UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGL 306A: INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS
WINTER 2018
(Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:20, St J2 2003)

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Office: Hagey Hall 245
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9:30 – 10:00, Thursdays, 2:00-3:00 (or by appointment)
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COURSE AIMS AND OUTCOMES
This course is an introduction to the field of linguistics. As linguistics is itself an entire
discipline (like political science or physics), that is a very tall order. We will at least touch on
almost all the major subfields in linguistics, including the history of language, sociolinguistics
and linguistic variation, and pragmatics. While our focus will be on the ‘core’ areas of
contemporary technical linguistics – phonology, morphology and syntax – we will also
examine broader questions about how language works, where it comes from, and the role it
has in social life. Wherever possible, we’ll also think about the relation between linguistics
and rhetoric, which is an older tradition of thinking about language.

My aim is to provide you with knowledge of linguistics that will help you with the rest of
your program, that will enrich your understanding of literature, rhetoric, and communication.
By the end of the course you should:

• Understand the basic shape of linguistics as a discipline and have a basic grasp of
  some of the philosophical and methodological issues facing linguists
• Be familiar and comfortable with a broad range of concepts in linguistics, which
together cover most of the key subfields within the discipline
• Have a good grasp of basic concepts in phonology, morphology, syntax and the
  study of linguistic variation.
• Be able to analyse sentences and words grammatically.
• Be prepared for advanced or specialized study in linguistics
• Understand many of the key linguistic features of the English language.

READINGS:
There are no formal printed readings for the course; you’ll become acquainted with the
material through lectures and occasional on-line material I’ll assign during the semester. If
you wish to consult a text, I have put two good textbooks (which cover most of the topics
we examine on the course) on reserve at Dana Porter: René Dirven and Marjolijn Verspoor,
*Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics*, 2nd revised edition (Amsterdam: John
Benjamins, 2004); and William O’Grady and John Archibald, *Contemporary Linguistic Analysis:
Throughout the term I will provide links to websites that provide information and analysis relevant to the topics on the course. You should look at these whenever you can: they will help master the material on the course.

The PowerPoint presentations used in the lectures will be posted on the course LEARN site.

**CLASSES**

Because there are few readings, nearly all the material covered will be presented in class. Attendance is therefore essential. The class will be in lecture format, but questions and discussion are encouraged. There will be times when I ask the class to discuss an issue in groups and there will be times when I will want questions about the material from the class. The material is often quite technical: if you aren’t clear about what a term means or how we analyse something, ask about it in class (if you are confused, chances are someone else is as well).

**ASSESSMENT:**

The course is assessed on the basis of two midterm exams, given in class, and a final exam. The first midterm will cover the material we look at in weeks 1-5 (general questions in linguistics, phonetics, phonology and morphology). The second midterm will cover syntax, discourse theory and speech act theory. The final exam will cover all the material on the course.

First midterm 25%
Second midterm 25%
Final Exam 50%

If you fail to appear for an examination, you will be given a mark of 0 for that exam, unless you provide evidence of a medical condition that made it impossible to sit the exam or of an unforeseeable domestic crisis. Please note that the Final Examination period for Winter 2018 is April 9-24 and that student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (this applies also to the midterm exams).

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**Introduction: Jan 4**
Thursday: What is language? How do we study it?

**What is linguistics and what does it have to do with language? January 9-11 (week 2)**
Tuesday: Two views of language: Steven Pinker and Dan Everett.
Reading: You should read the *New Yorker* article on Dan Everett and watch the Steven Pinker video before class. Both are linked from the class website
Thursday: What is linguistics?

**Words: their meanings, structure and history (weeks 3 and 4) January 16-18**
Tuesday: Words, word meanings and word history
Thursday: Word structure – the classes of words
January 23-25
Tuesday: Morphology – derivational
Thursday: Morphology – inflectional

Sounds of language  (weeks 5 and 6)
January 30 - February 1
Tuesday: Phonetics
Thursday: Phonology

February 6-8
Tuesday: Intonation, review for midterm
Thursday: Midterm 1

Syntax: combining words into sentences (weeks 7 and 8)
February 13-15
Tuesday: Syntax
Thursday: Syntax

Reading week!: February 20-22

February 27 - March 1
Tuesday: Syntax
Thursday: Syntax

Style and situation: embedding sentences in life (weeks 9 and 10)
March 6-8
Tuesday: Syntax, stylistics, and rhetoric
Thursday: Types of signs, language as discourse

March 13-15
Tuesday: Speech act theory
Thursday: Midterm 2

Language and society (weeks 11 and 12)
March 20-22
Tuesday: Linguistic variation: dialects
Thursday: Linguistic variation: sociolinguistics

March 27-29
Tuesday: Linguistic variation: style
Thursday: Language, origins, historical change

April 3
Tuesday: Review for final examination
**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Cross-listed course (requirement for all Arts courses)**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**Academic Integrity**

*Academic Integrity:* In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/administration/policies/academic-integrity/) for more information.

*Discipline:* A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/administration/policies/71). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/administration/policies/718).

*Grievance:* A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/administration/policies/70), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

*Appeals:* A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/administration/policies/72).

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

*Note for students with disabilities:* The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.