



01:615:101

Exploring Language

(Spring 2019) M &amp; TH, 11:30-12:50, SC-115

Troy Messick

[troy.messick@rutgers.edu](mailto:troy.messick@rutgers.edu)

Room 302 18 Seminary Place

Office Hours: M/W 3:00pm-4:00pm (or by appointment)

**Course Description:** This course is an invitation to explore language from multiple perspectives. We will work together to discover what it means to know a language, how we acquire language, how and why language changes, how language defines who we are and brings us together in communities, what seemingly different languages share in common, and what it means to study language scientifically.

**Prerequisite(s):** None.

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Text:** *Language Files*, 12<sup>th</sup> edition

**Bergman, Anouschka, Kathleen Currie Hall, Sharon Miriam Ross (eds.)**

**ISBN-13:** 978-0814252703

### Core Curriculum Learning Goals Met:

This course satisfies the Core Curriculum Learning Goal AHq “Understand the nature of human languages and their speakers.”



### Department Learning Goals

You will reason about language, identify how incorrect or irrational assumptions and prejudices distort understanding of language, demonstrate knowledge about language in the world, including a sophisticated understanding of linguistic and cultural variation, and evaluate popular views about the nature of human languages and their speakers.

## Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic concepts of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics.
2. Understand how language is acquired in normal and abnormal circumstances.
3. Understand the basic neural underpinnings of language.
4. Understand the differences between human language and animal communication.
5. Understand how languages change and evolve over time.
6. Understand how language and cultural influence one another.
7. Understand how language can influence our perceptions of individuals and populations.

## Grade Distribution:

Quizzes	10%
(In class) Assignments	30%
Midterm I	20%
Midterm II	20%
Final Exam	20%

## Letter Grade Distribution:

$\geq 90$	A	73 - 76	C
87 - 89	B+	67 - 69	D+
80 - 86	B	63 - 66	D
77 - 79	C+	$\leq 59$	F

## Course Policies:

### • Quizzes

- Through out the semester, you will be given seven (7) quizzes each worth 2 points.
- Quizzes will not be announced before hand.
- You can miss two (2) quizzes without penalty.
- The purpose of the quizzes is to help prepare you for the exam, and also help me assess how well you are learning the material.

### • Assignments

- You will be given three (3) assignments during the course each worth 10 points.
- The first will involve applying concept learned and practiced in the first section of the course to a novel problem set.
- The final two will be short (approximately 500 word) reflection essays you will write in response to additional reading assignments.
- You may discuss the assignments with other students, but each student must independently turn in their own assignment.
- Late assignments are accepted up to one week after the due date, but with a 2 point penalty. After a week past the due date, assignments will no longer be accepted.
- The purpose of the assignments is to get you to engage critically and independently with the material covered in the course.

- **Exams**

- There are three exams given throughout the course of the semester each worth 20 points.
- None of the exams are cumulative and consist of 40 multiple choice questions.
- The purpose of the exams is to reinforce the main points discussed in the course and also to assess your learning.

- **Extra Credit**

- Some faculty and graduate students in the Department of Linguistics do experimental research on language. This research depends on the participation of undergraduate participants.
- You have the option of participating in Linguistics experiments during the semester. Each experiment usually takes between 20 and 45 minutes.
- Experiments are offered through the Linguistics department experiment management system (sona): <http://rutgerslinguistics.sona-systems.com/> . Towards the beginning of the semester, your name and email will be added to the experiment system. You will be issued an anonymous id to participate in experiments through this system. Once Linguistics experiments are posted, you can sign up online. Note that this system is different from the psychology pool, and you should not use a psychology ID to log in to the system.
- Any student enrolled in a Linguistics undergraduate course is eligible to participate in Linguistics experiments, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language status, or impairments, disorders, or disabilities (as long as his/her instructor provides the opportunity). You cannot be denied participation for any of these reasons.
- You have the right to not participate in experiments to earn extra credit. You may speak with me about possible research alternatives, such as reading a pre-approved scholarly article in linguistics and writing a 2-page paper summarizing it.

### **Academic Integrity Policy Summary:**

Please take a moment to review the university's academic integrity policy:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

### **Self-Reporting Absence Application**

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

### **Disability Services**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order, to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

### **Counseling, ADAP, & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners. (848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ [www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)

### **Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181. (848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

### **Scarlet Listeners**

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space. (732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

### **Just in Case Web App**

<http://codu.co/cee05e> Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

### Tentative Course Outline:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. However, you must keep up with the reading assignments. Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester.

Week	Content
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Th Jan 24: <i>Introduction &amp; Prescriptive vs Descriptive rules</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 1.0-1.3; 17.6</li></ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Jan 28 &amp; Th Jan 31: <i>Sound</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 2.0-2.5; 3.0-3.3; 3.5</li></ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Feb 4 &amp; Th Feb 7: <i>Words</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 4.0-4.5</li></ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Feb 11 &amp; Th Feb 14: <i>Syntax</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 5.0-5.5</li></ul>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Feb 18 &amp; Th Feb 21: <i>Meaning</i> <b>Assignment #1 due Th!</b></li><li>• Reading assignment: 6.0-6.4; 7.0-7.4</li></ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Feb 25 <b>Exam 1</b> Th Feb 28: <i>Acquisition</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 8.0-8.5</li></ul>
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Mar 4 &amp; Th Mar 7: <i>Acquisition &amp; Sign language</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 1.5; 2.7</li></ul>
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Mar 11 &amp; Th Mar 14: <i>Aphasia &amp; Language Disorders</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 9.0-9.2</li></ul>
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Mar 25 &amp; Th Mar 28: <i>Animal Communication</i> <b>Assignment #2 due Th!</b></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 14.0-14.3</li></ul>
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Apr 1 <b>Exam 2</b> Th Apr 4: <i>Linguistic Relativity</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 11.2</li></ul>
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Apr 8 &amp; Th Apr 11: <i>Linguistic Relativity &amp; Dialects</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 10.0-10.3; 12.0-12.7</li></ul>
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Apr 15 &amp; Th Apr 18 <i>Linguistic Diversity &amp; Language Contact</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 13.0-13.6</li></ul>
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Apr 22 &amp; Th Apr 25: <i>Language Change &amp; Language &amp; Race</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: LF 10.4-10.5; 11.3</li></ul>
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M Apr 29 &amp; Th May 2: <i>Language &amp; Gender</i></li><li>• Reading assignment: TBD</li></ul>
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M May 6: <i>Wrapping Up</i> <b>Assignment #3 due M</b></li><li>• Final Exam TBD</li></ul>