

LINGUISTICS Spring 2024

Language

LING-UA 1-001

Professor Gary Thoms

M/W, 11:00AM – 12:15PM

Satisfies Introductory course requirement and the Societies and Social Science component of the College Core Curriculum

This course is an introductory survey of the field of linguistics—the scientific study of language. During the semester, we will look at questions like the following: Is speaking an instinctual or a learned behavior? Why do children acquire language so much faster and easier than adults, and what are the stages of acquisition? What do the native speakers of a language know about the language's word structure, sentence structure, sentence meaning, and pronunciation? How is language processed in the brain? How and why did language evolve into such a complex system? How is language affected by social class and race? The course will approach these questions from a scientific perspective, incorporating methodologies from mathematics and logic, as well as the social sciences (such as psychology and sociology). It will provide you with the necessary background to continue your studies in linguistics at a more advanced level if you choose to. It satisfies the Introductory Course requirement for Linguistics majors and is a prerequisite for some of the other courses. Language is a CORE exemptor for CAS students; it satisfies the Societies and Social Sciences course requirement.

Language

LING-UA 1-005

Professor Lucas Champollion

T/R, 12:30PM – 1:45PM

Satisfies Introductory course requirement and the Societies and Social Science component of the College Core Curriculum

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Indigenous Languages of the Americas

LING-UA 9-001

Professor Gillian Gallagher

M, 9:30AM - 12:15PM

This course focuses on the social context of indigenous languages in North and South America, with an emphasis on language in education. The course also introduces concepts and skills from linguistics through analysis of the phonetics, phonology (i.e. 'sounds') and morphology (i.e., 'words') of indigenous American languages. The first third of the course orients students towards the structural properties of language and the basics of linguistic analysis; assessments include linguistic data analysis. The second two-thirds of the course delve into the social context of indigenous languages and their speakers; assessments include reading presentations and written responses. We will discuss the social, economic and political factors that influence language use and particularly the shift from primary use of an indigenous language to primary use of a colonial language (e.g., English or Spanish). Topics covered include bilingualism, orthography, school curriculum, language policy, and the intersection of language and human rights. This course has no pre-requisites, and is designed to appeal to students with a broad range of backgrounds and interests in language and linguistics, indigenous communities and indigenous identity, as well as education and social justice.

Phonological Analysis**LING-UA 12-001****Professor Maria Gouskova****T/R, 12:30PM – 1:45PM****PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 11 OR Permission of the Instructor****Satisfies Phonology requirement**

Phonology is the study of how speech sounds pattern and contrast. How do we know that 'gdin' is not a possible English word but 'krin' is? What does it take to recognize a foreign accent? How can sound systems of languages differ, what do all languages have in common, and what are the sorts of patterns not found in any human language? To answer these questions, we will focus on such concepts as sound classes, features, phonemes, allophones, and syllable structure, and we will look at the role these concepts play in the most common phonological processes in the world's languages. The course will also include a basic introduction to the phonology of stress, tone, and intonation. Analytical skills will be honed by solving phonological problems based on data from English and many other languages.

Grammatical Analysis**LING-UA 13-001****Professor Stephanie Harves****M/W, 9:30AM – 10:45AM****PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 1 OR LING-UA 3 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 by analyzing problems in the syntax of English and a number of other languages.

Language and Society**LING-UA 15-001****Professor Laurel MacKenzie****T/R, 9:30AM – 10:45AM****Satisfies the Societies and Social Science component of the College Core Curriculum**

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.

Advanced Semantics**LING-UA 19-001****Professor Anna Szabolcsi****M/W, 12:30PM – 1:45PM****PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 4 OR Permission of the Instructor**

This course aims to build interest and confidence in formal semantics. It starts with developing a solid foundation in propositional and predicate logic, elements of the lambda calculus, and intensionality. It shows how those tools are useful in accounting for quantification in natural language, information structure, and phenomena that demand the encoding of the speaker and the addressee in the left periphery of clauses. The course prepares students for graduate-level coursework in semantics and the syntax-semantics interface but it isn't specifically oriented towards that goal.

Sex, Gender, and Language

LING-UA 21-001/SCA-UA 712-001

TBD

M/W, 4:55PM – 6:10PM

This course will examine gender from a multidisciplinary perspective and in particular as a sociolinguistic variable in speech behavior. We will discuss how gendered linguistic practices – intersecting with race and class-linked language – both reflect and shape our identity. We will also review the variability in the linguistic expression of gender in various languages and cultures around the world, as well as within the single national context of the United States. We will also discuss the constructionist argument that anatomy need not be linguistic destiny and that language may be used to perform social identities that do not match the individual's biological characteristics. In this context, we will consider the limits and possibilities of gender self-[re]construction through language, including [re]naming strategies, and pronoun use, and coming-out stories. We will also consider the efficacy of language reform to reduce gender stereotyping and discrimination.

Language in Latin America

LING-UA 30-001/SPAN-UA 403-001/LATC-UA 361-003

T/R, 3:30PM – 4:45PM

Professor Gregory Guy

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 regional and national dialect differences in Latin American Spanish and Portuguese. We also consider social diversity: the ways of speaking of people of different social classes or 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.

Neural Bases of Language

LING-UA 43-001/PSYCH-UA 300-008

Professor Liina Pylkkanen

T/R, 11:00AM – 12:15PM

PREREQUISITE: PSYCH-UA 25, PSYCH-UA 29, LING-UA 1, or LING-UA 3 or permission of the instructor.

What are the brain bases of our ability to speak and understand language? Are some parts of the brain dedicated to language? What is it like to lose language? This course provides a state-of-the-art survey of the cognitive neuroscience of language, a rapidly developing multidisciplinary field in the intersection of Linguistics, Psycholinguistics and Neuroscience. Lectures cover all aspects of language processing in the healthy brain from early sensory perception to higher level semantic interpretation as well as a range of neurological and development language disorders, including aphasias, dyslexia and genetic language impairment. Functional neuroimaging techniques will be introduced.

Introduction to Morphology at an Advanced Level

LING-UA 55-001

Professor Maria Gouskova & Alec Marantz

T/R, 11:00AM – 12:15PM

PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 12 and LING-UA 13 or Permission of the Instructor

This course examines the building blocks of words and sentences: the atomic units of word structure, their hierarchical and linear arrangement, and their phonological realization(s). The course provides an introduction to fundamental issues in morphology, including allomorphy, morpheme order, paradigm structure, blocking, and cyclicity. The field of morphology currently embraces much of what goes on in linguistics as a whole; syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics and variation all play an essential role, and their interactions will be highlighted here.

Experimental Syntax and Semantics

LING-UA 61

Professor Tal Linzen

T/R, 2:00PM – 3:15PM

PREREQUISITE: LING-UA 1 OR LING-UA 3 OR Permission of the Instructor

How do we understand and produce sentences in a language we speak? How do we acquire the knowledge that underlies this ability? Psycholinguistics seeks to address these questions using quantitative measurements drawn from sources such as corpora or human experiments, as well as using computational simulations implementing cognitive models. This class is an introduction to the methods and questions studied in experimental linguistics, with a focus on the mechanisms that underlie language comprehension by adult speakers, at the word level and above (syntax, semantics and pragmatics).