

## LIN 4500/6501 Introduction to Syntax

T 2-3, Th 3  
AND 019

### ***Instructor***

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### ***Course Description***

This course is an introduction to transformational syntactic theory, developed through the study of central aspects of English grammar. Using homework problems and in-class exercises, we will construct a model of (a fragment of) English. Coursework emphasizes problem solving, syntactic argumentation, and the ability to construct and work with a formal system.

### ***Objectives***

- gain exposure to some syntactic phenomena of English
- obtain basic control of current syntactic theory
- learn to construct and work with a formal system
- 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. 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.

### ***Course Materials***

There is no textbook for the course. All course materials will be available on E-Learning in Sakai, <https://lss.at.ufl.edu>, including a syllabus, an assignment style sheet, homeworks, handouts, readings, and a detailed schedule.

### ***Requirements***

- |            |     |
|------------|-----|
| • homework | 65% |
| • quizzes  | 10% |
| • exam 1   | 10% |
| • exam 2   | 15% |

*Homework assignments.* The primary vehicle for the course material is the homework assignments. There will be one or two each week. Approximately twenty are scheduled throughout the semester. Undergraduates must turn in 6 of the assignments; graduate students must turn in 10. 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.

Please note that I cannot prevent you from going to the internet for help in solving the homeworks. I discourage you from doing this however, for many reasons. 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. If you do use any outside references whatsoever, even if it is only a Wikipedia page, standard academic practice requires that you cite them.

*Quizzes*. Several of the homeworks will have quizzes associated with them. After you have looked at a homework, go to Sakai and see if there is an associated quiz under Tests & Quizzes. It will be numbered the same as the homework. The quiz will consist of a brief (5 minutes or less) 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.

There will be *two exams*. The first in-class exam will be around Tuesday, October 15. The second in-class exam will be on Tuesday, December 3 (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 9 at 5pm, although you may turn it in earlier.

*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**

Homeworks will be graded using the letter scale below. The corresponding numerical score on a one hundred point scale is given. The Style Sheet discusses some of the evaluation criteria.

A	95	excellent	C-	72	
A-	92		D+	68	
B+	88		D	65	marginal work, significant improvement is required
B	85	good			
B-	82		D-	62	
C+	78		E	30	unsatisfactory
C	75	satisfactory		0	missing work

Quizzes will be graded on a pass/fail (0 or 100) basis.

The course grading scale is as follows:

A	93.3 - 100	B-	80 – 83.2	D+	66.7 – 69.9
A-	90 – 93.2	C+	76.7 – 79.9	D	63.3 – 66.6
B+	86.7 – 89.9	C	73.3 – 76.6	D-	60 – 63.2
B	83.3 – 86.6	C-	70 – 73.2	E	< 60

Further information about UF's grading policies and the calculation of grade point averages is at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

**Miscellaneous**

*Missed/Late Work.* 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 an E for 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". You can read all about it at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>. 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." This includes relying on another student's work from a previous instantiation of this course. Do not use others' work in this class.

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 acknowledged.

*Accommodations for students with disabilities.* Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register 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.

**Schedule**

The following schedule is a rough estimate of the course’s progress. You can use it to plan when homeworks will be due. Bear in mind that it is subject to change. Please see Sakai and class announcements for the most up-to-date schedule.

WEEK	DATES	CORE TOPICS	HW DUE DATES (HW#)
1	August 22	introduction	
2	27-29	phrase structure	
3	September 3-5		9/3 (1), 9/5 (2)
4	10-12	constituents	9/10 (3), 9/12 (4)
5	17-19	the lexicon	9/17 (5), 9/19 (6)
6	24-26	X' theory	9/26 (7)
7	October 1-3	nominals	10/1 (8), 10/3 (9)
8	8-10	clauses	10/8 (10), 10/10 (11)
9	15-17	movement	in class exam 1, 10/17 (12)
10	22-24		10/22 (13), 10/24 (14)
11	29-31		10/29 (15), 10/31 (16)
12	November 5-7	infinitival constructions	11/7 (17)
13	12-14		11/12 (18), 11/14 (19)
14	19-21	cross-linguistic variation	11/21 (20)
15	26		11/26 (21)
16	December 3		in-class exam 2
	December 9, 5 pm		take home portion of exam 2

