

**Introduction to Linguistics**  
**LING 2001, Fall, 2017**  
**Section TY2, code # 17458**  
**4 hours; 4 credits**

Instructor: Rennie Gonsalves

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:00-9:00 & 12:30-1:30, and Thursdays 8:00-9:00 in 1420 Ingersoll

**Class meetings: Tuesdays 2:15-3:30 PM, and Thursdays 1:25-3:30 in 2154 Boylan**

**Course Description:**

This course will introduce the core areas of linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. It will also introduce several other selected areas of linguistics, including historical linguistics, first and second language acquisition, and neurolinguistics. In spite of our very stringent time constraints, we will try to make it possible for students to investigate and report on other areas of linguistics covered in the text; these areas include psycholinguistics, natural sign language, sociolinguistics, writing systems, animal communication, and computational linguistics.

The main focus of the course will be on the core areas. Readings from the course text will introduce the general methodology and basic ideas in each of these areas and will be accompanied in each case by appropriate exercises and problems. The readings will provide the groundwork for doing the problems and we will go over them in class. Participation in class assignments will be especially important. You should come to class having read the assigned reading and done the problems so that you will be prepared to present and discuss problem solutions with the rest of the class. Occasionally groups of students will be assigned specific problems; each group will work on its problem and then present a solution to the larger class. I will form groups during the first week of classes and we will use these groups throughout the semester.

One further comment: the material in this course is substantial and sometimes fairly technical. You will probably find it challenging. However, if you read the text carefully, do the exercises in the study guide, and actively participate in class when we discuss the concepts and go over the exercises, you should be able to do very well, and you will definitely learn a lot about the nature of language. In addition, I will set up study groups on Blackboard—the same groups that we will form during the first week. You should use the discussion board on your group page to help each other study the material in the course. I have set aside three class sessions at the end of the semester for group presentations. We will talk about the nature of these presentations during the first week—they will be based on material from our text.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course you should be able to

- demonstrate a knowledge of how languages are similar and how they may differ;

- use the concepts of linguistics to describe a variety of linguistic phenomena;
- apply the tools of linguistic analysis to the sounds, words, and sentences of a language;
- explain how languages change over time and give specific examples of language change;
- discuss important discoveries concerning first and second language acquisition;
- describe the findings of neurolinguistics concerning how and where language is processed in the brain

(Course objectives adapted from Contemporary Linguistics instructors' manual)

**Course Texts (Required and Available at the Brooklyn College Bookstore in Boylan Hall; You should have these texts with you on the first day of class.):**

O'Grady, William, et al., editors, *Contemporary Linguistics; An Introduction*, seventh edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.

O'Grady, William, et al., *Study Guide for Contemporary Linguistics*, seventh edition, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.

**Course Schedule:** (HW=homework on corresponding chapter in *Study Guide* or the text.)

1. Tuesday, August 29: Introductions, the language instinct, Preview of the text (Chapter 1)
2. Thursday, August 31: Continue with Chapter 1; begin Phonetics (Chapter 2); HW1 Due.
3. Tuesday, September 5: Continue with Phonetics
4. Thursday, September 7: Continue with Phonetics; HW2 Due.
5. Tuesday, September 12: Phonology (Chapter 3)
6. Thursday, September 14: Continue with Phonology
7. \*\*Tuesday, September 19: Continue with Phonology; HW3 Due.  
(note that Tuesday, 9/19 is a Conversion Day and follows a Thursday schedule)
8. Tuesday, September 26: Morphology (Chapter 4)
9. Thursday, September 28: Continue with Morphology; HW4 Due.
10. Tuesday, October 3: Syntax (Chapter 5)
11. Thursday, October 5: Continue with Syntax
12. Tuesday, October 10: Continue with Syntax; HW5 Due
13. Thursday, October 12: **Midterm Exam**
14. Tuesday, October 17: Return Midterm Exam, begin Semantics (Chapter 6)
15. Thursday, October 19: Continue with Semantics; HW6 Due.
16. Tuesday, October 24: Historical Linguistics (Chapter 8)
17. Thursday, October 26: Continue with Historical Linguistics
18. Tuesday, October 31: Continue with Historical Linguistics
19. Thursday, November 2: Continue with Historical Linguistics; HW7 Due
20. Tuesday, November 7: First Language Acquisition (Chapter 9)
21. Thursday, November 9: First Language Acquisition; HW 8 Due
22. Tuesday, November 14: Brain and Language (Chapter 12)
23. Thursday, November 16: Brain and Language (Chapter 12) HW 9 Due  
\*\*(note that Tuesday, 11/21 is a Conversion Day and follows a Friday schedule)
24. Tuesday, November 28: Review; Go Over Practice Final
25. Thursday, November 30: Group Presentations on Miscellaneous Chapters
26. Tuesday, December 5: Group Presentations on Miscellaneous Chapters

27. Thursday, December 7: Group Presentations on Miscellaneous Chapters  
28. Tuesday, December 12: Review; Language & Brain Assignment Due (ExCr)  
**Final Exam: Thursday, December 14, 1:00-3:00; The Final Exam schedule is available here:**  
[http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/schools/naturalsciences/undergraduate/computers\\_forstudents.php](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/schools/naturalsciences/undergraduate/computers_forstudents.php)

Note: A double asterisk (\*\*) indicates a conversion day.

### **Grading:**

Grades will be based on the following percentages:  
attendance and class participation 10%;  
homework 20%, midterm exam 30%, and final exam 40%.

### **Attendance and Participation:**

Attendance and participation will be very important in this class. More than 3 unexcused absences will have a profound negative impact on your semester grade. You will be allowed only 3 excused absences. If you need to be absent, please e-mail me to let me know.

### **About Homework Assignments:**

Your homework assignments are worth 20% of the grade. They will be taken mostly from the study guide by Teresa Vanderweide, covering the core chapters plus historical linguistics, chapters 1 to 7. Homework assignments 8, 9, and 10 will come respectively from the exercises at the end of chapters 10, 11, and 13 in the O'Grady text. You will notice that almost all of the answers for the assignments in each chapter in the study guide are at the end of the book. Nevertheless, in order to get the educational benefit of the assignments, you should do the assignments in pencil before checking the answers at the back of the book. If you find a particular exercise difficult, after checking your answers the first time you might want to erase your answers and try again until you feel you have the hang of it. You will need to hand in the homework assignment for a chapter on the last day that we are scheduled to cover the topic of that chapter in class. Keeping up with the homework is essential for this class. **A homework assignment handed in late will lose 50% of the credit assigned for that homework assignment.** Much of our class time will be spent going over the homework, which will be our way of making sure that we have a good understanding of the material covered.

### **Resources:**

Our text, *Contemporary Linguistics*, has a wide range of web-based resources that you are encouraged to make use of—go to: <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/linguistics>. You will need to register as a student—it's free and it only takes a few minutes. You should give the following e-mail address when asked for your instructor's e-mail address: [renniegons@yahoo.com](mailto:renniegons@yahoo.com). Brooklyn College also provides us with a Blackboard.com site, which we will use throughout the course. If you do not already have one, you will need to get a CUNY Portal account in order to access the Blackboard site for our class. To register, go to: <http://portal.cuny.edu/> then click on Log-in, then on Register-now, and follow the instructions for registering as a student.

**Decorum:**

Throughout the semester there will be a great deal of in-class discussion, in small groups and in the larger class. In addition, I have set up our Blackboard page and will require you to post responses to what we have been reading and to each other's comments. You might also have occasion to send e-mails to me or to other members of our class about the work we are doing. All of these interactions should be governed by high standards of politeness and respect for each other. Nothing less is acceptable.

**Cell phones:**

Your cell phone should be turned off before you enter the classroom. If there is a need for it to remain on, please keep it silent and do not respond to messages in the classroom—step out if you need to. Texting during class is specifically forbidden.

**Statement on the University's policy on Academic Integrity:**

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives.php>

If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

**Statement in Reference to the Center for Student Disability Services:**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. The Center is located at 138 Roosevelt Hall.

If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide me with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with me.

**The state law regarding nonattendance because of religious beliefs:**

You should check this on page 64 in the 2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin  
[http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/off\\_registrar/2015-2016\\_Undergraduate\\_Bulletin.pdf](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/off_registrar/2015-2016_Undergraduate_Bulletin.pdf)

**Information Regarding College Deadlines and Regulations:**

See the Fall 2017 Calendar at:

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/enrollment/registrar/bulletins/fall17.php>