

Phonology (LING 5350) Syllabus

Alexander Smith (instructor)

Fall 2018

BASICS

Email: smith.alexander.david@gmail.com
Office: Language building 409L (hours to be determined)
Room: NTDP D 208 B
Date and Time: Tuesday, 6:30 – 9:20

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will require students to comprehend and critically discuss abstract linguistic concepts. Understanding phonology means more than understanding a single theory; it also means understanding the linguistic motivations behind multiple theories, their strengths, and their weaknesses. The course focuses on several aspects of phonological theory, including pre-SPE Bloomfieldian and Sapirian approaches to phonology, SPE, Feature Geometries, Natural Phonology, Metrical Phonology, Optimality Theory, Exemplar Theory, and Evolutionary Phonology. The course will require a large amount of reading regarding these various approaches to phonology and class discussion. Students will be required to write summaries of the various approaches to phonology throughout the semester. The course will also offer opportunities for phonological analysis of data, using both data sets from Halle and Clements (1983) and my own primary data. Students must write a final paper in one of three fields 1) critically analyze a theory of phonology. The paper must identify problems and offer novel solutions within a theoretical framework. 2) produce a robust phonological description of a language. The description must include discussions of various theoretical analyses. 3) write on a special topic in phonology, with my approval.

GRADING

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|---------------|-----------|
| Participation | 15 |
| Homework | 15 |
| Midterm | 20 |
| Final exam | 20 |
| Final paper | 30 |
| <hr/> Total | <hr/> 100 |

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is very important for this class. This is where we will discuss the readings and other class materials. We will introduce new ideas in the lecture and answer any questions students may have. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with what was missed by asking classmates and/or the instructor. The student's efforts in coming to class on time will be duly recognized.

PARTICIPATION

To be successful in this class, students must attend class sessions with proper preparation. Assigned readings must be completed before corresponding lectures. Lectures are not simply a review of the material in the textbook; they presuppose and expand upon that material. To make the lectures more meaningful and understanding, please be prepared to share your questions and comments on assigned readings in class. Students are responsible for all of the information presented in this course, and students' active participation in class and proper preparation for class are also expected. Asking questions is very important and will affect grades. Office hours (to be determined) and email are also good ways to get credit for participation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism and cheating. Students who violate the University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course. There is no need to leave information that is taken directly from an outside source uncited, and there is no need to avoid using information from outside sources out of fear of being accused of plagiarism. If you need any help referencing and citing your information, just let me know.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

| WEEK | TOPIC |
|--------|--|
| Aug 28 | Introduction. What is phonology? Phonetic and phonological basics. |
| Sep 4 | The phoneme |
| Sep 11 | Features |
| Sep 18 | Phonological rules |
| Sep 25 | Syllables and Sonority |
| Oct 2 | Stress and Metrical Phonology |
| Oct 9 | Feature Geometries |
| Oct 16 | MIDTERM |
| Oct 23 | Autosegmental Phonology |
| Oct 30 | Natural Phonology |
| Nov 6 | Exemplar Theory |
| Nov 13 | Diachronic Phonology |

| | |
|--------|-------------------|
| Nov 20 | Optimality Theory |
| Nov 27 | Optimality Theory |
| Dec 4 | Optimality Theory |

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940-565-4323.

“Phonology is the study of the difference between what people think they are saying, and what they are actually saying.”