LIN101H1F **Syllabus** **Fall 2025**
Introduction to Linguistics: Sound Structure Northrop Frye 3   Health Sciences 610
T 1–3pm   T 5–7pm

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Course description

This course provides a general introduction to linguistics, the scientific study of language. We will cover basic linguistic methodology and concepts through systematic exploration of the inherent similarities and differences across spoken and signed languages. Topics include the nature and diversity of human language, language-related social justice, the physical articulation of speech and sign, the patterning of sounds in spoken language, the internal structure of words and signs, sociolinguistic variation, and language change over time.

As part of the Writing-Integrated Teaching (WIT) Program, this course is designed to help develop your writing skills, with a focus on accurate and coherent argumentation.

This course satisfies the Humanities distribution requirement and the Thought, Belief, and Behaviour breadth requirement. There are no prerequisites to take this course. You cannot enrol in this course if you already have credit for LIN100Y1, LIN101H5, LINA01H3, or LINA02H3.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- recall, define, and explain basic concepts and terms used by linguists, especially:
    - articulatory descriptions of speech sounds and signs
    - fundamental units of linguistic structure (phoneme, handshape, morpheme, etc.)
    - differences between prescriptive and descriptive views of language
- identify and describe both the diversity and underlying similarities across languages
- effectively refute common misconceptions and myths about language
- identify the locations and functions of parts of the human anatomy relevant to speech production and signed language articulation
- transcribe speech sounds using the International Phonetic Alphabet
- analyze linguistic data to determine:
    - allophones, allomorphs, and their distributions
    - underlying representations
    - phonological rules needed to connect underlying to surface representations
- recognize and assess how language is used to construct and sustain unfair social structures
- write logically, coherently, and clearly about language

Course materials

The textbook for this course is Anderson et al.'s *Essentials of Linguistics*, which is free and available online at https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/essentialsoflinguistics2/. There are also many traditional (and therefore, expensive) options which have more exercises, more detail, and more topics, but these are probably more than you would need unless you plan to go further in studying linguistics. Note there can be some variation in how different sources talk about the topics in the course. If you come across anything that contradicts what you were taught in this course, remember that this course takes precedence.

Weekly lecture notes and other course materials will be available on Quercus at https://q.utoronto.ca.

Assessment

Your overall course grade is calculated as follows:

> 10%   course engagement
> 20%   homework (best 5 out of 6, 4% each)
> 30%   quizzes (best 3 out of 4, 10% each)
> 40%   final exam (date/time TBA)

Minimum final exam mark policy: You must pass the final exam to pass the course. If you fail the final exam, your overall course grade will be capped at 45%.

Assessment of course work adheres to the following policies set forth by the University and by the Department of Linguistics:

> https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/
> grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020
> https://www.linguistics.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-programs/grading-policy

In particular, the results for all course work are normally given as raw scores, not actual marks. In most cases, these scores will translate directly into marks (e.g. a raw score of 85 would count as a mark of 85), but sometimes, **it may be necessary to calibrate** the raw scores before computing a final course grade to account for various issues (discrepancies between TAs in marking, assignments that were harder or easier than intended, etc.). Calibration will normally be a linear transformation which adjusts the value of scores without altering the underlying curvature (thus, it is not a true "curve").

Homework and quizzes in this course are all intended as **formative** assessments, which means they are designed to help you progress through the course. Thus, your performance and scores for these assessments will be computed and released as soon as possible, to help you know what aspects of the material you need to work more on.

In contrast, course engagement and the final exam are **summative** assessments, which are intended solely for the instructor to compute a final grade as a representative summary of your overall mastery of the course material. These are *not* formative assessment, so you are not expected to learn from them. Accordingly, it is standard practice in the Department of Linguistics that **course engagement and final exam marks are not released**, so please do not ask for these marks.

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Course engagement

Serious engagement with every aspect of the course is important. Showing up to class and doing the assigned work is considered normal behaviour and does not count extra for your engagement. Beyond doing this bare minimum that any student should do to successfully complete this course, a fully engaged student will also provide proactive and insightful contributions throughout the course, demonstrating a superior understanding of the course material. This can manifest in different ways for different students, but usually through active participation in tutorials and/or on discussion boards, as well as participating in a linguistics experiment (details available later in the course).

Homework

Homework is assigned on a Tuesday and due the following Tuesday before the first lecture section. All homework is online and **must be completed on Quercus by 1pm on the due date**. Because homework solutions will be available and discussed shortly after the homework is due, and because we are on a tight timeline with material that continuously builds upon previous material, **late homework cannot be accepted under any circumstances**. To compensate for this strict policy, your lowest homework mark is ignored when computing your overall course grade.

Homework will be useful for studying for the quizzes. In addition, homework may require more time than you think, and life may take unexpected turns, so start early! **Do not wait until the last moments before the deadline to attempt to submit your homework!** Requests for extensions or make-up work will be denied, except in extraordinary cases (hospitalization, etc.). You are encouraged to consult and collaborate with other students to discuss the homework, but **you must each submit your own solutions online, <u>in your own words</u>, listing the names of all the students you worked with**.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq). Note that for the purposes of this policy, all written work is covered by the term *essay*.

Your homework must be submitted on Quercus as a PDF only, typed in a standard font (Times New Roman, Computer Modern, Cambria, etc.), at a reasonable size (11–12pt) and with reasonable margins (around 2.5cm or 1-inch). The top of the first page must include your full preferred name, your student ID#, the assignment number, and a list of the names of any students you collaborated with, something like the following (the actual format is not important, as long as the information is there):

Halima Sabir, 1234567890   Homework #1
collaborators: Asha Ojukwu, Justin Parker, and Li Wei

If your homework is not legible, not properly formatted, or otherwise unacceptable according to these guidelines, it may be rejected and counted as 0% towards your homework average!

Quizzes

Four quizzes will be given online on Quercus. You will have a 6-hour window in which to start writing each quiz, between noon and 6pm on Fridays. Once you begin a quiz, you will have 30 minutes to complete it. All material covered in previous lectures, tutorials, and assignments, including the most recent ones, are valid subjects for quizzes, though the focus will usually be on the most recent material since the previous quiz. **Make-up quizzes will only be given in certain emergency circumstances; appropriate medical documentation is required.**

Your lowest quiz mark is ignored when computing your overall course grade.

You cannot collaborate with anyone on the quizzes. You may use your notes and anything directly linked on Quercus (but no other sources), but do not rely on them; you will not have time to look everything up, so you should have much of the course material committed to memory.

Final exam

The **in-person final exam (date/time/location TBA)** is comprehensive, covering material from the entire course. The final exam is in-person and is closed book and closed notes. You are only allowed to bring a few writing implements. Scrap paper will be available if you need it. Your student ID will be checked and a signature page will be sent around. If you do not bring adequate ID, you may not be allowed write the exam.

Lectures

Lectures will be held on Tuesdays at 1–3pm and 5–7pm. The lecture content is the same for both timeslots, so you should only attend the timeslot you enrolled in. Note that lectures are on UofT time, starting at 10 minutes after the hour (i.e. 1:10pm and 5:10pm). Although attendance is not counted toward your grade, **regular attendance is strongly recommended**.

Tutorials

Tutorials provide an opportunity to discuss the course material and assignments in a more personalized setting, as well as to get important practice with various concepts and skills, especially before upcoming quizzes. Tutorials are held on Thursdays. The tutorial schedule is available on Quercus. Note that tutorials are also on UofT time, starting at 10 minutes after the hour.

There is no tutorial in Unit 12, due to the end of classes. Tutorials will ordinarily focus on practicing material covered in the most recent lectures and homework. **Regular tutorial attendance is strongly recommended, though not strictly required.** No part of your course grade is based on raw attendance, although participation in discussion and activities can contribute to your course engagement.

Office hours

I will hold office hours Mondays and Thursdays 3–5pm, and you can also arrange separate meetings by email. You can ask questions about the lecture content, but it is also a good opportunity to ask questions after looking through the homework and attempting to work on it. Starting early on your work is a great way to ensure success!

Copyright and Intellectual Property

Please note that, except where indicated, all course materials (this syllabus, lecture notes, homework assignments, quizzes, solutions, the final project, other Quercus content, etc.), whether in hardcopy or electronic form, are the intellectual property of Professor Sanders. **You do not have permission to distribute any of these materials, in whole or in part, in any form, to any person, website, or organization.** In particular, do not post these materials to online repositories like Chegg, Course Hero, etc., and do not give them to other students, now or in the future. Unauthorized distribution of protected course material is not only an academic offence but also a violation of the Canadian *Copyright Act* (RSC, 1985, c. C-42).

Academic Integrity

The issue of academic integrity is taken very seriously in this course, and there is **zero tolerance** for dishonesty. Please give full respect to the teaching team, yourself, the University, and the larger academic endeavour by adhering to the highest standards of ethical academic behaviour. Note that even unintentional violations are still unacceptable, so give your submitted work the care and attention necessary to guarantee that fair and accurate credit is given to all sources at all times.

Suspected lapses in your academic integrity will be pursued to the full extent of Department and University policy. Please consult the Governing Council's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters at the following URL for more information, including descriptions of proscribed activity:

https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019

In particular, your work on the quizzes and the final exam must be representative of your own independent knowledge and ability. Do not attempt to get answers or help from any unauthorized sources, and do not give answers or help to any other students.

Artificial text generation

There are many recent advances in technology that can generate artificial text through large language models (e.g. ChatGPT). These tools are **strictly prohibited for all work you submit in this course, except where explicitly noted**. Using work you did not create and submitting it as your own is an academic offence.

Accessibility Accommodation

If you require accommodation for equitable access to course materials or activities, please get official documentation of your accommodation needs from Accessibility Services as soon as possible, because you cannot receive appropriate accommodation without it. In particular, if you need accommodations for a specific assignment or quiz, **at least one week's notice is needed**. I will work together with you and Accessibility Services to figure out the most effective accommodation for your needs. For more information, visit the Accessibility Services website at https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/.

Course Etiquette and Other Tips

If you want to be referred to by a particular **name and/or pronouns**, please let the instructors and your TA know in a manner and time that is comfortable for you. If we make a mistake in class, please feel free to correct us at an appropriate time, respectfully and non-confrontationally. We're on your side and will do our best, but we are human and can make unintentional mistakes.

You may **refer to me** as Professor Sanders, Professor, Sanders, or Nathan, whichever you feel comfortable with. Linguistics as a field tends to be a bit more informal than other fields, so it is common to call linguistics professors by their first names, but do not feel obliged to do so if you prefer to be more formal. My pronouns are grammatically masculine: *he*, *him*, etc.

If you need to **contact me by email**, do so only from Quercus or directly from your utoronto.ca email account. Start the subject header with the course code and finish with a short relevant summary of your email (e.g. "LIN101: HW #6 question"). Please be sure to identify yourself by full name at least once (such in your email signature). Often, you may be asking a question that is answered in the syllabus, so please read it carefully before emailing. I will try to respond promptly, but it may take up to two business days for me to respond, so do not rely on email for urgent questions.

Do not contact your TA by email! You may ask them questions during tutorial, but otherwise, you should not engage with them about the course outside of tutorial. The TAs are unionized and have strict guidelines governing how much time they can spend on this course, and they have been instructed to delete any emails you send to them.

You may also want to make use of the course's **discussion boards on Quercus**, which will be monitored fairly regularly every day.

If there is a genuine **marking error** on an assignment (that is, an objectively correct answer being marked wrong), let me know as soon as possible. Requests for mark reconsideration can only be handled **within two weeks** after the mark is released; after that, they are locked in. Your request should be specific and clear; vague complaints about harsh grading are not sufficient.

If your academic livelihood depends on getting some particular mark in this course, meet with me early in the semester to discuss your situation, and I can help guide you to make the best decisions for your academic success. **Desperate pleas for last-minute extra marks will not be received favourably. Start planning now**! The end of semester is far too late.

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Course Schedule

unit	topics	EoL2 readings	lecture (Tue)	tutorial (Thu)	quiz (Fri)	HW due (Tue 1pm)
1	language and linguistics	1.1–1.7	Sep. 2	Sep. 4	—	—
2	language and power	2.1–2.8, 9.7	Sep. 9	Sep. 11	—	#1 Sep. 16
3	linguistic articulators	3.1–3.2, 3.7	Sep. 16	Sep. 18	#1 Sep. 19	—
4	consonants	3.3–3.4, 3.6	Sep. 23	Oct. 25	—	#2 Sep. 30
5	vowels	3.5–3.6	Sep. 30	Oct. 2	—	#3 Oct. 7
6	signs	3.8–3.9	Oct. 7	Oct. 9	#2 Oct. 10	—
7	syllables, stress, and tone	3.10–3.12	Oct. 14	Oct. 16	—	#4 Oct. 21
8	phonemes and allophones	4.1–4.6	Oct. 21	Oct. 23	—	—
	reading week (no classes)					
9	practice with phonemic analysis	4.1–4.6	Nov. 4	Nov. 6	#3 Nov. 7	—
10	rules and derivations	4.7–4.10	Nov. 11	Nov. 13	—	#5 Nov. 18
11	morphology	5.1–5.4	Nov. 18	Nov. 20	#4 Nov. 21	#6 Nov. 25
12	language variation and change	10.1–10.5	Nov. 25	Nov. 27	—	—
	final exam TBA					

EoL2 readings represent the material from the textbook (EoL2 is short for *Essentials of Linguistics*, 2nd edition) to be covered in lecture for that unit. Lecture notes will also be made available on Quercus before lecture so that you may bring them with you to take notes on. You are not expected to read the textbook or lecture notes in advance, but you may find it helpful to do so. Either way, you should read them soon after lecture, since they will be relevant for tutorial activities, quizzes, and homework.

Other Important Dates for Fall 2025

Sep. 1	Labour Day (University closed)
Sep. 2	first day of classes for F and Y courses (note: **LIN101 will meet that day!**)
Sep. 11	waitlists for F courses are closed
Sep. 15	last day to enrol in F and Y courses
Oct. 13	Thanksgiving Day (University closed)
Oct. 27–31	reading week (no classes)
Nov. 2	Daylight Saving Time ends (clocks move back to 2am at 3am)
Nov. 11	last day to drop F courses
Dec. 1	last day of regular classes in F term
Dec. 2	last day to add/remove CR/NCR option for F courses
Dec. 5–23	final exam period (includes Saturdays and evenings)
Jan. 9	last day to file petition for late term work for F courses