTICS
Fall 2017

<http://linguistics.as.nyu.edu/object/ugschedule.fa2017>

Language (MAP exemptor course)

LING-UA 1-001 Professor Maria Gouskova T/R, 12:30PM – 1:45PM
Satisfies Introductory course requirement

Nature or nurture? Linguistics is a science that systematically addresses this puzzle, and its results in recent decades offer a uniquely interesting support for the answer: “Both”. Language is a social phenomenon, but all human languages share elaborate and specific structural properties. The conventions of speech communities exist, exhibit variation, and change within the strict confines of universal grammar, part of our biological endowment. Universal grammar is discovered through the careful study of the structures of individual languages, by cross-linguistic comparisons, and the investigation of the brain. In this way, linguistics mediates between cognitive science and social science.

Language & Mind

LING-UA 3-001/PSYCH-UA 27-001 M/W, 12:30PM – 1:45PM
Professor Ailis Cournane/Brian McElree
Satisfies Introductory course requirement

This course deals with what our knowledge of language can tell us about the nature of the mind, and vice versa. It is offered jointly by Psychology and Linguistics, presenting methodology and results from both fields. It is well known that language is a social phenomenon; this course will focus on some aspects of language that make its study more like a natural science. We discuss the structure of sentences (syntax), words (morphology), and sound shape (phonetics, phonology), and ask how these are acquired, mentally represented, and processed by humans.

Introduction to Semantics

LING-UA 4-001 Professor Lucas Champollion T/R, 11:00AM – 12:15PM
PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 1 OR LING-UA 2 OR LING-UA 3 OR LING-UA 13 Satisfies
Semantics requirement

This course focuses on the compositional semantics of sentences. It has a formal component that introduces set theory, propositional logic, and predicate logic as tools. Using these tools, we investigate various empirical linguistic issues. Some possible topics we may cover include presuppositions, quantification, scope, and polarity, and parallelisms between the nominal and the verbal domains. The precise set of topics will be determined closer to the start of the Fall semester. If you have any questions, please contact the instructor.

Sound and Language

LING-UA 11-001

Professor Lisa Davidson

T/R, 2:00PM – 3:15PM

Satisfies Phonetics requirement

This course offers an introduction to the sounds of the world's languages, how they are produced and how they are organized as basic units of linguistic representation. Topics include basic phonetic and phonological theory, the description and analysis of speech sounds, the anatomy, physiology, and acoustical properties of speech sounds, elements of speech perception, and the properties of connected speech. Students develop skills to distinguish and produce the sounds of human languages and to transcribe them using the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Grammatical Analysis

LING-UA 13-001

Professor Hadas Kotek

M/W, 11:00AM – 12:15PM

PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 1 OR LING-UA2 OR LING-UA3 OR Permission of the Instructor

Satisfies Syntax requirement

What determines the sequencing of words in a given language? How can we explain word order variation within and across languages? Are there universal syntactic properties common to the grammar of all languages? This course presents the motivation for the modern generative approach to the scientific study of language and systematically develops a model that will account for the most basic syntactic constructions of natural language. Skills in scientific argumentation and reasoning are developed primarily through an analysis of English, but occasionally of other languages as well.

Language and Society

LING-UA 15-001/SCA UA 701-001

M/W, 11:00AM – 12:15PM

Professor Laurel MacKenzie

This course satisfies the Societies and Social Science component of the College Core Curriculum

Language is the medium of social interaction, and is tailored and manipulated for social purposes. Consequently, a language is not uniform, but rather reflects all the diversity of its users: language varies by region, class, gender, ethnicity, and age, and language is adapted by speakers to construct social identities and to accommodate different listeners and situations. This course explores contemporary issues in the social organization and significance of language. Topics include how language correlates with sociodemographic factors, language change, language attitudes, language contact and multilingualism, language policy and planning, and language in education.

Bilingualism

LING-UA 18-001

Professor Carina Bauman

M/W, 4:55PM - 6:10PM

Most people in the world today grow up speaking multiple languages. In this class, students will be introduced to a variety of linguistic and social issues that are raised by the phenomenon of multilingualism. Among other topics, we will read about and discuss different multilingual communities to discover the ways in which people use multiple languages in their daily lives; policies that exist in societies with multilingual populations; differences in growing up learning one and two or more native languages; changes that happen in a language as it comes under the influence of another language; reasons why people in traditionally bilingual communities can shift away from using one of their languages. We will also investigate what the study of these and other phenomena tied to multilingualism can tell us more generally about language and about community and identity.

Language in Latin America

LING-UA 30-001/SCA-UA 850-001

T/R, 12:30PM – 1:45PM

Professor Gregory Guy

This course satisfies the Societies and Social Science component of the College Core Curriculum

This course examines the linguistic variety of Latin America – the region of the Americas where Spanish, Portuguese and French are the dominant languages. These languages have flourished and diversified in the Americas: the Spanish spoken in 20 countries of the New World shows dialect differences between regions and nations, and collective differences with European Spanish. Brazilian Portuguese is markedly different from its European source. This diversity is partly a result of contact with other languages currently or formerly spoken in Latin America, especially the indigenous (Native American) languages like Quechua, Guarani, and Nahuatl, and African languages like Yoruba and Kimbundu. The course examines dialect features in Latin American Spanish and Portuguese, as well as social diversity: the ways of speaking of people of different class and ethnic backgrounds. Other languages spoken in the region are also considered, including indigenous languages, languages of immigrant groups, and contact languages and creoles, such as Haitian Creole and Papiamentu. Finally, we study the linguistic history of Latin America: how and why the languages spoken there spread, developed, changed and interacted.

Romance Syntax

LING-UA 42-001

Professor Richard Kayne

M/W, 3:30PM – 4:45PM

PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 13

This course is an introduction to comparative syntax, using Romance languages as subject matter, especially French, Italian, and Spanish, but also Catalan, Portuguese and various Romance dialects. We will try to discover what syntactic properties correlate with each other across all these languages. Specific areas of syntax to be studied will include null subjects, possessives, subject clitics, object clitics and auxiliary selection.

Field Methods

LING-UA 44-001/LING-GA 44-001

M/W, 9:30AM – 10:45AM

Professor Chris Collins

PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 12, LING-UA 13 OR Permission of the Instructor

Field Methods is a hands-on approach to learning linguistics. Every year, a different language is chosen to investigate. Students interview a native speaker of an unfamiliar language, usually a nonlinguist, to study all aspects of the language's grammar: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics. They learn to evaluate and organize real, non-idealized linguistic data and to formulate generalizations which then serve as the basis for a research paper. This course is a unique opportunity to obtain a rich set of data on a new topic of theoretical interest in any field of linguistics.

Honors Thesis Research Seminar

LING-UA 102-001

Professor Stephanie Harves

T, 3:30PM – 5:30PM

This seminar is for students writing Senior Honors Theses. The course will be led primarily by students, who will take turns presenting their ongoing thesis research each week, and will focus on making progress on the thesis throughout the semester. This course counts as an Advanced Honors course. It will involve writing, research, and reviewing the work of your peers.

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