FEATURED LINGUISTICS COURSES – Fall 2021

COURSES NOT REQUIRING LINGUISTICS BACKGROUND

Eng 316: English Language Variation in the U.S.

Professor Tom Purnell
MWF 11:00-11:50

Why do some speakers of American English talk differently? English 316 offers an overview of language variation in United States English from a current sociolinguistic perspective. Historical, social, regional, ethnic, gender, and stylistic variation are examined, along with models for describing, explaining, and applying sociolinguistic knowledge. Each student transcribes a recording from the Dictionary of American English and compares the variation in that transcription with those made by other students in the class. Students are exposed to a wide range of data on language variation focused on vernacular varieties of American English in general.
Prerequisite – sophomore standing

Eng 318: Second Language Acquisition

Professor Juliet Huynh
MW 2:30-3:45

Systematic study of how people learn ESL and other second languages. An interdisciplinary survey emphasizing research in linguistics, psychology, education, and sociology into the phenomenon of second language acquisition.
Prerequisite – sophomore standing

Ling 101: Human Language

Rebecca Shields
MW 12:05-12:55 + 1 weekly discussion, 6210 Social Science

In this class we investigate the inner workings of human language. Humans across the world use language to communicate, and they acquire this complex communication system effortlessly and rapidly as very young children. How is human language structured, and how does it work? We will learn about the fascinating diversity of human languages across the globe, and also about the intriguing commonalities that all languages share. The course includes a basic introduction to the study of phonetics and phonology (speech sounds), as well as morphology and syntax (word and sentence structures). We will also consider related questions such as: How do humans acquire language as children? What are signed languages, and how are they different from spoken languages? Students will get hands-on experience analyzing linguistic data from a diverse set of languages and dialects in the small-group discussion section.
The course is appropriate for both majors and non-majors and is open to anyone with an interest in language science. No prerequisites.

COURSES FOR STUDENTS WITH SOME LINGUISTICS BACKGROUND

Ling 303: Language, History, and Society
Professor Joe Salmons
MWF 9:55-10:45

Relation of variation and change to formal properties of human language; consideration of linguistic typology, basic concepts and methods of diachronic analysis. Topics include: language classification; language and social identity, geography, power and prestige; language contact; registers; writing systems.
Prior coursework in linguistics recommended.

Eng 420: Third Language Acquisition   NEW!
Professor Jacee Cho
TR 2:30-3:45

This course provides an introduction to third language (L3) acquisition within the generative theory. Questions we will address in this course include: (1) What is special about L3 acquisition? (3) What is the initial stage of L3 acquisition (native language (L1), second language (L2), or both?) (3) What motivates linguistic transfer selectivity between the two available systems (i.e., L1 and L2)?

GRADUATE-LEVEL COURSES

Ling 800: Research Methods & Materials
Professor Ryan Henke
TR 1:00-2:15

This course will help students who are engaged in language-oriented research to develop a variety of professional academic skills. Sample activities might include:
- Creating a Zotero library
- Writing a conference abstract
- Giving a conference-level presentation
- Creating a personal academic website
- Creating a CV
- Working on a mock grant proposal
- Working on a mock job application
- Giving and getting peer feedback throughout these tasks

The course is most appropriate for graduate students who have at least one research project (either ongoing or completed).

Ling 977: Seminar – Syntax & Linearization
Professor Yafei Li
W 2:25-5:25

The theory of Universal Grammar includes different models of word order (e.g. parametric linearization and antisymmetric syntax). It will be shown that none of the existing models is adequate for accommodating the word order traits found with serial verb constructions, coordination, certain "linker" words, the locations of constituents in the "functional region" of a clause, etc. We will explore an alternative model based on two hypotheses: (1) that syntax favors less "costly" operations and (2) that the 2nd law of thermodynamics is behind the measurement of the cost in word-order-related operations of syntax. This theory also has other unexpected but arguably desirable implications. It might sound a little wild for linguistics, which makes it all the more enjoyable.

See our **Upcoming Courses** page for the full list of linguistics courses offered across campus!