

Course information and policies

All times are EDT=GMT-04:00 until Sun Nov 1, then EST=GMT-05:00 [[compare with your time zone](#)]

Professor	Jennifer Smith (jlsmith@email.unc.edu) Office hours W 3:45–4:45 pm [Zoom link] and by appointment		
TAs	601 • Leah Dudley (lmdudley)	OH W 11:00am–12:00 noon and by appointment	
	602 • Dylan Elliott (dylanpe)	OH Th 11:00am–12:00 noon and by appointment	
	603 • Ben Coleman (benlouis)	OH Th 10:00–11:00am and by appointment	
	604 • Rebecca Winters (wintersr)	OH W 3:00–4:00pm and by appointment	
	605 • Jiefang Li (jiefang)	OH Th 8:30–9:30am and by appointment	
	All TA e-mail addresses: @email.unc.edu TA contact info available here		
Course format, meeting times	Lecture:	M <i>Online, synchronous</i> —12:00–12:50pm [Zoom link] (via Sakai)	
		W <i>Asynchronous learning activities</i> [info and schedule]	
	Recitation:	F <i><u>Synchronous</u></i> —12:00–12:50pm	<i><u>Asynchronous</u></i>
		601 [Leah's Sakai site]	604 [Rebecca's Sakai site]
		602 [Dylan's Sakai site]	605 [Jiefang's Sakai site]
		603 [Ben's Sakai site]	
Textbook	<i>Contemporary Linguistics</i> , 7ed. (O'Grady et al., 2017) • At the campus bookstore. Additional readings may be distributed in class or online.		
Web site	http://users.castle.unc.edu/~jlsmith/ling101.html Web site includes announcements, relevant links, mandatory course preparation, lecture outlines, and a detailed course syllabus (updated after every class).		

I. Overview and goals

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
- 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

II. Who is this course for?

This course will give you a sense of how rich and complex every person's unconscious knowledge of his or her native language is, and how systematic human language can be despite its impressive diversity. It will help you sharpen your problem-solving and analysis skills, and will give you perspectives that are useful in foreign-language learning. Also, analyzing language is fun! (This course satisfies the Social and Behavioral Sciences (Approaches) requirement.)

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: <http://linguistics.unc.edu/undergrad-program/>.

III. Course requirements and grading information

Final grades for the course are calculated as follows:

A. Participation and learning activities	25%
B. Homework assignments	35%
C. Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%

Grading scale:

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 and learning activities

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

- For ***synchronous lectures*** (usually Mondays)
 - Prepare by completing any assigned **readings** or practice activities.
 - Either **attend lecture** by Zoom or **watch the recording** once it has been posted.

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

- For ***asynchronous learning activities*** (usually available Mondays and due Thursdays)
 - Complete the assigned **learning activities**, which may include readings or videos.
 - Complete the **pass/fail learning assignments** (quiz, forum discussion post, etc.).

The proportion of learning assignments passed makes up 50% of your grade for participation and learning activities.

- For ***recitations***

Synchronous recitations | 601, 602, 603 (Fridays)

- **Attend** in person or by Zoom, as directed by your TA's policy (603 is Zoom only)
- **Participate** in activities: group discussions, polls, problem-solving in Google docs, etc.

Asynchronous recitations | 604, 605 (Recitation activities available for about two days around Fridays)

- **Complete** all assigned learning activities
- **Participate** in activities: forum discussions, polls or quizzes, small-group collaborative problem-solving in Google docs, etc.

Recitation is an especially good opportunity to ask questions, discuss ideas, and learn by doing with your TA and classmates. *Your recitation grade makes up 50% of your grade for participation and learning activities*, and is based on how frequently you attend/complete recitations and the quality of your participation in problem-solving and discussions.

- If you are in a ***synchronous*** recitation but will be unable to attend some week, either for health or for other reasons, contact your TA as early as possible and **request permission** to participate asynchronously that week instead. **Stay home if you are sick (checklist)**.
 - If you are unable to complete ***any*** recitation activities some week (including the asynchronous option), contact your TA as early as possible; recitation absences may be considered 'excused' based on the judgment of your TA.
- Always remember to check the web site and watch for assignments and deadlines.

B. Homework (HW) assignments

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

- There are about 12 HW assignments: one about every week except when there is an exam. These emphasize the use of course concepts to solve linguistic analysis problems. Each HW

requires intellectual investment equivalent to at least one page of academic writing.

- HW assignments will be graded on this scale: **95 / 85 / 0**. For 95, an assignment is complete and mostly correct. For 85, an assignment is complete.
- HW assignments are due on Sakai **by 12:00 noon**, usually on Mondays. The lowest HW score is dropped, so ~~no late HW is accepted for credit~~ (official ARS accommodations excepted).
[Update, Sept 16: See revised [Late assignments policy](#) on the course web site.]
- You will get feedback on completed HW on Sakai and in your recitation. You may ask questions about the current HW in your recitation, or by email to one of the instructors.

C. Exams

There is one midterm exam and one final exam. Exams will be taken in Sakai. They are open-book and open-note, but are to be done without collaboration. Exam dates are firm; the midterm will only be postponed in extreme circumstances, such as if a large number of class cancellations causes a major schedule adjustment. The final exam date is set by the Office of the Registrar.

- MIDTERM EXAM (on Sakai): ~~Monday, September 21~~ now **Wednesday, October 7**
 - The study of human language: Linguistics, mental grammar
 - Phonetics: Describing the sounds of language
 - Phonology: Sound patterns in the mental grammar
 - Morphology: Meaningful parts of words
 - **Syntax: The structure of phrases and sentences**
- FINAL EXAM (on Sakai): **Saturday, Nov 21 at 12:00 noon**

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

- ~~Syntax: The structure of phrases and sentences~~
- Semantics and pragmatics: Language meaning, and meaning in context
- First and second language acquisition: How it happens, and what that tells us
- Language variation: Regional, social, and other factors in language structure and use
- Language change: How and why languages change over time

IV. Course policies

Community standards and COVID-19 screening: Every student, employee and visitor to the UNC-Chapel Hill campus is expected to adhere to the [Community Standards](#) and [University Guidelines](#) when on campus. These standards include the three Ws: *wear* a cloth covering over your nose and mouth, *wash* your hands for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, and *wait* 6 feet apart.

- Anyone **experiencing any symptom(s)** indicated on the [COVID-19 screening checklist](#) **must not go to class or work**. Please self-isolate and contact your health care provider.
- Students in **face-to-face/hybrid** recitations are required to **wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times** when in the classroom. This requirement is to protect us all as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, your TA will ask you to leave immediately and will [submit a report](#) to the Office of Student Conduct. At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. An exemption to the mask-wearing community standard will not typically be considered to be a reasonable accommodation. Individuals with a disability or health condition that prevents them from safely wearing a face mask must seek alternative accommodations through [Accessibility Resources and Service](#)—or, for

this course, you may enroll in one of three **fully remote recitation sections**. For additional information about face masks, please see [Carolina Together](#).

Collaboration/citation policy for submitted assignments:

- You are encouraged to discuss learning assignments and HW assignments with other students in this course, but you must write up and submit your solutions independently.
- If any reference materials other than course readings, handouts, the course web pages, or in-class notes are consulted, you are required to list such outside references in your assignment. (Outside materials will usually not be necessary unless otherwise specified.)

Make-up exam policy: If you absolutely must miss the midterm exam, contact an instructor *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. (The *final* exam may only be made up with official permission from the office of the Dean of Students.)

Honor Code statement: All students are expected to follow the guidelines of the UNC Honor Code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. More information is available at <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>. If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable collaboration or acceptable use of reference material on assignments, please feel free to talk with us at any time.

Changes to the syllabus: We, your instructors, reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including exam dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), if unforeseen circumstances occur. Any changes will be announced as early as possible so that you can adjust your schedules. If the health situation on campus deteriorates, TAs with face-to-face/hybrid recitations reserve the right to convert to remote-only recitations.

Respect and diversity: We value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. We broadly define diversity to include race, gender identity, national origin, native language variety, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, political background, and physical and learning ability. We strive to make this course an inclusive space for all students. Please let us know if there is anything we can improve.

Title IX resources: Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance Adrienne Allison (Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (<https://caps.unc.edu/>; confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at <https://safe.unc.edu/>.

Accessibility resources: UNC Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. See the ARS website (<https://ars.unc.edu>) for contact information.

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

V. 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>

VI. For more about linguistics: Additional readings

Here are a few interesting books about linguistics, written for a general audience, that have been put on reserve (see “[Course reserves](#)” on Sakai). 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