The Study of Language (Ling 2100) – Fall 2025

Prerequisites: None

Course information

Class meeting time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:10 am – 12:25 pm
Class meeting location: Caldwell Hall, Room G10
Google Drive folder:
    https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1azDvKeSceHNFEagtI2lUIEigvHan1sYn

Instructor information

Instructor: Prof. Steven Foley

Email: srfoley@uga.edu
                  I will respond to emails within 24 hours

Office hours: Mondays, 2:00–4:00 pm
                  and by appointment
                  Gilbert Hall 240

Website: https://stevenrfoley.github.io/

Course description and details

This course introduces the scientific study of language, emphasizing such topics as the mental organization of grammar, the relationship between the study of language and other disciplines, and the relationship between language and its use in society. In order to provide a broad understanding of human language, this course covers major formal and functional subfields in linguistics, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, language acquisition, sign language, language variation, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course you should be able to:
- Use linguistic terminology accurately, having read a substantial body of material related to the scientific study of language
- Discuss basic linguistic facts, theories, and research methodologies
- Analyze samples of written or spoken language from a variety of world languages
- Understand both language change and how language supports all learning and communication
- Undertake more advanced and specific linguistic studies

This course also fulfills the following University-wide learning outcomes:
- Students will be able to express ideas in writing with clarity and fluency
- Have the ability to express, manipulate, and apply mathematical information, concepts, and thoughts using appropriate mathematical forms, including numeric, graphical, verbal, and symbolic forms for solving a variety of problems

- Explain how knowledge is constructed in the sciences using the scientific method.
- Locate and evaluate reliable sources of scientific evidence to construct arguments, to apply scientific knowledge, and to critically assess real-world issues
- Express and manipulate quantitative information, concepts, and thoughts in verbal, numeric, graphical, computational, and symbolic form to frame and devise a solution to a problem
- Evaluate conclusions drawn from or decisions based on quantitative data

Course topics
- Properties of the vocal apparatus, and conventions for transcribing speech in English and beyond (phonetics)
- Fundamental concepts in linguistic theory related to phonology (phonology), the structure of words (morphology) and sentences (syntax), and the expression of meaning (semantics–pragmatics)
- How language is acquired by children and adults (acquisition), how it is processed by the human mind (psycholinguistics) and by computers (computational linguistics), how it changes over time (historical linguistics), how it varies across the world (typology), how it expresses identity (sociolinguistics)

Required course materials

Textbooks: Anderson, Catherine, Bronwyn Bjorkman, Derek Denis, Julianne Doner, Margaret Grant, Nathan Sanders, and Ai Taniguchi. 2022. *Essentials of Linguistics*. Second edition. ISBN: 978-1-927565-50-6.
Open access: https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/essentialsoflinguistics2/

Dawson, Hope C., and Michael Phelan (editors). 2016. *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Twelfth edition. The Ohio State University Press. ISBN: 0814252702.

All readings (including textbook chapters) will be posted in the Google Drive folder

Assessment and grading

Course assignments and requirements

In class exercises	30%	Short written exercises to practice concepts covered in lecture, about once a week. Lowest two scores will be dropped.
Homework assignments	30%	Problem sets (4–6) tasking you with analyzing linguistic data from English and other languages, using the tools and frameworks introduced in class.
Linguistics in the Wild	10%	Twice throughout the semester, submit a short audio clip from media you consume (YouTube, TikToks, podcasts, etc.) that made your 'linguistic spidey senses' tingle, and briefly explain it in class. Guidelines forthcoming.
Final exam	15%	A written exam on material covered throughout the semester. To be held Dec 4, 12:00–3:00 pm in our usual classroom.
Participation and attendance	10%	Regular attendance and active participation are the best way to keep up with the material. The textbooks are more of a crutch than your main source of information, so you will not want to miss class. UGA policy allows you two unexcused absences. If you cannot make it to class or if you know you will be late, please email me beforehand.
Office hours	5%	Come to office hours or schedule a meeting at least once during the semester to discuss course content (e.g. homework assignments).

More information about each assignment will be posted on eLC / Google Drive.

Missed exams, late assignments, and regrading requests

Homework assignments are due at the beginning of lecture (11:10 am)

These items may be turned in after the deadline, but you will be eligible for fewer points once the deadline has passed: you will only be eligible for 95% of the total grade if it is submitted by 3 am that night, and you will lose an additional 10% from the total you are eligible to earn for every 12 hour period it is late thereafter. Papers more than three days late will earn a grade of 0.

Extensions will not generally be permitted, but if you think you are subject to an exceptional circumstance, please discuss it with me outside of class or by emailing me at least 24 hours before the original deadline.

A	93–100	C+	76–79
A−	90–92	C	73–75
B+	86–89	C−	70–72
B	83–85	D	60–69
B−	80–82	F	<60

Final grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number (e.g. 89.50 to 90, and 89.49 to 89).

Course statements and policies

UGA honor code

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

Honesty and transparency are important features of good scholarship. On the flip side, plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses with serious consequences. If you are discovered engaging in either behavior in this course, I will follow the procedures laid out in UGA's Academic Honesty Policy. There you can also find more information about what counts as prohibited conduct.

I encourage you to work together on homework assignments and to make use of campus resources like the Office of Student Success & Achievement and the Writing Center. While collaboration is encouraged, *each student must submit a unique assignment* reflecting their own work.

If you have questions about my integration of the Student Code of Conduct into this course, please do not hesitate to ask: my aim is to foster an environment where you can learn and grow, while ensuring that the work we all do is honest and fair.

Accommodation for disabilities

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting http://drc.uga.edu.

Attendance & participation policy

Class participation is a very important part of the learning process in this course. Although not explicitly graded, you will be evaluated on the *quality* of your contributions and insights. Quality comments possess one or more of the following properties:

- Offers a different and unique, but relevant, perspective;
- Contributes to moving the discussion and analysis forward;
- Builds on other comments;
- Transcends the "I feel" syndrome. That is, it includes some evidence, argumentation, or recognition of inherent tradeoffs. In other words, the comment demonstrates some reflective thinking.

We will use our assessment of your participation to manage borderline grades. While your participation grade is subjective, it will not be random or arbitrary. And, clearly, more frequent quality comments are better than less frequent quality comments.

<u>Use of AI in this course</u>

UGA's policy is that the use of AI for coursework is not permitted unless explicitly authorized by me (your course instructor) ahead of time. In this course, to ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and skills in this course, the use of generative AI (GAI) tools is strictly prohibited. This includes all stages of your work process, even the preliminary ones. This prohibition extends to AI writing tools like Grammarly and Wordtune, as well as GAI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Writesonic, Rytr, and Rtutor. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it.

<u>Well-being resources</u>

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: drc.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting https://well-being.uga.edu.

<u>Disclaimer</u>

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Course schedule and activities

Subject to change — pay attention to announcements on eLC. EL = *Essentials of Linguistics* (Anderson et al. 2022); LF = *Language Files* (Dawson & Phelan 2016). All dates for assignments are estimated.

Day	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Aug 14 (Th)	Introduction	LF Ch 1 and EL Ch 1 (both optional)	
Aug 19 (T)	Language design features	LF Ch 1.4	
Aug 21 (Th)	Animal communication	LF Ch 14	HW 1 (due 8/28)
Aug 26 (T)	Syntax	LF Ch 5.1–5.2	
Aug 28 (Th)		LF Ch 5.3	
Sep 2 (T)		LF Ch 5.4	
Sep 4 (Th)		LF Ch 5.5	HW 2 (due 9/11)
Sep 9 (T)			
Sep 11 (Th)	Semantics & Pragmatics	LF Ch 6.1–6.2	
Sep 16 (T)		LF Ch 6.3–6.4	
Sep 18 (Th)		EL Ch 8.1–8.5	
Sep 23 (T)			HW 3 (due 9/30)
Sep 25 (Th)	Morphology	EL Ch 5.1–5.3	
Sep 30 (T)		EL Ch 5.4–5.9	
Oct 2 (Th)			
Oct 7 (T) ***via Zoom***			HW 4 (due 10/16)
Oct 9 (Th) ***via Zoom***	Phonetics	EL Ch 3.1–3.3	
Oct 14 (T)		EL Ch 3.4–3.5	
Oct 16 (Th)		EL Ch 3.6	
Oct 21 (T)		EL Ch 3.10–3.12	HW 5 (due 10/28)
Oct 23 (Th)	Phonology	EL Ch 4.1–4.4	
Oct 28 (T)		EL Ch 4.5–4.6	
Oct 30 (Th)		EL Ch 4.7–4.9	
Nov 4 (T)			HW 6 (due 11/11)

Nov 6 (Th)	Variation	EL Ch 10.1–10.6	
Nov 11 (T)		EL Ch 10.7–10.9	
Nov 13 (Th)			
Nov 18 (T)	Language & Mind	LF Ch 9.1–9.4	HW: Submit final review questions (by 11/24)
Nov 20 (Th)		LF Ch 9.5–9.7	
Nov 25 (T)	Final Review Session		
Dec 4 (Th)	12:00–3:00 pm Final		