

University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras
Faculty of Humanities/English Department

First Semester, Year 2014-2015: August to December 2014
INGL 4207 Syntactic Theory
Monday and Wednesday, 4:00pm to 5:20pm, Pedreira 201

Professor:

Dr. Robin J. Schafer

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 3:00pm to 4:00pm

Pedreira, third-floor (inside the Linguistics Program Office)

Telephone: 787-764-0000 x89716; E-mail: robin.schafer@upr.edu

An invitation only google group will be set up for this class.

Course Description:

The course is designed for students interested in understanding and performing formal analysis of the structure of phrases and sentences. There will be a particular, but not exclusive focus on Modern English. We will examine a full range of grammatical structures in English, frequently comparing them to corresponding structures in other languages. This is NOT a course in prescriptive Modern English Grammar.

Prerequisites and other preparation necessary for this course:

This course is taught in English and is for students proficient in English.

No prior study of syntax will be assumed.

Course Objectives:

- a) Gain analytic skills in reasoning about language data
- b) Understand the difference between prescriptive grammar and the term "grammar" as it is used by syntactician.
- c) Identify, distinguish, and know how and when to use basic syntactic tools.
- d) Learn to read syntactic analyses.
- e) Become familiar with the prevailing formal model of syntactic structure.
- f) Creatively apply syntactic tools to language data that has not been reviewed in class.

Teaching Method: As much as possible this course will be taught using a "guided discovery" method, a type of participatory, student-centered learning. Topics covered will be introduced in data sets some of which students must complete prior to class. The class will be engaged in a collaborative project of creating a grammar for Modern English. In this way, you will be actively engaged in the learning process, recapitulate some of the work that Generative Syntacticians did in the mid and late 20th century and gain foundational skills in syntactic analysis.

Required Text:

Andrew Carnie, Syntax: A Generative Introduction. Third Edition, Wiley Blackwell. 2012.

Order from amazon.com, your favorite textbook website or bookstore.

You must have this text / I will assume you have this text by Monday, August 25.

<i>Evaluation:</i>	
10 Problem Sets	5points each = 50 points
Exam 1 (includes take-home and in-class portions)	15points
Exam 2 (in-class)	5 points
Final Exam (Take Home)	10 points
On-time Attendance and Participation. Participation involves intentionally and thoughtfully questioning or commenting on topic in the class discussion.	2pts for <i>weeks</i> 2 through 6, 1pt for each of the other ten <i>weeks</i> = 20points

Marking System: A=90-100pts, B=80-89pts, C=70-79pts, D=60-69pts, F <60pts

Groundrules

Attend on time: You are expected to come to class and to arrive on time. No Class Break No breaks: Class begins at 4pm. It will not end until 5:20. There is no scheduled break in the class. Be discrete if you have to slip out.

Ask questions: This course is about you doing syntax. Make comments, answer and ask questions. However, I reserve the right to issue a “promissory note” in answer to your question, if it is better discussed later in the term after we have a more developed model.

No late assignments or exams: Problem sets are due at the start of class --- No late problem sets are accepted. No problems sets can be turned in at the end of class. There are no makeup exams.

Problem sets: **Problem sets must be hand written in a legible fashion**, with numbered pages, stapled together with your name at the top left of the first page. **Problem sets are ALWAYS due the next class day at the very beginning of the class – please stack them on my desk.** You may work in groups on the problem sets and you must include the names of your group members at the top right of the problem set. NB: **Each person must write up their responses individually, on their own, without the help of other group members.** See plagiarism below.

Exams: You must work on your own, individually on all portions of the exams.

Writing (reading, speaking, and listening) in English: You are expected to write in standard English. The text and class discussion will be held in English.

Plagarism: This course is about YOU developing a skill. Copying the work of others defeats the purpose. Plagarism of any kind — including the copying of the work of fellow students — will result in a 0 for the assignment and possible referral to the Program Director and the Dean’s Office. See UPR plagiarism policies below

How to read for this class: **What happens in class is the most important thing going on in this course.** The purpose of the text is to provide a review of material discussed from a slightly different viewpoint. I am not teaching the text --- so the chapters do not precisely match what is covered in class. Readings are assigned for each of the four parts of

the class. I strongly suggest **reading the text as a review after we have completed our work** in each of the sections. If you read ahead, you may find yourself confused as sometimes we will be ahead of Carnie and sometimes Carnie will be ahead of us. We will NOT cover all the topics in the book. Skim the chapters, reading closely on those topics we have covered that you wish to review.

Cellphones: Set your cellphones and similar electronic devices on vibrate and keep them off your desk. Numbers may be checked for emergencies.

Computers: Computers are for note-taking only. Wifi must be off.

Class Dates (dates in bold face are due dates for Problem Sets)				
August	September	October	November	December
11, 13	1 HOLIDAY	1 in-class exam 1; Take-home portion of exam 1 due	3, 5	1 in-class exam 2
18, 20	3	6: midterm grades reported to Registrar	10, 12	8 Take-home final exam due
25, 27	8, 10	8	17	
	15, 17	13 HOLIDAY	19 HOLIDAY	
	22, 24	15	24, 26	
	29	20, 22		
		27, 29		

Topics, Assignment Dates, (Tentative) Chapters for Reading

Part 1. Syntactic Categories, the Lexicon and Phrase Structure Rules

Required Readings : Chapter 3. Constituency, Trees, and Rules ; 4. Structural Relations; 6. X-bar Theory; 7. Extending X-bar; and 8. Constraining X-bar

Suggested Readings : Chapter 1. Generative Grammar; 2. Parts of Speech; and 9. Auxiliaries and Functional Categories

August 11 Overview of Course;

Some key concepts

Intro to Grammatical Categories, the Lexicon, and Phrase Structure

Problem Set 1 assigned

August 13 Phrase Structure 2

Problem Set 1 due

Problem Set 2 assigned

August 18: Phrase Structure and Transformations

Problem Set 2 due

August 20: Structural Relations and Foundational Principles

Problem Set 3 assigned

Part 2. Short Distance Dependencies

Required Readings : Chapter 11. DP Movement and 5. Binding Theory.

Suggested Reading : Chapter 15. Raising, Control, and Empty Categories

August 25: Passive 1

Problem Set 3 due

August 27: Passives 2

September 1: HOLIDAY

September 3: Pronouns and Anaphors

Problem Set 4 assigned

September 8: Existentials and Expletive It

Problem Set 4 due

September 10 Raising 1

Problem Set 5 assigned

September 15 Raising 2

Problem Set 5 due

September 17 Deletion and an Alternative to Deletion

Problem Set 6 assigned

September 22 Properties of Control

Problem Set 6 due

September 24 Control 2

September 29 Review: A movement to DP movement

Take-home midterm distributed

October 1 **In-class exam 1**

Take-home exam 1 due

Part 3: Long Distance Dependencies

Required Reading : Chapter 12. Wh-Movement

Suggested Reading: Chapter 17. Advanced Topics in Binding

October 6 WH Questions

October 8 Subjacency 1

Problem Set 7 assigned

October 13: Holiday

October 15 Relative Clauses

Problem Set 7 due

October 20 Bounding Theory

October 22 Barriers

Problem Set 8 assigned

October 27 Subjacency Again: Calculating Barriers

Problem Set 8 due

October 29 Modules and Levels

Part 4: Towards Minimalism: From Rules to Principles and Parameters

Required Readings : Chapter 9. Head to Head Movement and 12. A Unified Theory of Movement

Suggested Reading: Chapter 17. Advanced Topics in Binding

November 3 Head Movement

November 5 Relativized Minimality 1

Problem Set 9 assigned

November 10 Relativized Minimality 2

Problem Set 9 due

November 12 Levels of Representation: LF
November 17 The Phonology-Syntax Interface

Problem Set 10 assigned

November 19: Holiday

November 24: Principles and Parameters

Problem Set 10 due

November 26; Evidence for the notion of Universal Grammar and alternative theories of syntax (HPSG, LFG, RG, CG)

December 1: *In-class exam 2*; Review.

December 8 (finals week) *Final exam (take-home) due*

Must be turned into my box in the Linguistics Office by 3:00pm (Office will be locked after 3pm so you MUST get it there on time!!!)

Helpful References

Crystal, David. 2003. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. *For a lot more on English than we can cover this semester.*

Chomsky, Noam. 1957. Syntactic Structures. 's-Gravenhage: Mouten & Co., N.V. *The foundation piece for generative grammars.*

Fromkin, Victoria and Robert Rodman. 1993. An Introduction to Language. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace and Company. *This is one of many excellent introductions if you just need to remind yourself of how syntax fits into the study of Linguistics.*

Haegemann, Liliane. 1994. An Introduction to Government and Binding Theory. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Inc. *An excellent text on 1990s GB. It covers all the topics in the first three sections.*

Lees, Robert B. 1957. Review: Syntactic Structures. *Language*, 33:3, part 1 (July-Sept), 375-408.

MIT Open Courseware: Introduction to Syntax Lecture Notes.

<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/linguistics-and-philosophy/24-951-introduction-to-syntax-fall-2003/lecture-notes/> *Notes on all our topics and then some. For more information on Minimalist Syntax look here.*

Soames, Scott and David Perlmutter, 1979. Syntactic Argumentation and the Structure of English. Los Angeles and London: University of California Press. *If you feel confused about how to create generalizations in syntax and how to argue for or against them, look at this book.*

Ley 51: Ley de Servicios Integrales de Personas con Impedimentos

Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con la profesora al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) de Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con la profesora.

Circular 17: Deshonestidad académica: La falta de integridad y el fraude académico y científico incluye: **plagio**, falsificación, invención o atribución falsa y cualquier engaño o desviación de aquellas conductas prácticas de honestidad generalmente aceptadas en la comunidad académica, que no ocurra como resultado de errores o diferencias honestas e involuntarias en la interpretación o manejo de datos o información.

Reglamento General de Estudiantes UPR, Artículo 6.2: Conducta estudiantil sujeta a sanciones disciplinarias

1: Deshonestidad académica: Toda forma de deshonestidad o falta de integridad académica, incluyendo, pero sin limitarse a, acciones fraudulentas, la obtención de notas o grados académicos valiéndose de falsas o fraudulentas simulaciones, copiar total o parcialmente la labor académica de otra persona, plagiar total o parcialmente el trabajo de otra persona, copiar total o parcialmente las respuestas de otra persona a las preguntas de un examen, haciendo o consiguiendo que otro tome en su nombre cualquier prueba o examen oral o escrito, así como la ayuda o facilitación para que otra persona incurra en la referida conducta. [...]