

LING 5010 | Introduction to Syntax
LING 5000 | Proseminar: Morphosyntax

FALL 2020

Course Delivery

Our course will meet virtually (synchronously).

Mondays 1 - 2:15pm

Wednesdays 12:10 - 2:15pm

Zoom links for each meeting is in our ICON calendar.

Instructor: Prof. Zuzanna Fuchs

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451 Phillips Hall

Phone: (319) 467 1635

Drop-in hours: Wednesdays 2:30 – 5:30pm

Modality: virtual

<https://uiowa.zoom.us/j/97124581107>

or by appointment

Administrative home: Department of Linguistics

Note: Some of the policies relating to this course (such as the drop deadline) are governed by its administrative home, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 120 Schaeffer Hall.

DEO: Prof. Mercedes Niño-Murcia

m-nino-murcia@uiowa.edu

463 Phillips Hall

Course description

This two-part course introduces syntax as an object of inquiry and is concerned with the broad range of linguistic phenomena that are of interest to syntacticians. Over the course of two semesters, we will learn about the various rules and principles that govern the structure of sentences, including but not limited to word order. We will find that rule-governed structures are also present below the word level (this will constitute the morphosyntax part of this course), and that long-distance relationships between words determine processes such as agreement. Formal mechanisms learned in the second part of the course will allow us to represent these structures and relationships in order to communicate our observations and ideas to others working within the field of generative syntax. Along the way, we will discover that the questions raised by traditional syntactic research can be informed by investigations of the same phenomena in the fields of language acquisition, heritage linguistics, and psycholinguistics, among others.

Goals

In the first part of the course, the goal will be to establish a common vocabulary and understanding of what concepts and phenomena are central to the study of (morpho)syntax. Additionally, our goal will be to investigate how various approaches to analyzing language can inform our understanding of syntactic phenomena. To do this, we will be reading supplemental papers on experimental linguistics, typological work, first language acquisition, and others.

In the second part of the course (LING 6010 in the spring), we will shift our attention to learning how to analyze what we learned in the first part of the course within the Minimalist program. We will use the syntax of English as our starting point and see how data from other languages impacts our rules and assumptions.

(Morpho)Syntax-specific skills learned in this course:

- Unit #1: Relationships within words and between words
 - o Identification of morphemes and morphological analysis & decomposition
 - o Describing allomorphy
 - o Using principles of headedness to predict word order relations within a language
- Unit #2: Agreement and its features
 - o Being able to describe the types of features that may enter into agreement
 - o Identifying crosslinguistic variation in how agreement is realized
- Unit #3: Movement
 - o Understanding the surface evidence for movement
 - o Describing the phenomena in which we crosslinguistically may see movement
 - o Testing for movement using various diagnostics

Broadly useful skills learned in this course:

- Data analysis
- Argumentation
- Strategic and critical reading of primary literature in the field
- Presentational skills

Course materials

There is no textbook required for this course. Weekly readings will be available in pdf format on ICON. Note that weekly readings are listed in the order that I recommend you read them in.

Looking ahead, next semester we will be using the textbook *Core Syntax: A Minimalist Approach* by David Adger. You may purchase it ahead of time if you choose, but you will not need it before January.

Course requirements

Components:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Assignments	30%
In-class presentation	15%
Take-home midterms (2)	20%
Take-home final exam	25%

Grading Scale:

A	94 +	B	84 - 86.99	C	74 - 77.99	D	64 - 66.99
A-	90 - 93.99	B-	80 - 83.99	C-	70 - 73.99	D-	60 - 63.99
B+	87 - 89.99	C+	77 - 79.99	D+	67 - 69.99	F	< 60

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is mandatory. Please see the attendance policy below for what to do in the event of an absence. There will be ample opportunities for participation, as we will be doing a fair amount of problem-solving and discussion in class (to the extent that this is feasible via Zoom). I will provide a rubric for participation grades within the first two weeks of the semester.

What is participation in the Zoom era?

- Keeping your video on during lecture (if your internet connection prevents this, please get in touch with me).
- Asking questions verbally (the chat feature can be hard to keep track of on my end).
- Participating in discussion.
- Using our class hand-signals when appropriate to indicate your thoughts. See here for how and why: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9T99GAWuKE>
- Annotating shared screens when appropriate.
- Note: We all know the internet can be fickle. If you experience internet disruptions and get disconnected, please rejoin if possible. If rejoining is not possible, please send me an email so that we can discuss how to make up what you missed. Your participation grade will not be affected by internet outages, since this is obviously not in your control.

Assignments: You will have weekly assignments, assigned on Wednesday afternoons and due the following Tuesdays at 5pm. Depending on what is appropriate given the nature of the material learned in a particular week, you will be assigned either a problem set or a critical reading. You may work together on the homeworks, but each student should submit their own completed assignment, with the names of any collaborators also listed. All assignments should be submitted via ICON. You may hand-write problem sets if it easier and turn them into a pdf using an app such as CamScanner.

In-class presentation: Being able to present data and analyses in a concise and clear manner is a crucial skill for linguists. To develop this skill, each student will present a paper in class (via Zoom, live, i.e. not pre-recorded) once throughout the semester. The dates of the presentations will be determined in the second week of the course. The exact paper to be presented will be agreed upon by the student and the instructor 1-2 weeks ahead of the presentation date and should present (experimental or typological) data relevant to the topic of that week or the week before. It is your responsibility to arrange a meeting with me 1-2 weeks before your presentation date to select a paper. The first two presenters will receive additional guidance from me, since they are first and will serve as an example for the subsequent presenters. I will provide you with a grading rubric for presentations in the first weeks of class.

Take-home midterms: Two non-cumulative take-home midterms are meant to measure your ability to analyze previously unseen data and couch your analysis in the terms introduced in class. These exams are not meant to be difficult (they will be generally about the same level or easier than the homeworks) but rather to make sure you are able to do the work on your own. You are responsible for all information from lecture and from readings, as well as the broad arguments of your classmates'

presentations. By nature of being take-home, these midterms are open-note. The take-home midterms will be administered on the days that they are listed, and they will not be proctored.

Final exam: There will be a cumulative take-home final exam. You can expect a critical reading to be part of this exam. By nature of being take-home, the final exam is open-note. No collaboration is allowed on the final exams.

Class policies

Collaboration: Collaboration on homework assignments is allowed and encouraged. Each student should submit their own write up of the homework assignment, with the names of all collaborators listed near the top. Collaboration is not allowed on the take-home midterms or the take-home final. Violation of this no-collaboration policy will be considered academic misconduct and will result in no credit on the exam for anyone involved.

Absences: In a grad-level class, frequent and/or sporadic absences can significantly impact your ability to succeed in the course. If you do not come to class, you also cannot contribute to the learning that day. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. If you must miss class for health reasons, please let me know in advance if possible. You are responsible for all material you miss, and regular homework deadlines still apply unless you discuss possible extensions with me ahead of time. Expect to come to office hours as soon as possible after the missed class. One or two absences will not affect your grade, but if you miss three or more classes you can expect it to affect your participation grade.

Communication outside of class: I always prefer email, and I check my email frequently. If you email me before 9pm on a weekday, you can reasonably expect a response the same day. Generally, I do my best to respond within 24 hours. If I fail to do so, please do not hesitate to send a follow-up.

Late policy: Life happens, so I will accept **one** late assignment up to 5 days after the original due date, no questions asked. All other work must be submitted on time, or it will not receive credit.

A student-teacher contract

A syllabus should be an agreement between the students and the instructor, in which we set expectations for the learning and the behavior that will take place in this course. Below are my expectations and what I can offer. We can also add to this list as a class.

I ask you to...

- Be on time and prepared for all class meetings.
- Be vocal. Share your ideas and ask questions. This helps you and your classmates learn, and it helps me assess our progress.
- Communicate with me. If things are going too fast, let me know via email or in office hours. If it's genuinely too much work (I am aware that as grad students you have a lot of responsibilities), ask me for help in prioritizing readings and assignments.
- Be honest. If you have not done the reading or are still struggling with a concept, let me know. Lecturing to a classroom that doesn't know what I'm talking about is a waste of my time and of your time, so I will try to adjust accordingly. Please do not abuse this.
- Do not stand me up for meetings outside of office hours.

And in return I will...

- Be on time and prepared for all class meetings.
- Treat every question with patience and respect, and attempt to answer it to the best of my ability either in class, via email, or in a meeting.
- Adjust the level and pace of the course to meet the students' needs. My job is to help you learn, not to talk at you for 3 hours a week.
- Be flexible in my lectures, so that we can dedicate more time to concepts you are struggling with.
- Be generous with my time.

Zoom etiquette

- You are expected to have your video ON, unless the quality of your internet connection prevents it, in which case please talk to me about your options.
- Please make sure that your background (whether real or virtual) is appropriate for a classroom setting and is not distracting to other viewers (no flashing lights/colors, changing screens, etc.)
- You are expected to have your audio OFF when you are not speaking, in order to prevent various types of background noise from distracting me and your classmates. When participating verbally, please unmute yourself and remember to go back on mute when you are done.

University policies

Absences and Attendance

Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing their course absence policies, which will vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, military service obligations, unavoidable circumstances or University authorized activities. Students may use the CLAS absence form to aid communication with the instructor who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused. The form is on ICON in the top banner under "Student Tools." More information is at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences>.

Academic Integrity

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#). Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through UI email. Visit this page for information: (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>).

Accommodations for Disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>.

Administrative Home of the Course

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other colleges may have different policies. CLAS policies may be found here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>.

Class Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding appropriate classroom behavior as outlined in the [Code of Student Life](#). This includes the policies and procedures that all students have agreed to regarding the Steps Forward for Fall 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, all students are required to wear a face covering when in a UI building, including a classroom. In addition, the density of seats in classrooms has been reduced; in some instances, this will allow 6 feet or more between students while other cases, it may be less. Regardless, wearing a face covering and maintaining as much distance as possible are vital to slowing the spread of COVID-19. In the event that a student disrupts the classroom environment through their failure to comply with the reasonable directive of an instructor or the University, the instructor has the authority to ask that the student immediately leave the space for the remainder of the class period. Additionally, the instructor is asked to report the incident to the [Office of Student Accountability](#) for the possibility of additional follow-up. Students who need a temporary alternative learning arrangement related to COVID-19 expectations should contact [Student Disability Services arrangements/](#); +1 319 335-1462) (<https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/fall-2020/covid-19-temporary-learning-arrangements/>).

Class Recordings: Privacy and Sharing

Some sessions of a course could be recorded or live-streamed. Such a recording or streaming will only be available to students registered for the course. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty, and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit **written** consent of the faculty member. Students may not share these sessions with those not in the class; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and, in some cases, a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Communication and the Required Use of UI Email

Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](#)).

Complaints

Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; see this page for more information: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>.

Final Examination Policies

The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and location of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals with very few exceptions made (for labs, ESL and some world language courses, and off-cycle courses): <https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies>.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (<https://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod>; +1 319 335-0705 or (diversity.uiowa.edu)).

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>.

Course outline (subject to change)

Week	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignment
Week 1	Aug 24: Syllabus, overview of course	Carnie Chp 1; Baker & Bobaljik Chp 1 p 1-24	Pset #1 assigned
	Aug 26: Introduction to morphology		
Week 2	Aug 31: Reading workshop	Workshop paper	Write-up of in-class reading workshop
	Sept 2: Reading workshop (cont'd)		
Week 3	Sept 7: [no class, LABOR DAY]	Baker & Bobaljik Chp 2	Pset #2 assigned
	Sept 9: Derivation		
Week 4	Sept 14: Allomorphy	Baker & Bobaljik Chp 1.5	Pset #3 assigned
	Sept 16: Introduction to case studies		
Week 5	Sept 21: Lexical categories	Carnie Chp 2	Critical reading of Braginsky 2019
	Sept 23: Lexical categories Presentations		
Week 6	Sept 28: MIDTERM #1	Carnie Chp 3.0 and 3.4	Pset #4 assigned
	Sept 30: Constituency and word order typology		
Week 7	Oct 5: Thematic roles, case-marking, and ergativity	Carnie 8.2; Excerpts from Payne Chp 7	Critical reading of Longenbaugh & Polinsky 2015
	Oct 7: Case-marking typology, case concord Presentations		
Week 8	Oct 12: Number & concord	Corbett 1996, Kramer Chp 4	Pset #5 assigned
	Oct 14: Gender & concord		
Week 9	Oct 19: Tense, aspect & mood	Excerpts from Zagana Chapter 20	--
	Oct 21: TAM continued Presentations		
Week 10	Oct 26: MIDTERM #2	Read the paper assigned to your group	Submit your BYOPset (counts as Pset #6)
	Oct 28: In-class activity, build your own problem set		
Week 11	Nov 2: Questions & movement	Stowe 1986	Pset #7 assigned
	Nov 4: Filled-gap effects Presentations		
Week 12	Nov 9: Interrogative typology	Siemund 2001	Critical reading: Potsdam & Polinsky 2011
	Nov 11: Islands for extraction		
Week 13	Nov 16: Relative clauses	de Vries 2005	Pset #8 assigned
	Nov 18: Relative clauses in HL Presentations		
	[Thanksgiving break]		
Week 14	Nov 30: Topicalization & focus	Neeleman et al. 2007	Pset #9 assigned
	Dec 2: Topicalization & focus cont'd		
Week 15	Dec 7: Copula constructions	Mikkelsen chapter	–
	Dec 9: Wrap-up, looking ahead Presentations		