

**Linguistics 133**  
**Language Online: Communication in the Digital Era (LOL)**

UCSC, Summer Session 1, 2022

Tues / Thurs 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, Zoom

**Instructor:** Allison Nguyen (she / they)

**Email:**

**OH:** Weds 4:00 pm PST or by appointment

**Zoom link:**

**TA:** Max Kaplan (he/him)

**Email:**

**OH:** Weds 9:00 am PST

**Zoom link:**

**Password:**

**Course Information:** The internet has been shaped by a series of choices that can shape everything from our digital appearance to our digital communication. Despite claims to the contrary, the internet has not destroyed language; rather, language is thriving in new and vibrant ways online. This course uses the tools of linguistics to explore how the internet (with acronyms, emojis, and memes) has affected language use and how properties of language continue to shape online communication technologies. Topics covered include: whether emojis are language, what makes a spicy meme, how communities form online, and how online linguistic behaviors aid in the spread of misinformation.

General Education Code(s): PE-T.

**Course Goals:**

- 1) Know the history of the internet
- 2) Understand what choices have shaped the internet as we know it today and how those choices affect communication
- 3) Learn how Internet communities use language in various forms
- 4) Critically engage with interdisciplinary research on internet communication

**Materials:** There is no textbook for the course, but there will be a number of readings, all of which will be available on Canvas. A course Discord will also be available.

### **Requirements Overview:**

1. **Reading responses (24% of final grade; 3% each):** We will be reading a number of academic and non-academic texts in this course, and it's likely you will find at least some of them challenging. Reading responses will help you actively engage with the material in class and think critically about the contents of the readings. A reading response consists of a very short summary of main points in the reading (no more than a paragraph), along with three questions or comments you have about it, submitted on Canvas. The total length of the response should be about 200-300 words. Responses are due for all required readings one hour before class on the day that the readings are discussed. Please consult the rubric for each response for guidance regarding what we are expecting.
2. **In-class participation reflections (16% of final grade; 1.6% each):** Attendance and participation in class are necessary to getting the most out of this course. It is also important that you come to class having done the readings and are prepared to ask any questions or clarifications that will help us engage more deeply with the material. Every day in lecture, I will ask you to submit a short activity, related to that day's meeting, to be submitted by the end of lecture. You are also encouraged to participate in the class Discord, though this is not part of your grade.
3. **Homeworks (60% of the final grade; 20% each):** There will be three small projects over the course, each consisting of a creative component and an analytical written component. Projects will build off the in-class reflections.

**Collaboration:** All work is expected to be your own - while you can (and should!) discuss the homework with your peers, everyone is expected to submit **their own original work** on Canvas. If you did discuss the homework with your peers, please list the people you discussed the homework with. **No late homework will be accepted** (unless you have emailed me or a TA).

**Readings:** Readings will be assigned each week. You are expected to read the assigned papers before the corresponding class.

### Grading Scale:

A+	96.67 % and above	B	83.34 to 86.66 %	C-	70.00 to 73.33 %
A	93.34 to 96.66 %	B-	80.00 to 83.33 %	D	60.00 to 69.99 %
A-	90.00 to 93.33 %	C+	76.67 to 79.99 %	F	below 60.00 %
B+	86.67 % to 89.99 %	C	73.34 to 76.66 %		

### Getting Help

We want to make sure that everyone in the course has access to the resources they need to make it a success. Here are some of those ways:

1. **Office Hours:** The instructor and TA have designated office hours when any student can drop by. You are strongly encouraged to make use of this opportunity. Possible valid uses of office hours include (but are by no means limited to): coming by to say hello, asking a question, working through homework quietly and asking questions as needed.  
If you are not able to attend a regularly-scheduled office hour, you can always make an appointment by email.
2. **Email:** You are also more than welcome to ask questions of the instructor or TA over email, and we will respond within 24 hours during the week. Note: We cannot guarantee an immediate response to an email outside of normal business hours (weekdays 9-5).
3. **Lecture:** You are always welcome--and in fact, encouraged--to ask questions during lecture and section!

### Course Calendar (readings subject to change):

Week	Day 1	Day 2
<b>1 - The Internet as a series of choices</b>	<b>A brief history of the internet</b>	<b>Broadly, what choices have shaped the internet?</b>
Reading & Reading Response		McCulloch chapter 3, *McSweeney, 2018

<b>2 - Emojis (are undemocratic)</b>	<b>Are emojis language?</b>	<b>What choices led to the current emoji system we have now?</b>
Reading	<a href="#">Gawne &amp; McCulloch, 2019</a> , <a href="#">Sutton &amp; Lawson, 2017</a> , *Kaiser & Grosz, 2021	<a href="#">The problem with emoji skin tones no one talks about, Robertson, et al., 2021</a> ,
<b>3 -Sociolinguistics online</b>	<b>What (linguistic) choices do we make when we present ourselves online?</b>	<b>How do we form internet communities (linguistically)?</b>
Reading	<a href="#">Robertson, et al., 2020</a>	<a href="#">Tsiplakou, 2009</a> , *Holliday & Tano, 2021
<b>4 - Memes</b>	<b>How does information spread across the internet?</b>	<b>What makes a meme?</b>
Reading	Shifman 2014	Nguyen et al., in press
<b>5 - Mass hysteria &amp; beyond</b>	<b>American technoculture, mass hysteria</b>	<b>Censorship &amp; Language</b>
Reading	Gibson 2019, <a href="#">Muller-Vahl, et al., 2021</a>	<a href="#">Massenari, 2015</a>

\* denote optional readings

### **DRC Remote Accommodations:**

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. Operations continue via remote appointments. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email the DRC Schedulers at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu) for an appointment.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, he or she may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of his or her college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript.

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Integrity page](#) at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

#### **Title IX:**

The [Title IX Office](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

The Title IX Office is working remotely and is conducting meetings and interviews via zoom and phone. If you want to make a report or request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using their [online reporting link](#). For questions about making a report, your reporting responsibilities, and/or questions about the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) call 831-459-2462.

#### **Distribution of Lecture Notes and Materials:**

Please note that students may be disciplined for selling, preparing, or distributing course lecture notes, including notes created independently by students. The unauthorized sale of lecture notes, handouts, readers or other course materials is a violation of campus policies as well as state law. Violation by distribution to the public may also constitute copyright infringement subject to legal action.

