

Course information and policies

<i>Contact information:</i>	Jennifer Smith, 309 Smith Building j1smith@email.unc.edu (962-1192 for emergencies only; leave msg with dept office)
<i>Office hours:</i>	Th 1:00-3:00 and by appointment
<i>Class meets:</i>	MW 3:00-4:15, Dey 304
<i>Course web site:</i>	http://www.unc.edu/~j1smith/ling202.html • See the web site for assignments, relevant links, and a detailed course syllabus (updated after every class).

I. Goals and objectives

Major questions to be explored include: How and why do languages change over time? How can the linguistic history of a language or language family be studied? How does variation in a linguistic community relate to language change over time?

Specific objectives for this course

- Be able to explain some of the reasons **why** languages change
- Be able to explain some of the mechanisms for **how** languages change
- Understand how work in historical linguistics **informs** and **is informed by** other areas of linguistics, including:
 - Phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, (lexical) semantics
 - Language acquisition, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics
- Be able to **apply** the tools of historical linguistics to understand and analyze language data
- Be able to critically **evaluate** claims about language change and language relationships, distinguishing plausible from implausible proposals

Objectives common to many linguistics courses

- Be able to describe clearly, and analyze insightfully, complex patterns in linguistic data
- Be able to use and understand linguistic terms and notation
- Be able to state competing claims or hypotheses, and present a clear argument, based on evidence, for which is better

II. Prerequisites

The prerequisite for this course is Ling 101/Introduction to Language or permission of instructor.

*Please note that students may take **either** Ling 202 **or** Ling 525/Historical Linguistics, but not both.*

(Exception: Students who take 202 for their BA may later take 525 for their MA.)

III. Course requirements

Final grades for the course will be calculated as follows:

A. Attendance and participation	5%
B. Homework assignments (approx. 8–9)	25%
C. Midterm exam	35%
D. Final exam	35%

A. Attendance and participation

- You are expected to attend class, complete all readings and exercises on time, and participate in class activities and discussion—learning by doing is crucial in this course.
- Multiple absences will make it difficult for you to keep up in this course and will lower your participation grade (unless the absences are due to illness or other unavoidable events, in which case it is your responsibility to provide documentation).
- If you have to miss class, it is your responsibility to collect any missed materials or notes; check the online daily syllabus to see what you are responsible for.

B. Homework assignments

- There will be approximately 8–9 homework assignment during the semester. These are designed to help you practice the basic techniques and concepts of historical linguistics. Solving the problems or developing a good answer to the questions in the homework assignments is essential preparation for the exams.
- Homework assignments may be written up **individually**, or in **groups** of up to three students. When an assignment is submitted by a group, all members of the group will receive the same grade. Please remember that if you work in a group, it is your responsibility to make sure that you understand the material yourself.
- Homework is due at the **beginning** of class. **Hard copy is required** unless prior permission is obtained to submit an assignment by e-mail.
- What happens when a homework assignment is not turned in: The first missing homework will contribute a 0 to your homework average. Each additional missing homework will both contribute a 0 to your homework average and lower your homework average by one grade level (e.g., B becomes B–).

EVALUATION:

- Homework assignments are evaluated on a scale from 0 to 4. A homework average of 4 is an A, 3 is a B, 2 is a C, etc.; intermediate values correspond to +/- grades.
- Your work will be scored according to the following criteria. If the assignment is messy, hard to read, or poorly organized, an additional point will be deducted.

4 points (✓+)	The assignment has no or few errors and demonstrates that you understand the material well.
3 points (✓)	The assignment indicates a good-faith effort, but it has more than a few incorrect answers or shows an incomplete understanding of the material.
2 points (✓–)	The assignment is done superficially and/or is mostly incorrect.
0–1 point (0, –)	Not turned in, turned in late, or turned in significantly incomplete.

C. Midterm exam

- The midterm exam will take place in class on **Wednesday, October 10**.

D. Final exam

- The final exam is scheduled according to the category “Classes not otherwise provided for in this [exam] schedule,” which means that it will be held **Tuesday, December 11, at 4:00 pm**. See the Registrar’s exam calendar for more information.

IV. Course policies

Collaboration/citation policy: You are encouraged to discuss homework assignments with any of your classmates, whether or not you are working in a group with them. However, every

assignment must be **written up** by its author or group **separately**—no written assignment should copy from another. Please **list any collaborators** that you or your group have worked with on each assignment. Unless you are told otherwise, homework assignments are to be done without using any outside resources (other than course readings and notes). If you do use outside resources, you must cite your sources.

Late assignment policy: As a general rule, **no late assignments will be accepted for credit**. However, exceptions may be made in the following circumstances:

- (i) With *advance* permission (before the due date), extensions *may* be granted case-by-case.
- (ii) If a serious illness or other emergency unexpectedly causes you to be away from campus on the day an assignment is due, or otherwise makes you unable to complete an assignment, the assignment should be turned in at the earliest possible opportunity with a *written explanation* of the situation (or, even better, an e-mail to let me know what is going on as early as possible). On a case-by-case basis, such assignments *may* be accepted.

Make-up exam policy: If you absolutely must miss class on the day of the midterm exam, contact me *in advance* to determine whether you are eligible for a make-up exam. Without such prior permission, a missed exam may not be made up unless you can provide documentation from Health Services, your dean, or another appropriate authority to demonstrate that your absence was unexpected and unavoidable. (By University policy, final exams can only be made up with written permission from the Office of the Dean of Students.)

Weather/class cancellation policy: No matter what the weather is like, if the University is officially operating under Condition I during the time of our class, you should assume that class will be held. However, if you feel that the weather conditions make it unsafe for you to come to class, please get in touch with me before class in order to have your weather-related absence count as excused. (If the University is operating under Condition II or III during the time of our class, you should assume that class is cancelled.)

V. Strategies for success in this course

- **Check the web site:** Check the course web site to see what is due for the next class and what new online handouts have been posted, if any. [Remember to use the Refresh button or Ctrl+F5 to get the latest version of each web page that you visit.]
- **Review:** Go back over the material discussed in class to **make sure you understand** what we discussed and why. If you find you have questions about what was done, prepare to bring them up in the next class, or come talk to me in office hours.
- **Prepare:** If a reading, a data set, or a discussion question has been assigned for the next class, work through it. If you don't prepare, you may find that the discussion moves too fast for you to follow!

Please remember that the Honor Code of the university, which prohibits giving or receiving unauthorized aid on course work, is in effect in this course.

- See the full text of the Honor Code online at: <http://instrument.unc.edu/>

When specified, assignments and exams submitted for this course must be accompanied by a **signed statement** that you have complied with the requirements of the Honor Code in everything relating to that work, e.g., "I completed this assignment in full compliance with the Honor Code."

If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable collaboration or acceptable use of reference material on assignments, feel free to talk with me.