



LIN 3010
Introduction to Linguistics
81326 001
Fall 2026

Instructor Name

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University Course Description

Introduction to the basic principles of linguistic science; phonological and grammatical analysis and description; language change and genetic relationships.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

This course is organized into weekly modules that build progressively from the core components of linguistic science to broader questions about language in society. During the semester, you will explore topics including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, language acquisition, sociolinguistics, language and culture, and language change.

Each module includes a combination of learning materials designed to help you master the content, including:

- Assigned textbook readings

- Instructor lectures and class discussions
- Linguistic data analysis and problem-solving activities
- Homework assignments
- Reading quizzes

Learning in this course is highly interactive. Rather than simply memorizing facts about language, you will analyze real language data, identify linguistic patterns, solve linguistic puzzles, and apply course concepts to examples from everyday communication.

Throughout the semester, you will also complete a presentation on a linguistics topic of your choice and write a personal application essay connecting linguistics to your own academic interests, career goals, or everyday experiences. By the end of the course, you will have developed both an understanding of how human language works and the analytical tools linguists use to study it.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain how linguistics approaches the scientific study of language.
- Describe the fundamental properties shared by all human languages.
- Analyze the sound systems, word structure, sentence structure, and meaning of language using basic linguistic terminology and methods.
- Apply linguistic analysis to authentic language data from a variety of languages.
- Explain how context, culture, and society influence language use and interpretation.
- Describe how first and second languages are acquired.
- Evaluate common myths and misconceptions about language using evidence from linguistic research.
- Recognize how linguistics can be applied to a variety of academic disciplines and professional fields.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain what linguistics is and describe its major subfields.

2. Identify and analyze the sounds of language using principles of phonetics and phonology.
3. Analyze the internal structure of words and explain common word formation processes.
4. Describe how sentences are structured and account for patterns of grammatical organization.
5. Explain how meaning is constructed through semantics and how context influences interpretation through pragmatics.
6. Describe how children acquire language and compare first and second language acquisition.
7. Analyze patterns of language variation, language change, and the relationship between language, culture, and society.
8. Apply linguistic methods to solve language problems and evaluate common beliefs about language using scientific evidence.
9. Connect linguistic concepts to your own academic interests, future profession, and everyday experiences.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

Dawson, H., & Phelan, M. (Eds.). (2016). *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics* (13th ed.). Department of Linguistics, The Ohio State University.

Additional required readings, videos, and other course materials will be provided through Canvas. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before class so they are prepared to participate in discussions and activities.

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

N/A

How to Succeed in this Course

The best way to succeed in this course is to stay actively engaged with the material. Linguistics is a hands-on discipline—you will learn much more by practicing linguistic analysis than by simply reading about it.

To be successful:

- Attend class regularly and participate in discussions and activities.
- Complete the assigned readings before class.

- Keep up with homework, quizzes, and other assignments rather than falling behind.
- Practice the analytical skills introduced in class, even if they feel unfamiliar at first.
- Ask questions whenever something doesn't make sense—many concepts build on one another throughout the semester.

Most importantly, approach language with curiosity. This course challenges many common assumptions about language, and students who stay open-minded and actively engage with the evidence tend to get the most out of the experience.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale (%)			
98 – 100	A+	77 – 79	C+
94 – 97	A	74 – 76	C
90 – 93	A-	70 – 73	C-
87 – 89	B+	67 – 69	D+
84 – 86	B	64 – 66	D
80 – 83	B-	60 – 63	D-
decimals > .5 are rounded up		0 – 59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

- Homework = 20%
- Attendance & Participation = 5%
- Reading Quizzes = 5%
- Presentation = 15%
- Exams = 30%
- Personal Application Essay = 10%
- Final Exam = 15%

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to revision. Readings are to be completed by our class meeting on the

date they are listed.

week	content	readings	assignments
Week 1	Introduction & Syllabus	-	-
	Chapter 1. What you know when you know a language.	File 1.1 & 1.2, 9 Ideas about Language on Canvas	-
Week 2	Prescriptive vs. Descriptive grammar	File 1.3 & 2.1	Discussion Board
	Chapter 2. Intro to Phonetics & Consonants	File 2.2	Discussion Board HW #1
Week 3	Labor Day holiday; no classes & USF offices closed		
	Vowels	File 2.3	RQ #1 (<u>due by class Time</u>)
Week 4	Suprasegmentals	File 2.5	
	Chapter 3. Phonology Phonotactic constraints, Phonemes and Allophones	File 3.1 & 3.2	RQ #2 (<u>due by class time</u>)
Week 5	Phonemes and Allophones Phonology problems	File 3.5	
	Extra Phonology Exercises		HW #2
Week 6	Exam #1 Review		
	Exam #1: in-class 75 minutes		
Week 7	Chapter 4. Morphology (1)	File 4.1 & 4.2	
	Morphology (2)	File 4.4. & 4.5	RQ #3 (due by class time)
Week 8	Morphology problems		HW #3
	Chapter 5. Syntax	File 5.1 & 5.2 & 5.4	RQ#4

week	content	readings	assignments
Week 9	Syntactic Trees (1)	File 5.5	
	Syntactic Trees (2) & Syntactic ambiguity & Extra exercises	File 5.5	HW #4
Week 10	Chapter 6. Semantics Meaning of words and meaning relationships	File 6.1, 6.2	
	Chapter 7. Pragmatics: Grice's Maxims	File 7.1 & 7.2	RQ#5 (due by class time)
Week 11	Exam Review 2		
	EXAM #2: in class, 75 minutes, all topics included		
Week 12	Chapter 7. Speech acts	File 7.4	
	Chapter 8. First Language Acquisition & Second Language Acquisition	File 8.1	
Week 13	Chapter 11. Language and Culture & Language and power	File 11.1 & 11.3	Presentation Progress Report
	Chapter 10. Sociolinguistics & Language and Identity	File 10.4 & 10.5	HW #6
Week 14	Chapter 13. Language Change & Language Relatedness		
	Wrap-up		Personal Application Essay
Week 15	Presentations	Exam Review	

week	content	readings	assignments
Week 16	Final Exam		Final Take-home Exam

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

Late work policy

As a general rule, you're expected to plan ahead and avoid submitting assignments late. If you know ahead of time that a due date will be problematic, *contact me as soon as possible*. If there is an emergency, you must provide documentation and contact me as soon as possible. If you miss class, you are

responsible for finding out what you missed (check Canvas modules, announcements, and the course calendar) and coming prepared to the next class. Please do NOT send me an email to the effect of, "Sorry, I wasn't in class, did I miss anything?" However, if something is still unclear after you have taken the steps to find out what you missed, please email me or ask about it in class.

In addition to potential penalties in the [Class Involvement](#) category, late work may receive the following penalties on the assignment grades: up to 48 hours late, the maximum score is 90%; if the work is between 2-7 days late, the highest grade you can receive on the assignment is 80%; after 7 days, the highest grade you can receive is 70%; NO work can be turned in after the last day of class.

Extra credit policy

Opportunities for extra credit may be offered during the semester, e.g., attending a linguistics-related web event at USF, e.g., a guest speaker for WLE. More details will be provided in the event any opportunities may arise.

Grades of "Incomplete"

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. For undergraduate courses: An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. For graduate students, this time limit may not exceed one academic semester. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

For technical questions and support, contact the IT Help Desk at (813) 974-4357 or help@usf.edu.

To resolve your issue quicker, please include the following information:

- Course ID if the problem occurred within a course, example: ABC1234.001F13.
- What you were trying to do when the problem occurred.
- The exact wording of any error you received.

[IT Help Desk](#). This page allows you to chat with IT support, reset your password, or report a problem.

Visit the IT website for each campus:

- [Tampa Campus IT](#)
- [St Pete Campus IT](#)
- [Sarasota-Manatee IT](#)

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's

assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made

available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website](#).

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing.

Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)