

# Survey of Sociolinguistics

LIN 4600 . Fall 2023 . MWF 3 (9:35-10:25) MATHERLY 116

**Instructor:** Dr. Fiona Mc Laughlin (<https://people.clas.ufl.edu/fmcl/>)  
**Office:** 305 Pugh Hall  
**Office hours:** Monday: 11-12 (in person) & Thursday 3-4 (virtual, e-mail me in advance)  
**Phone:** 352-392-4829  
**e-mail:** [fmcl@ufl.edu](mailto:fmcl@ufl.edu)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Sociolinguistics. This is a survey course that introduces you to the ways in which language and society are mutually constituted, i.e.: how language is shaped by society and how society is shaped by language. You will explore classic and emerging studies, methodologies, and theories in sociolinguistics, and learn to formulate hypotheses about language in society.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this course are:

- To survey the different roles of language in society
- To acquire critical skills for analyzing language in society
- To gain experience in presenting oral and written arguments about sociolinguistics
- To develop a deeper understanding of the role of language in society

## READINGS

The following textbook is required for this class:

Holmes, Janet and Nick Wilson. 2022. *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. London & New York: Routledge. (6<sup>th</sup> edition)

Additional readings, marked by an asterisk on the schedule below, will be made available on Canvas.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ATTENDANCE POLICY

As part of our classroom community, you are required to attend class, complete readings and assignments on time, and participate in class panels, discussions, and activities. I consider these requirements to be interrelated: you cannot do one without the other. There may be times when something such as illness, an emergency, a religious holiday, or an activity will prevent your attendance, in which case you will be given the opportunity to make up the missed work. This provision will not apply to non-emergencies like oversleeping or working. In the case of illness or an emergency, please contact me by e-mail as soon as it is feasible for you to do so, to

discuss how you will make up what you have missed. If you are participating in a university or athletic event that requires travel, or if you will be observing a religious holiday, please let me know well in advance by e-mail so that we can make arrangements regarding readings and assignments.

### **CLASS FORMAT**

This course relies on a combination of lectures and discussions that will enable you to explore the material we are considering. The format of this class demands that you, the students, be active participants in the learning process by a) doing the assigned readings; b) coming to class prepared and ready to contribute to conversations and activities on the day's topic; c) listening to your classmates and sharing with them your thoughts, insights, frustrations, or problems related to the material and topic at hand.

### **CLASSROOM CULTURE**

Our guidelines on classroom culture reflect respect for yourself, your classmates, and your professor. Cell phones must be silenced and put away in a backpack or purse by the time class begins. Please do not leave them sitting on your desk as they will distract you from our lectures and discussions. You may take notes on your laptop if you prefer that to a notebook, but please do not engage in activities on your laptop that are not related to class because it can be distracting to students sitting behind you. Please be punctual and arrive on time for class. When we discuss controversial topics in class, please be respectful of other students, including those who have points of view that may differ from your own. The university classroom should be an open space for debate and the exchange of ideas.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to the readings, students will be asked to:

- 1) Report regularly on their sociolinguistic observations, insofar as they relate to class material and readings, in the form of 'fieldnotes.'
- 2) Participate in two group presentations on the articles we read
- 3) Make a presentation on their final paper.

Note also that there will be two exams.

### **GRADES**

**Grades are** calculated as follows:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Group presentations	10% (5% each)
Paper presentation	10%
Fieldnotes	15%
Paper	15%
Classroom contribution	20%

The assignment of a final letter grade will be based on the following scale:

A 94-100	B 84-87	C 74-77	D 64-70
A- 90-94	B- 80-84	C- 70-74	D- 61-64
B+ 87-90	C+ 77-80	D+ 67-70	E Below 61

You may consult the following website to see how the final letter grade is weighted with regard to overall GPA: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

## COMMUNICATION

I communicate with students outside of class and office hours through UF e-mail, which is how you should communicate with me. Please be sure to check your UF e-mail on a regular basis. You should familiarize yourself with professional e-mail etiquette [here](#) and apply it in your communications with all your professors.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

### Access

Students who require academic accommodation to access the full benefits of this class may apply through the Disability Resource Center <https://disability.ufl.edu> You should share your accommodation letter with me as early as possible so that I can make appropriate arrangements.

### Academic honesty

As a UF student you have subscribed to the Student Code of Honor. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, is a violation of that Code. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy and receive a failing grade for the course.

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

### AI

Generative artificial intelligence programs such as ChatGPT, Bard, and the like have recently become openly accessible. Their implications for education are highly debated, controversial, and speculative. I encourage you not to use a program like ChatGPT for work in this class, but I understand the allure of using it as a tool and will not forbid it. If you use it, you should state this clearly on your assignment and hand in all versions of texts the program generated along with your final text. Using AI while failing to acknowledge it is plagiarism and will result in a grade of 0 for that assignment.

### Course evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/> . Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

## **Class recording**

Pursuant to Florida House Bill 233, which you can see [here](#), please note the following:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## **Campus resources**

### **Health and Wellness**

*U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

*Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

*Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

*University Police Department:* Visit [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

*UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit [the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

### **Academic Resources**

*E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

*Career Connections Center:* Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

*Library Support:* Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

*Writing Studio:* 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

**SCHEDULE of TOPICS** This is a roadmap for our course, subject to minor changes according to class rhythm, interests, and needs. Readings marked by an asterisk will be available on CANVAS.

#### **Week 1 (8/23-25)**

##### **Introduction to the class**

Readings: *Text* Chapter 1: 'What do sociolinguists study?'

Video: Jan Blommaert <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwUV-NGQHHA>

### **MULTILINGUALISM & SPEECH COMMUNITIES**

#### **Week 2 (8/28-9/1)**

Readings: *Text* Chapter 2: 'Language choice in multilingual communities'

\*Blommaert, excerpt from *The Sociolinguistics of globalization*

#### **Week 3 (9/6-8)**

Readings: *Text* Chapter 3: 'Language maintenance and shift'

#### **Week 4 (9/11-15)**

Readings: *Text* Chapter 4: 'Linguistic varieties and multilingual nations'

\*Mufwene, excerpt from *The ecology of language evolution*

**Week 5 (9/18-22)**

Readings: Text Chapter 5: National languages, language policy, and language planning'

**Week 6 (9/25-29)**

Readings: Text Chapter 6: 'Regional and social dialects'  
\*Hachimi 'The Maghreb-Mashreq language ideology'  
Guest speaker: Jordan Mackenzie

**Week 7 (10/2-4)**

Readings: Text chapter 7: 'Gender and age'

**Week 8 (10/9-13)**

Readings: Text Chapter 8: 'Ethnicity and social networks'  
\*Martin & Wright 'Bias in automatic speech recognition: The case of African American vernacular English'  
Guest speaker: Dr. Joshua Martin.

**Week 9 (10/16-20)**

**Exam 1 Monday, October 16**

Readings: Text Chapter 9: 'Language change'  
\*TBA

**Week 10 (10/23-27)**

Readings: Text Chapter 10: 'Style, context, and register'

**Week 11 (10/30-11/3)**

Readings: Text Chapter 11: 'Speech functions, politeness, and cross-cultural communication'

**Week 12 (11/6-8)**

Readings: Text Chapter 12: 'Gender, politeness, and stereotypes'

Week 13 (11/13-17) Final paper presentations

**Exam 2 Monday, November 13**

Week 14 (11/27-12/1) Final paper presentations

Week 15 (12/4-6) Final paper presentations