

# Ling 170D Introduction to Linguistics



Dr. Nick Danis, [nsdanis@wustl.edu](mailto:nsdanis@wustl.edu)  
Washington University in St. Louis

Web version: <https://www.nickdanis.com/syllabi/sp2021-ling170d>

## Course Info

Course Number	L44 Ling 170D
Semester	Spring 2021
Section 03	Tu./Th. 10-11:15am
Section 04	Tu./Th. 4-5:15pm
Location	McDonnell 361 / Zoom*

\*all Zoom links available on Canvas

### *Graders/Course Engagement Monitors*

- Jack Goldberg (Section 03), [jack.goldberg@wustl.edu](mailto:jack.goldberg@wustl.edu)
- Jack Pruett (Section 04), [jackpruett@wustl.edu](mailto:jackpruett@wustl.edu)

## Description

This course introduces students to the scientific study of language. All major subfields are covered: the physical description of speech sounds (phonetics), the cognitive patterning of these sounds in a speaker's grammar (phonology), the creation and analysis of word and phrase structure (morphology and syntax), and the study of compositional meaning of these sentences (semantics) and their interaction in a discourse (pragmatics). Students will learn the fundamental tools and analytical methodology in each. Additionally, this course covers special topics in language variation, acquisition, and change; and writing systems.

## Course Goals

1. Learn to view natural language, and humanity's capacity for it, as an object of scientific inquiry
2. Understand the different core subfields within linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics
3. Create representations and implement methodology within these subfields
4. Analyze and solve problems in novel natural language data
5. Apply linguistic tools to critique and debunk common myths about language

## Required Materials

The required textbook is the 12th edition of Language Files (abbreviated LF12). Earlier editions are likely to differ in content and organization. Any additional readings are posted as PDFs as necessary.

## Special covid-19 related policies

This is a **hybrid, in-person** with **remote** welcome, **synchronous** with **asynchronous** possible, alternating-attendance class. This means that I will be lecturing in person in the assigned classroom. The classroom is not big enough to safely fit the entire class, so **half of the class will be physically present on Tuesdays, the other half will be physically present on Thursdays.** (Your assigned day will be visible on Canvas.) **Do NOT show up when it is not your assigned day!** The assigned classroom cannot accomodate the entire roster at once. If you are not attending in person, you are expected to view the lecture live on Zoom if possible. There will be outlets of live participation if synchronous: asking questions, answering PollEverywhere questions, and so on. If you cannot view the lecture synchronously (e.g. because of illness, or an emergency, or you are in a distant timezone), then you should view the recording at your earliest convenience (ideally the same week, so you do not fall behind). There will be opportunities for participation asynchronously on Canvas as well.

The most important policy for this semester: be safe and be smart. I will not be tracking in person attendance. You do not need to notify me if you cannot make it on your assigned day. (But you should notify me if you feel you are in danger of falling behind in the class! I am always here to help.) Per WUSTL policy, you should be wearing a mask at all times in the classroom. I will be as well.

## Grade

The grade breakdown is shown below.

Category	Weight
Quizzes	40%
Study Guides	25%
Exercises	25%
Participation	10%

### *Quizzes*

There are four quizzes throughout the duration of this class. These are administered on Canvas, graded, open-book, and with a time limit. You have only one submission. Treat these as mini-midterm exams that are taking the place of in-person exams. These are the bulk of your grade.

### *Study Guides*

For most of the chapters we cover, there is a corresponding Study Guide on Canvas. Each Study Guide is 20 multiple choice questions. You can and should submit the Study Guide multiple times until you get a score you are satisfied with. You will see your score and any incorrect answers,

though the correct answers will be hidden. All due dates for the study guides are posted on Canvas in advance.

### *Exercises*

There will be several exercises throughout the semester, intended to give you a more hands-on experience with the material. Some will be individual assignments, some will be group assignments. Details will be on Canvas as we move through the semester.

### *Participation*

There is no perfect (or even good) way to quantify participation, and I don't like doing it for myself or for you, the students. Instead, I aim to provide a wide variety of participation methods, and trust that you will fall into a rhythm that works best for you. About once a month, there will be a short participation survey for you to reflect on your current status. I have tried to think of ways for all students—in-person or remote, live or asynchronous—to participate. Some of these are listed below:

- Speaking up in class
- Talking in the Zoom chat during class
- Answering questions on PollEverywhere
- Annotating/commenting on the lecture recordings (for asynchronous students)
- Sending me emails with questions or comments
- Coming to my office hours or scheduling individual meetings
- Posting on the Canvas discussion boards

### *Letter grades*

Letter grades are assigned based off the following scale. Numerical grades are **not** rounded.

- $100 \geq A+ \geq 98$
- $98 > A \geq 93$
- $93 > A- \geq 90$
- $90 > B+ \geq 87$
- $87 > B \geq 83$
- $83 > B- \geq 80$
- $80 > C+ \geq 77$
- $77 > C \geq 73$
- $73 > C- \geq 70$
- $70 > D+ \geq 67$
- $67 > D \geq 63$
- $63 > D- \geq 60$

If you are taking this class pass/fail, you must receive at least a C- (70%) to pass.

If you believe there has been an error in grading, I am happy to discuss it with you. However, you must bring it up to me within one week of the graded assignment being returned to you. After this, the grade is considered final.

# Schedule

The exact schedule might change as the class progresses. Please see Canvas for all readings and assignment due dates.

Date	Day	Week	Comment	Unit
1/26/2021	Tuesday	1		Foundations
1/28/2021	Thursday	1		Foundations
2/2/2021	Tuesday	2		Phonetics
2/4/2021	Thursday	2		Phonetics
2/9/2021	Tuesday	3		Phonetics
2/11/2021	Thursday	3		Phonetics
2/16/2021	Tuesday	4		Phonology
2/18/2021	Thursday	4		Phonology
2/23/2021	Tuesday	5		Phonology
2/25/2021	Thursday	5		Morphology
3/2/2021	Tuesday	6	Wellness Day	<b>No Class</b>
3/4/2021	Thursday	6		Morphology
3/9/2021	Tuesday	7		Syntax
3/11/2021	Thursday	7		Syntax
3/16/2021	Tuesday	8		Syntax
3/18/2021	Thursday	8		Semantics
3/23/2021	Tuesday	9	Study Day	<b>No Class</b>
3/25/2021	Thursday	9		Semantics
3/30/2021	Tuesday	10		Pragmatics
4/1/2021	Thursday	10		Pragmatics
4/6/2021	Tuesday	11		Flex Day
4/8/2021	Thursday	11		Language Change
4/13/2021	Tuesday	12		Historical Linguistics
4/15/2021	Thursday	12		Variation
4/20/2021	Tuesday	13		Linguistic Discrimination
4/22/2021	Thursday	13		Acquisition
4/27/2021	Tuesday	14	Study Day	<b>No Class</b>
4/29/2021	Thursday	14		Psycholinguistics
5/4/2021	Tuesday	15	Last Day of Classes	Wrap-up

## Academic Integrity

This course adheres to the university's Academic Integrity Policy (<https://studentconduct.wustl.edu/academic-integrity>), and takes cheating and plagiarism very seriously. All work completed online must be done alone, and no resources not approved by the instructor may be used during exams.

The material in the graded Quizzes is confidential. Any student caught sharing the content of the graded quizzes (via screenshots, copying content, and so on) with other students, in this class or not, is considered to have violated the Academic Integrity Policy.

## ADA Compliance

Washington University is committed to providing accommodations and/or services to students with documented disabilities. Students who are seeking support for a disability or a suspected disability should contact Disability Resources at 935-4153. Disability Resources is responsible for approving all disability-related accommodations for WU students, and students are responsible for providing faculty members with formal documentation of their approved accommodations at least two weeks prior to using those accommodations. I will accept Disability Resources VISA forms by email and personal delivery. If you have already been approved for accommodations, I request that you provide me with a copy of your VISA within the first two weeks of the semester. Please see more information at <http://cornerstone.wustl.edu>.

## Sexual Assault Resources

The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations (e.g., no contact order, course changes) to students who are victims of relationship or sexual violence, regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. If you need to request such accommodations, please contact the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at [rsvpcenter@wustl.edu](mailto:rsvpcenter@wustl.edu) or 314-935-3445 to schedule an appointment with an RSVP confidential, licensed counselor. Information shared with counselors is confidential. However, requests for accommodations will be coordinated with the appropriate University administrators and faculty. Please see more information at <https://students.wustl.edu/relationship-sexual-violence-prevention-center>.