

## Course information & policies (Syllabus)

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<i>TAs</i>	601, 604 <b>Yuhan Sui</b> ( <a href="mailto:yuhansui@unc.edu">yuhansui@unc.edu</a> , <i>she/her</i> ) • OH Th 1-2 and by appointment   Smith Bldg 304 (Zoom by request) 602, 603 <b>Esther Chen</b> ( <a href="mailto:estherchen@unc.edu">estherchen@unc.edu</a> ) • OH W 3-4 and by appointment   Smith Bldg 304 (Zoom by request)
<i>Course meets</i>	<b>Lecture</b> M & W 10:10-11:00, Howell 115 <b>Recitation</b> • 601: F 10:10-11:00, Hamilton 452 • 602: F 10:10-11:00, Woollen Gym 302 • 603: F 11:15-12:05, Genome Sci 1374 • 604: F 11:15-12:05, Hamilton 452
<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Contemporary Linguistics</i> , 7ed. (O'Grady et al., 2017) • At the campus bookstore. Additional readings may be distributed in class or online.
<i>Web site</i>	<a href="http://users.castle.unc.edu/~jlsmith/ling101.html">http://users.castle.unc.edu/~jlsmith/ling101.html</a> • Lecture outline slides, links, assignments, schedule, and daily syllabus. See also the course <a href="#">Canvas</a> site.

**I. Overview** *From course catalog: LING 101. Introduction to Language.* Introduction to the formal analysis of human language, including sounds, words, sentences, and language meaning, plus child language acquisition, language change over time, social attitudes toward language, and similarities and differences among languages.

**Linguistics** is the **systematic study of human language**. By the end of the semester, you will have learned some of the key aspects of:

- the sound, word, sentence, and meaning structure found in human language
- how to use linguistic methods to describe and compare languages
- how to use language data to build a scientific model of the linguistic system
- some of the ways that languages can differ from one another
- some of the things that languages have in common
- how young children come to know their language
- when, where and why people use different dialects (of English and other languages)
- how languages change over time

**Why take this course?** It will give you a sense of how rich and complex every person's unconscious knowledge of their native language(s) is, and how very systematic human language is despite its impressive diversity. It will help you sharpen your scientific thinking, problem-solving, and analysis skills, and give you perspectives that are useful in foreign-language learning. Also, analyzing language is fun! (This course satisfies the *Natural Scientific Investigation* or *Ways of Knowing* focus capacity, or the SS GenEd.)

LING 101 has no prerequisites and does not assume prior knowledge of linguistics. This course is recommended for people considering a major or minor in linguistics, and it is a prerequisite for nearly all courses in the Department of Linguistics. For more information about the major or the minor, see: <https://linguistics.unc.edu/undergrad-program/>.

## II. Course requirements and grading information

Course final grades are calculated as follows:

A. Participation	10%
B. Homework assignments	30%
C. Midterm exams (2 @ 20% each)	40%
D. Final exam	20%

### Grading scale (points for letter grade)

A	93–100 (95)	C+	77–79 (78)
A–	90–92 (91)	C	73–76 (75)
B+	87–89 (88)	C–	70–72 (71)
B	83–86 (85)	D+	67–69 (68)
B–	80–82 (81)	D	60–66 (65)
		F	0–59

### A. Participation

Linguistics is best learned by doing! We expect you to **participate** in class, which means:

- For **lectures** (Mondays and Wednesdays)
  - Before class, **prepare** by completing assigned **readings** or **practice activities**.
  - **Attend lecture** and take notes about the **big ideas**. (Keeping up with readings and practice activities will make it easier to see which ideas are the big ones.) Join in any practice problems, check-in questions, and pair discussions in lecture.
  - Review the **lecture slides** after class, and review the readings as needed, in order to master the **important details** behind the big ideas. Try solving the **example problems** from the lecture slides and readings for yourself.

Lectures are your own responsibility—we will not grade you on attendance. But preparing for and attending lectures will help you master the course material.

- For **recitations** (Fridays)
  - **Attend** your recitation.
  - **Participate** in recitation activities: group discussions, polls, problem-solving, etc.

Recitation is an especially good opportunity to ask questions, discuss ideas, and learn by doing with your TA and classmates. Your **course participation grade** is based on how frequently you **attend** recitations and **participate** in recitation activities.

- There are 13 recitations scheduled this semester. We strongly encourage you to attend all of them. However, we understand that sometimes life happens: you may feel ill, or have a family emergency, for example. To give you some flexibility, all students in this course may miss **up to 3** recitations for any reason with no effect on their course grade. (Students with a University Approved Absence should please contact me or your TA to discuss your situation.)
- Always remember to check the course web site for **assignments** and **deadlines**.
- See also the handout "[LING 101 tips for success](#)" on the course web site.

### B. Homework (HW) assignments

Doing HW assignments is crucial for learning the course material and preparing for the midterm and final exams.

- There are about 11 HW assignments: approximately one per week except when there is an exam. For these, you will apply course concepts to solve linguistic analysis

problems or answer discussion questions. Each HW requires intellectual investment equivalent to at least one page of academic writing.

- HW assignments are **due** at the beginning of class (10:10am) on the due date, which is usually a Monday. HW assignments are **submitted** on paper in the classroom; submissions will be accepted as on-time with a 20-minute grace period, until 10:30. You may also submit HW *early* by email, if your TA gives permission.
- You will get **feedback** on completed HW in your recitation. You may ask **questions** about an in-progress HW in your recitation, or by email to one of the instructors.
- HW assignments will be **graded** on this scale: **A / B / 0**. For A, an assignment is complete, easy to read, and mostly correct. For B, an assignment is complete. HW assignments may be typed or handwritten (or both), but they need to be legible.
- You will learn the most if you complete your HW assignments on time. However, to allow for some flexibility in case of emergencies, any HW assignment will be **accepted late** for two weeks after the deadline. Late HW assignments will incur a **one-grade penalty** (A work receives a B; B work receives a C), and they may not be given detailed feedback by your TA.
- Your **lowest** HW grade for the semester will be dropped.

### C. Exams

There are two midterm exams and one final exam. Exam dates are firm: (a) midterm exams will only be postponed in extreme circumstances, such as a class cancellation on or right before the exam date, or a major schedule adjustment due to multiple class cancellations, and (b) the final exam date is set by the Office of the Registrar.

- EXAM #1: **Monday, October 2** (in class)
  - The study of human language: Linguistics, mental grammar, science, ethics
  - Phonetics: Describing the sounds of language
  - Phonology: Sound patterns in the mental grammar
- EXAM #2: **Monday, November 6** (in class)
  - Morphology: Meaningful parts of words; word structure
  - Syntax: The structure of phrases and sentences
  - First language acquisition: How it happens, and what that tells us

- FINAL EXAM: **Thursday, December 14 at 8:00am**

The final exam will be **cumulative**, including topics from the midterms and also:

- Second language acquisition and bilingualism from a linguistic perspective
- Semantics and pragmatics: Language meaning, and meaning in context
- Language and society: Regional, social, and other factors in language structure and use
- Language change: How and why languages change over time

### III. Course policies

Devices in class: Please use laptops or other devices only for class-related activities.

Studies show that students who use devices for non-class activities impair their own learning—and their neighbors’ learning too (Fried 2006; Sana, Weston, & Cepeda 2013).

Class absences: If you need to miss class for health or other reasons, be sure to keep up with course material and assignment deadlines posted on the course web site.

Lecture outlines and other items will be posted there shortly before or after class.

Collaboration/citation for assignments:

- (i) *HW assignments*: You are encouraged to **discuss** these with other members of our class. However, any **written work** you submit must be written by yourself alone unless otherwise specified.
- (ii) *Exams*: **No collaboration** of any kind is allowed during exams, but you will be able to ask clarification questions of the instructors.
- (iii) *Consulting outside materials* (materials other than course readings, handouts, course web pages, or in-class notes) for an assignment is **discouraged** unless otherwise stated, and may negatively impact your grade—but if any outside materials are consulted, you are required to **cite such outside references**.

Make-up exams: If you must miss a midterm exam, contact me *in advance* to determine whether you are eligible for a make-up exam. Without prior permission, a missed exam may only be made up if you can provide documentation from Health Services, your dean, or another appropriate authority to demonstrate that your absence was unexpected and unavoidable. (The *final* exam may only be made up with an official Final Exam Excuse.)

Weather cancellations: Unless University classes are officially canceled, you should assume that our class will be held, but if there is bad weather, use your own judgment about whether it is safe for you to travel to campus. If classes are canceled, check the course web site for announcements and schedule changes.

Other policies and resources: See “Information for Undergraduate Classes” at [this link](#) for UNC policies on: syllabus changes, attendance (incl. University Approved Absences), Honor Code, acceptable use of technology resources, Accessibility Resources (ARS), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Title IX, non-discrimination, the Undergraduate Testing Center, the Learning Center, and the Writing Center.

For new or updated course policies, see the [Course policies](#) page on the course web site.

#### IV. Schedule of course topics

The schedule of course topics is available on the course web site, at: <https://users.castle.unc.edu/~jlsmith/ling101/schedule.html>

#### V. For more about linguistics: Additional readings

Here are a few books about linguistics, written for a general audience, that are on reserve for this course (see “[Course reserves](#)” on Canvas). You might enjoy looking through them.

- *Patterns in the Mind*, by Ray Jackendoff                      UNC Libraries P37.J33 1994
- *Language Matters*, by Napoli & Lee-Schoenfeld        UNC Libraries P107.N37 2010
- *The Language Instinct*, by Steven Pinker                    UNC Libraries P106.P476 1994

## **VI. Focus Capacity: Natural Scientific Investigation**

### Learning Outcomes

These are the learning outcomes that are expected of students after completing a course.

- Demonstrate the ability to use scientific knowledge, logic, and imagination to construct and justify scientific claims about naturally occurring phenomena, including validation through rigorous empirical testing.
- Analyze and apply processes of scientific inquiry as dictated by the phenomena and questions at hand. These include generating and testing hypotheses or theories pertaining to the natural world; using logic and creativity to design investigations to test these hypotheses; collecting and interpreting data about the natural world; making inferences that respect measurement error; building and justifying arguments and explanations; communicating and defending conclusions; revising arguments and conclusions based on new evidence and/or feedback from peers; and synthesizing new knowledge into broader scientific understanding.
- Evaluate science-related claims and information from popular and/or peer-reviewed sources by examining the relationship between the evidence, arguments, and conclusions presented and by assessing consistency with existing knowledge from valid and reliable scientific sources.
- Identify, assess, and make informed decisions about ethical issues at the intersections of the natural sciences and society.

### Questions for Students

These are the types of questions you should be able to answer after completing a course.

- What rules govern the natural world and how are they discovered, tested, and validated?
- What is distinctive about the approach to understanding employed in the natural sciences?
- What challenges are encountered in making measurements of the natural world?
- What are the limits of investigation in the natural sciences?

## **VII. Focus Capacity: Ways of Knowing**

### Learning Outcomes

These are the learning outcomes that are expected of students after completing a course.

- Recognize and use one or more approach(es) to developing and validating knowledge of the unfamiliar world.
- Evaluate ways that temporal, spatial, scientific, and philosophical categories structure knowledge.
- Interrogate assumptions that underlie our own perceptions of the world.
- Employ strategies to mitigate or adjust for preconceptions and biases.
- Apply critical insights to understand patterns of experience and belief.

### Questions for Students

These are the types of questions you should be able to answer after completing a course.

- What norms and expectations do I take for granted?
- What categories and concepts frame my assumptions, experiences, and beliefs?
- What practices of investigation or inquiry best challenge those assumptions and expectations?
- How can I consider whether my beliefs might be wrong?