

*Introduction to Language in the Humanities*

10:30 – 12:18 MW

Enarson 212

Instructor: Steve Conley

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Office: 218 Oxley Hall

Office hours: 12:30 – 1:30 MW or by appointment.

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**Required Texts:**

Tserdanelis, Georgios. and Wai Yi Peggy Wong (eds.) (2004).

*Language Files, 9th Edition*. The Ohio State University.Homepage: <http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/publications/files/>

Bauer, Laurie and Peter Trudgill (eds.) (1998).

*Language Myths*. Penguin Books.**Course Website:** <http://www.ling.osu.edu/~sconley/201/>

**Course Objectives:** The objective of this course is getting you to think critically about language. What does that mean? “Thinking critically” is often academic-speak for “being able to have a knowledgeable opinion.” As you will discover, there are many opinions and beliefs about language—you may be surprised to learn how many!—but often they are based on myth rather than reality.

In this class, you will learn about language as a uniquely human phenomenon and examine the properties that all languages have in common. You will learn about language diversity, language change, and the relationships between language, culture, and identity. Finally, you will learn about some of the applications of linguistic theory in other fields, such as computer science and education.

**Reading Assignments:** Please read the assigned reading **before** the class they are to be discussed in. I recommend taking notes while you are reading so that you can ask questions about the material in class. If you find that you are struggling to keep up with the reading assignments, please contact me or visit me during my office hours so I can help you before it becomes a serious problem.

**Homework Assignments:** Homework assignments must be handed in **before** the start of class on the day they are due, otherwise they will not be accepted. You may miss two homework assignments with no penalty. The purpose of the homework is to help you check your own understanding of the reading material. You are not expected to answer all of the exercise questions correctly and this is reflected in the grading.

**Exams:** There will be an in-class midterm exam and a take home final exam.

**Quizzes:** There will be four quizzes. They are not currently on the schedule but will be added to a revised schedule that I will hand out on the second day of class.

**In-Class Activities:** There will be in-class activities nearly every day, including an ongoing group project which I will discuss later. You may miss two in-class activities

with no penalty. However, if you know ahead of time that you will miss class, please let me know in case it affects the ongoing group project.

**Myth Reports:** You must choose (from a list I will give you) two chapters from the book *Language Myths*, read them, and submit a short (1 page) report on each myth. The due dates and other details for this assignment will be explained on a supplementary handout on the second day of class.

**Talks & Experiments:** Students in all sections of Linguistics 201 must fulfill a requirement called *Linguistics Outside of the Classroom: Talks and Experiments*. To fulfill this requirement you must either participate in two linguistics experiments or attend two talks or video presentations or do one of each. Each project requires you to complete and submit a questionnaire. Questionnaires are given out at the talks and experiments. This component is detailed in a supplement to this syllabus, and is also available at <http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/courses/outside.html>.

**Academic Misconduct:** No academic misconduct will be tolerated, and as required by OSU policies, any suspicions of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported. If there is any doubt as to what constitutes cheating/plagiarism, please **ask** before committing the act. Cheating/plagiarism committed in ignorance is still considered academic misconduct.

**Etiquette:** Please be courteous in the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from harsh comments of others, talking while someone else is addressing the class or group, reading newspapers or other material unrelated to the lesson in class, entering class late or leaving class early, leaving your cellular phone ringer on and/or answering your cellular phone.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at (614) 292-3307 in 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Course Grade:**

Homework	15%	Talks & Experiments	5%
In-Class Activities	10%	Midterm	20%
4 Quizzes	20%	Final Exam	20%
2 Myth Reports	10%	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	E

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus is subject to change (with sufficient notice). The most up-to-date version of this syllabus can be found on the course web site.

## Course Schedule

	Topic	Reading <b>due</b>	Homework <b>due</b>
<b>Week 1</b>			
Wed., 9/24	Introduction	(1.1-1.4 if you missed class)	-
<b>Week 2</b>			
Mon, 9/26	Language in the Mind and Throughout Time	2.1-2.2, 9.2-9.3, 12.1-12.2	
Wed., 9/28	Language in the Mouth (Phonetics)	3.1-3.3	3.6: 2 (a-e), 3 (a-e)
<b>Week 3</b>			
Mon., 10/3	More Phonetics	3.4, 3.7	3.6: 2 (h-k), 4
Wed., 10/5	Patterns of Sound (Phonology)	4.1-4.3	4.3: 1-2
<b>Week 4</b>			
Mon., 10/10	Sounds in the Mind and Throughout Time	9.4, 12.3-12.4	9.4: 1-2
Wed., 10/12	What Words Are Made Of (Morphology)	5.1, 5.3	5.2: 1 (a-d), 2 (a-d) 5.3: 1 (b, g)
<b>Week 5</b>			
Mon., 10/17	More Morphology	5.4, 12.6	5.3: 1 (o, t) 5.4: 1
Wed., 10/19	Writing Systems	15.2	To be announced.
<b>Week 6</b>			
Mon., 10/24	MIDTERM	none	none
Wed., 10/26	How To Put Words Together (Syntax)	6.1-6.3	6.3: 1-2
<b>Week 7</b>			
Mon., 10/31	More Syntax	6.4	6.4: 2 (a-c), 3
Wed., 11/2	Even More Syntax	6.5, 6.6, 12.7	6.5: 1, 4
<b>Week 8</b>			
Mon., 11/7	Later Stages of First Language Acquisition	9.5, 9.6	
Wed., 11/9	What It All Means (Semantics)	7.1-7.3, 12.8	7.3: 1, 4
<b>Week 9</b>			
Mon., 11/14	What It All <i>Really</i> Means (Pragmatics)	8.1, 8.2, 8.4	8.2: 1
Wed., 11/16	Why Other People Talk Funny (Language Variation)	10.1-10.4	10.2 (all)
<b>Week 10</b>			
Mon., 11/21			
Wed., 11/23			
<b>Week 11</b>			
Mon., 11/28			
Wed., 11/30	Review	none	none
<b>FINAL EXAM</b> due by Thursday, Dec. 8, 5 PM.			

\*\*\* This schedule is subject to revision. See course website for latest version. \*\*\*