

**LING 4500: Introduction to Syntax**  
MWF5, Anderson Hall 0021  
Fall 2017

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## Course Description

This is an introduction to syntax and syntactic theory, within the general framework of Principles and Parameters (aka Minimalist Program). Most of the data we will discuss is from English, though we will occasionally look at other languages. No textbook will be used. The course will proceed on the basis of class discussion and (almost) daily written assignments. Doing the homework in time will be crucial to follow the course, and **no late assignments will be accepted**. You must write up the assignments individually; you can work together on the assignments, but you should acknowledge any collaboration. You cannot collaborate on the midterm or final exams. Answers to homework assignments should be typed, and as clear and brief as possible, making sure that you include all arguments and examples illustrating your analysis, but nothing more. Do not refer to data in the homework, or to data discussed in class, without reproducing it in your write-up. All examples, trees, rules, etc. should be numbered and referred to in the text by number.

**Goals** The primary goal of the course is to develop the ability to think abstractly about linguistic phenomena and learn to recognize and capture generalizations. You will gain exposure to some syntactic phenomena of mostly English (though we will occasionally touch on other languages), obtain basic control of current syntactic theory, learn to construct and work with a formal system, and develop writing and syntactic argumentation skills.

## Prerequisites

The prerequisites for this class are LIN 3010 (Introduction to Linguistics) and LIN 3460 (Structure of Human Language), or the consent of the instructor. Please talk to me if you have not taken the prerequisites or their equivalents. We will touch on basic concepts from LIN 3460 rather quickly in the beginning of the semester. The following textbook is recommended for reviewing these concepts (specifically chapters 1 through 5):

Tallerman, Maggie. 2011. *Understanding Syntax*, 3rd edition. London: Hodder Arnold.

## Evaluation

### Graded components

- Homeworks: 50%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Exam 1: 15%
- Exam 2: 25%

**Homework** The primary vehicle for the course material is the homework assignments. There will be about two each week. Approximately twenty-one are scheduled throughout the semester. You must turn in 8 homeworks. The lowest score will be dropped.

Please space out the assignments that you do over the entire semester. Do not wait until the end of the semester to do all your assignments and do not do them all at the beginning of the semester in hopes of not having any work at the end of the term.

Homeworks will be discussed during the class on which they are due. Late homeworks are thus of limited value. You may redo one homework during the semester if the grade is below C. The final grade on the homework will be the average of the two homeworks. Otherwise, late homework will not be accepted; instead, plan on completing one of the other homeworks.

You are encouraged to discuss the homework problems with other members of the class. You must write up your solutions entirely on your own, without help, in accordance with the University of Florida Honor Code and the academic honesty guidelines. If you discuss the material with other members of the class, on your paper, indicate who you worked with. If you make specific use of a classmate's important idea, say someone from your study group, give them explicit credit for it in your solution. This is simply good academic practice and will not affect your grade.

Even if you do not turn an assignment in, you are fully responsible for the problem and the material. You should think through the assignment and at least sketch out a solution.

You are not allowed to look up solutions to homework problems on the internet or in textbooks. This will be treated as academic dishonesty. I assure you that the class will be more enjoyable if you try to solve the problems yourself or with your peers. You will have the tools from class to accomplish this.

All homeworks will be posted on the CANVAS class site after class.

**Quizzes** Several of the homeworks will have quizzes associated with them. After you have looked at a homework, go to Canvas and see if there is an associated quiz under Quizzes. It will be numbered the same as the homework. The quiz will consist of a brief question and must be completed on-line prior to the start of class in which the homework is due. The goal of the quizzes is to check i) that you understand basic concepts and terminology and ii) that you are attempting to work through the homeworks, even if you are not turning them in. Approximately 20% of the quizzes will be dropped.

**Exams** There will be **two exams**. The first in-class exam will be around Thursday, October 15. The second in-class exam will be on Tuesday, December 8, the last day of the class. Both in-class exams will take approximately one class period. There is a take-home portion to the second exam that is due by Monday, December 14 at 5pm. You may, of course, turn it in earlier.

**Class Attendance** Attendance and active participation are essential. This is a class on **doing** syntax, not on reading about syntax. As stated above, there is no textbook; the course material comes from the class and the homework. Every class will build on the previous one, so being present, awake, and engaged in class is a vital part of succeeding. Thus, attendance and participation are important learning tools in the course, even though they are not an explicit part of your grade. As a reminder, even if you do not turn in an assignment, you are responsible for the related material and for working through the problem. This will allow you to more fully follow and participate in the class discussions.

**Grading** The following grading scale will be used:

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-769
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-68
B+	87-89	C	73-78	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	E	<60

Additional information about the University's grade policies is available at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

## Other information

**Missed or late work; absence from class** You should assume that late work or electronically submitted work will not be accepted. All requests for exceptions due to illness, religious obligations, unexpected emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances must be made before the exam date or homework due date.

**Academic honesty** Academic misconduct, including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. It may result in disciplinary action and failure in the course. The University has an Honor Code which reads as follows: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." The honor code is accessible online: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. The bottom line is: "On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Copying or sharing any part of your homework assignments in any way, shape, or form is strictly prohibited. For computer work, this includes, but is not limited to, using the same file/document as someone else, using a modified file/document, or copying information between files/documents. No written work may be a joint effort in any way unless explicitly permitted and stated.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register online with the Dean of Students Office: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc> The

Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Course evaluations** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>