

# Linguistics 201

## Introduction to Linguistic Theory

Wendell Kimper, Fall 2009

## Syllabus

### 1 Contact

**Email:** wkimper@linguist.umass.edu

**Class:** MWF, 10:10-11:00, Machmer W-11

**Office Hours:** M 3:00-4:00

**Office Location:** South College 225

Please do not wear heavy scents (perfume, cologne, etc) to class or to my office hours, as I am allergic. Other personal care products (deodorant, shampoo, lotion, etc) are fine in moderation.

### Course Website

There is a course website in SPARK. To log onto Spark, go to <https://spark.oit.umass.edu/> and then click *Go to Spark log in page*. Enter the same username and password that you use for UMail. Copies of the syllabus, handouts, and homework assignments will be uploaded to SPARK, and you can use it to track your grade.

### How to find my office

Go in the “A” entrance of South College, and go up the stairs. The Linguistics Department main office is on your left (my mailbox is in there). Turn right and into the hallway; my office is the second door on the left.

### 2 Course Goals

The structure of human language is complicated and diverse — but it’s also highly systematic. The goal of this course is to teach you how to reason about human language, how to find patterns and regularities in linguistic data. We’ll use those patterns to infer what kind

of knowledge speakers have that enables them to produce and perceive speech sounds and construct and comprehend words and sentences.

## **Gen Ed: R2 requirement**

This course fulfills the R2 or Analytic Reasoning requirement to the General Education curriculum. A large part of what you'll be learning has to do with reasoning about data — finding patterns, making generalizations, and constructing a sound logical argument. The data we'll be working with is the structure of human language, but the skills you'll be developing are applicable far beyond linguistics.

## **Linguistics Curriculum**

Because this course is the prerequisite for other courses in the linguistics curriculum, you'll be learning some basic linguistic theory in some of the major subfields of linguistics — morphology, syntax, and phonetics/phonology. You should walk away with from this course with the knowledge and background necessary to take other, more advanced linguistics courses.

## **3 Course Requirements**

There is no required textbook for this course.

### **Homework**

There will be 8 homework assignments. The first assignment will be worth 5 points, and all others will be worth 10 points. Assignments will be given out on in class on Fridays and will be due in class the following Wednesday (with one exception — see the schedule).

### **Exams**

There will be three in-class, non-cumulative exams, and each of them will cover a separate section of course material. The first two exams will be worth 30 points each, and the third will be worth 40 points. The third exam will be scheduled by the university during finals week, but it will *not* be a cumulative final.

## Participation

You will be graded on your in-class participation, worth a total of 25 points. Showing up is not enough! I expect you to be actively engaged with the course material, to ask questions, to contribute to group activities. If you are too shy to speak up in class, you can earn your participation points by emailing me (about the content of the course) or coming to office hours.

## Grading

Total Points Possible		
<b>Homework</b>	75 points	(37.5%)
<b>Exams</b>	100 points	(50%)
<b>Participation</b>	25 points	(12.5%)
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<b><i>Total</i></b>	<i>200 points</i>	

**You can track your grades on SPARK.**

To calculate your current grade, divide the total number of points you currently have from the total number of possible points so far (you'll have to add this up yourself). Use the "percent" column of the conversion table.

To calculate your final grade (or the grade you would have if you stopped doing anything altogether) just use the "points" column.

Conversion		
<b>Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>
186+	93%+	A
180-185	90-92%	A-
<hr/>		
174-179	87-89%	B+
166-173	83-86%	B
160-165	80-82%	B-
<hr/>		
154-159	77-79%	C+
146-153	73-76%	C
140-145	70-72%	C-
<hr/>		
134-139	67-69%	D+
120-133	60-66%	D
<hr/>		
-119	-59%	F

## 4 Course Policies

### Attendance

You are expected to come to class, and to participate fully in class discussions and exercises.

Attendance is *your* responsibility, and will not be recorded or graded. Because there is no textbook for the course, and because you will be introduced to new ways of thinking and

reasoning about language, it will be extremely difficult (if not impossible) to pass the course without consistently coming to class.

## Civility in the Classroom

The environment in the classroom will be one of civility and respect.

I'll do my part by making my expectations clear, providing opportunities to ask for clarification and get help, grading your work fairly and promptly, and beginning and ending class on time. You need to do your part by coming to class on time and prepared, giving your full attention while you're there, and staying until the end of class.

If something in the classroom interferes with your enjoyment, participation, and learning — whether it's something I'm doing or something someone else is doing — please bring it to my attention.

## Collaboration

You are encouraged to form study groups outside of class to help you understand the material.

Collaboration is permitted on homework assignments, **under the following conditions**:

- a. You must each write up and hand in your own assignment.
- b. Any explanations or reasoning in the assignment must be written in your own words.
- c. You must clearly indicate on the assignment who you collaborated with.

Collaboration is **not** permitted on exams.

Violations of this policy will be handled in accordance with the University's policy on academic honesty, which can be found at:

[http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/)

**A word of caution:** Homework assignments are designed to prepare you for the kind of questions you'll be asked on the exam. Depending too heavily on collaboration in your homework will negatively impact your performance on the exams.

## Late Assignments

Late assignments will **not** be accepted.

You have **one** no-questions-asked pass on this policy. To use it, you must:

- a. Email me *before* the deadline, and
- b. Turn in the assignment by the following class meeting.

## Extenuating Circumstances

Life is complicated — illnesses and injuries abound, swine flu is pandemic, crises of one sort or another happen.

If these or other life events are interfering with your ability to meet course requirements, please let me know as soon as possible. We can work together to find a way for you to complete the work and do well in the course.

## Extra Credit

You can earn up to 4 points of extra credit towards your final grade by participating in linguistics experiments. Each experiment is worth 2 points (experiments longer than an hour and a half count as two experiments).

I'll announce later in the semester how you can sign up to participate in experiments.

## Accommodations for Disabilities

If you need special accommodations because of a disability, your case manager in Disability Services will provide you with a form describing the accommodations you need. You should bring that form to me, and I will discuss the accommodations with you.

Don't wait until you start having problems or just before a test — I want you to have every opportunity to do well in this course, but advance notice may be necessary.

## 5 Schedule

Week Of	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Sept. 7	<i>no class</i>	Grammaticality	Grammaticality
Sept. 14	Morphology	Morphology <b>HW1 Due</b>	Morphology
Sept. 21	Morphology	Morphology <b>HW2 Due</b>	Morphology
Sept. 28	Language Games	Review	<b>Exam 1</b>
Oct. 5	Syntax	Syntax	Syntax
Oct. 12	Syntax Tues, Oct. 13	Syntax <b>HW3 Due</b>	Syntax
Oct. 19	Syntax	Syntax <b>HW4 Due</b>	Syntax
Oct. 26	Brain Stuff	Review	<b>Exam 2</b>
Nov. 2	Phonetics	Phonetics	Phonetics
Nov. 9	Phonetics	<i>no class</i>	Phonetics <b>HW5 Due</b>
Nov. 16	Phonology	Phonology <b>HW6 Due</b>	Phonology
Nov. 23	Signed Languages	<i>no class</i>	<i>no class</i>
Nov. 30	Phonology	Phonology <b>HW7 Due</b>	Phonology
Dec. 7	Phonology	Review <b>HW8 Due</b>	Review
Dec. 14	Finals Week: <b>Exam 3</b> scheduled by the University		