

LIN 4500 Introduction to Syntax

LIN 6501 Syntax 1

Fall 2025

when: M/W/F 6 (Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:50 PM - 1:40 PM) where: MAT 0102 course website: elearning.ufl.edu on Canvas
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instructor: Irina Burukina e-mail: irinaburukina@ufl.edu	office: 4017 Turlington	phone: (352) 294-7452
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office hours (in person & Zoom): Monday 4-5 PM, Wednesday 9:30-10:30 AM, Friday 10:30-11:30 AM, and by appointment reserve your spot here: irinaburukina.youcanbook.me the link for Zoom meetings: 93614492356

1 Course description

The course aims to introduce the students to the fundamental ideas and basic concepts of syntactic theory and the main principles of syntactic analysis, in line with the generative approach to grammar. Using scientific method to analyze data from English and other languages, we will model the basic properties of human language as a rule governed and complex system.

2 Learning objectives

After completing the course the students will be able to:

- identify and describe various syntactic phenomena from English and other languages,
- apply concepts and principles of generative syntax to analyze novel linguistic data,
- work within a formal theory, formulate hypotheses, test them, and interpret the results,
- present research ideas and arguments.

3 Prerequisites

Undergraduate students:

- LIN 2011 Introduction to Linguistics (former LIN 3010)
- LIN 3460 Structure of Human Language

Graduate students: none.

4 Course materials

Required textbook:

- Carnie, Andrew. 2021. *Syntax: A generative introduction*. 4th edition. Blackwell.

Make sure that you get the fourth edition of the book. You do **not** need to get the companion workbook. Other readings and assignments not from the textbook will be available on the course website.

Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is only responsible for these instructional materials.

5 Course requirements

1. Monday Reading Quiz – 10%
2. Friday Test Question – 10%
3. homework – 35% (5% for each HW 1-5, 10% for HW 6)
4. mid-term test (in class) – 20%
5. final exam (take-home) or squib – 25%

Late assignments are not accepted without valid proof/justification of an emergency situation.

You are encouraged to discuss your homework with other students. However, you should write your texts individually. Identical or nearly identical answers/squibs will get 0 (zero) points.

Texts copied from the internet or generated by AI tools will get 0 (zero) points.

5.1 Monday Reading Quiz

Before the beginning of each week, you should read the assigned chapter from Carnie's *Syntax* (indicated in the schedule below) and do the corresponding Monday Reading Quiz, available on Canvas. Each quiz consists of one-two short questions and is graded on a satisfactory-unsatisfactory basis.

Note: there is no reading quiz for week 9 (Case) and week 10 (Functional projections).

5.2 Friday Test Question

At the end of each week (**starting on week 1, August 25-29**), you should prepare one Test Question based on the material discussed that week. Don't show the question to your classmates. Bring it to class on Friday. We will start Friday sessions by going through your (plural) questions.

A good Test Question: (i) is a question about the theory (discussed in class and presented in the readings), (ii) has a clear unambiguous **short** answer. Yes-no questions and multiple-choice questions do not count.

5.3 Homework

There will be **six** homework assignments. These will be problem sets focusing on applying the concept and principles discussed in class to new linguistic data. All homework assignments will become available on Canvas on Wednesday afternoon and will be due by next Wednesday morning (9 AM). Please type your answers and submit the assignments on Canvas (as a .pdf or .doc file). The homework assignments will be graded on a satisfactory-unsatisfactory basis. We will discuss them in class.

Tools for drawing syntactic trees:

- [SynTree online](#)
- [jsSyntaxTree online](#)
- [Treeform, download](#)
- L^AT_EX packages: [qtree](#)

5.4 Mid-term test (in class)

Note: Both graduate and undergraduate students **must** write the mid-term test.

There will be one mid-term in-class test based on the readings and handouts, scheduled during our usual class time (preliminarily, on **October 15**). We will have a practice session before the mid-term test.

5.5 Final exam (take-home)

Note: Graduate students **must write a squib** instead of the final exam. Undergraduate students **may** also choose to submit a squib instead of taking the final exam (please discuss this with me in advance).

The final exam will be take-home and open-book and it will require critical thinking and understanding of the material covered during the semester. It will become available on Canvas on November 28 and will be due on **December 5**. We will have a practice session on December 1 and a consultation on December 3, scheduled during our usual class time.

5.6 Squib (instead of the final exam)

Note: For graduate students, submitting a squib is **required**.

The **squib** is due on **December 5**.

A **squib** is a short research paper that calls attention to a theoretically unexpected observation about language that is potentially relevant to a certain theory. A squib does not need to present a complete analysis, but it should outline one or several research hypotheses.

Your **squib** should:

- present an interesting puzzle/problem,
- explain its relevance to the syntactic theory,
- formulate a testable hypothesis or two,
- outline possible implications for the general theory.

Your squib should **not** be a summary of the existing literature (though it will inevitably refer to it).

The squib length is approximately 12 pages or 5000 words; see the style sheet [here \(LI\)](#) or [here \(Glossa\)](#).

Start thinking about the topic of your squib early. You **must** send me your topic by **October 10** at the latest.

For examples of squibs, see [Linguistic Inquiry website](#) or [Glossa website](#).

6 Grading

The course follows UF grading policies; [see the official webpage](#).

		B+	84-86	C+	74-76	D+	64-66	E	56 and below
A	90-100	B	80-83	C	70-73	D	60-63		
A-	87-89	B-	77-79	C-	67-69	D-	57-59		

7 Attendance

Attendance is **not** a part of your grade. Nevertheless, you should attend the classes, take notes, and participate in the discussion. If you have to miss a class, you should go through the corresponding handout and study the assigned materials; if you have questions, you can schedule an appointment with me.

8 Exams

Two exams will be given: a mid-term test and a final exam. The mid-term test will cover material from approximately half of the course, including information presented in lectures, handouts, and the assigned readings. The final exam will cover material from the whole course. The exams will test student's knowledge of basic concepts, terms, as well as data analysis. See above for more details.

All students must write the mid-term test. Graduate students must write a squib instead of taking the final exam.

9 Academic Policies

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please [see this link](#).

10 Campus resources

10.1 Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact 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](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, [visit the GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

10.2 Academic resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu. [Visit the UF Computing Help Desk website](#).
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. [Visit the website of Career assistance and counseling services](#).

- *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information. [Visit the library support website.](#)
- *Academic Resources*: 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. [Visit the Academic Resources website.](#)
- *Writing Studio*: Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. [Visit the Writing Studio website.](#)
- *Academic Complaints*: Office of the Ombuds. [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage.](#)
- *Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions)*: [Visit the Student Complaint Procedure webpage.](#)

11 Tentative schedule

This is a preliminary schedule of the course. Changes to it will be announced in class in advance.

You have to read all of the assigned readings (indicated in the schedule) **before** the Monday class.

Date	Topic	Reading	Extra
week 0 (August 22)	syllabus		
week 1 (Aug 25, 27, 29)	grammar and rules, structures	Carnie ch. 1	
week 2 (Sept 3, 5)	categories, phrases	Carnie ch. 2	
week 3 (Sept 8, 10, 12)	constituents	Carnie ch. 3, 4	HW1 assigned
week 4 (Sept 15, 17, 19)	X-bar model, adjuncts	Carnie ch. 6	
week 5 (Sept 22, 24, 26)	Tense projection	Carnie ch. 7	HW2 assigned
week 6 (Sept 29; Oct 1, 3)	Theta Theory	Carnie ch. 8	HW3 assigned
week 7 (Oct 6, 8, 10)	ditransitives, vP	Carnie ch. 14	squib topic due
week 8 (Oct 13, 15)	practice & mid-term		
week 9 (Oct 20, 22, 24)	Case	Carnie ch. 11.3-5	HW4 assigned
week 10 (Oct 27, 29, 31)	functional projections	Carnie ch. 7	
week 11 (Nov 3, 5, 7)	binding	Carnie ch. 5	HW5 assigned
week 12 (Nov 10, 12, 14)	head movement, A-movement	Carnie ch. 10, 11	HW6 assigned
week 13 (Nov 17, 19, 21)	A-bar movement	Carnie ch. 12, 13	HW6, part 2
week 14 (Nov 24, 26, 28)	autumn break		
week 15 (Dec 1, 3)	revision & final exam		