



COGS 4780 – Advanced Topics in Linguistics (Psycholinguistics) – Spring 2025

Monday/Thursday 2:00pm – 3:50pm

4 credit hours

<https://lms.rpi.edu/>

Carnegie 208

Instructor

Dr. Benjamin (Ben) Weissman

Office Hours: 12pm Monday in Carnegie 302B or email for appointment

weissb2@rpi.edu

Course Description

This course is an advanced linguistics class focusing specifically on the topic of Psycholinguistics. Psycholinguistics rests uniquely at the conjunction of cognitive psychology and linguistics, making it a specifically-great fit for a cognitive science approach. The course will approach many topics within psycholinguistics, including but not limited to language in the brain, sentence comprehension, language production, speech perception, and lexical access. The course will cover both classic approaches and modern trends in psycholinguistics.

Textbook

Language in Mind: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics – 2nd edition – Julie Sedivy

<https://global.oup.com/ushe/product/language-in-mind-9781605357058>

(it's kind of expensive sorry, it's a really great book & amazing resource though)

Used and digital copies of the book are totally fine, do try to get the 2nd edition though.

Other assigned readings will be posted to LMS.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of the field of psycholinguistics, including how it relates to both linguistics and cognitive science
- Build skills reading, analyzing, and discussing academic journal articles
- Deliver a presentation to the rest of the class effectively communicating information about a topic within psycholinguistics
- Conduct a psycholinguistic experiment, including designing the experiment, collecting and analyzing data, and writing up the results in the form of a paper.

Course Assessment & Grading

Presentation – 20%

Project – 60%

Participation – 20%

Every student will lead the instruction of one topic in the form of a ~20 minute presentation.

The project will be due at the end of the semester but there will be assignment-like stages throughout the semester; the project will be to conduct a psycholinguistic experiment – this will include setting up the experiment, collecting and analyzing data, and writing up the results in the form of a paper.

Participation will come from in-class discussion and pre-discussion posts on LMS. For discussion portions of class, it is mandatory to read the article and post a discussion thought/question on LMS before the start of class.

Academic Integrity

The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities and The Graduate Student Supplement define various forms of Academic Dishonesty and you should make yourself familiar with these. In this class, excepting group work, all assignments that are turned in for a grade must represent the student's own work.

Submission of any assignment that is in violation of this policy will result in a penalty of a grade of zero and formal disciplinary action might be undertaken.

If you have any question concerning these policies, please ask for clarification.

Students with Disabilities

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss your options. To establish reasonable accommodations, please register with The Office of Disability Services for Students. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. DSS contact information: dss@rpi.edu; 518-276-819; 4226 Academy Hall.

Course Calendar

This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. Readings correspond to class content for the day on which they are listed.

Day:	Date:	Topic:	Reading:
Monday	Jan 6	Introduction	
Thursday	Jan 9	Linguistics Review	
Monday	Jan 13	Human Language	
Thursday	Jan 16	Methods in Psycholinguistics	
Monday	Jan 20	NO CLASS – MLK Day	
Thursday	Jan 23	Language in the Brain: Foundations	
Monday	Jan 27	First Language Acquisition I	Ch 2.5-2.6
Thursday	Jan 30	First Language Acquisition II	Ch 4
Monday	Feb 3	First Language Acquisition III	Ch 5
Thursday	Feb 6	First Language Acquisition IV	Ch 6
Monday	Feb 10	Speech Perception I	Ch 7.1
Thursday	Feb 13	Speech Perception II	Ch 7.2-7.4
Monday	Feb 17	NO CLASS – President's Day	
Tuesday	Feb 18	Word Recognition I	Ch 8.1
Thursday	Feb 20	Word Recognition II	Ch 8.2-8.3
Monday	Feb 24	Word Recognition III	
Thursday	Feb 27	Sentence Comprehension I	Ch 9.1-9.3
Monday	Mar 3	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
Thursday	Mar 6	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
Monday	Mar 10	Sentence Comprehension II	Ch 9.4-9.6
Thursday	Mar 13	Sentence Comprehension III	
Monday	Mar 17	Inference and Language Use I	Ch 11.1, 11.4-11.5
Thursday	Mar 20	Inference and Language Use II	Ch 11.2-11.3
Monday	Mar 24	Language Production I	Ch 10.1-10.3
Thursday	Mar 27	NO CLASS – Ben at conference	
Monday	Mar 31	Language Production II	Ch 10.4-10.5
Thursday	Apr 3	Second Language Acquisition I	
Monday	Apr 7	Second Language Acquisition II	
Thursday	Apr 10	Second Language Acquisition III	
Monday	Apr 14	Reading/Writing	Ch 8.4
Thursday	Apr 17	Multimodality	
Monday	Apr 21	Work on Projects	