

Introduction to Linguistics

LING 1600, Fall 2026

Dr. Jonathan Paramore

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Office: Wilson Hall, Rm. 101

Office hours: Fridays, 10:00am–11:00am or by appointment

Time and Place

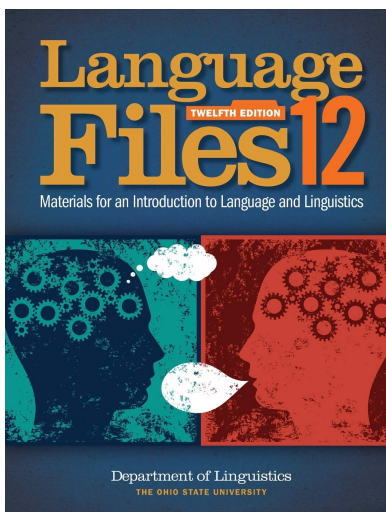
Lectures: Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:00am – 11:20am, tbd

Fall classes: Monday, August 24th – Monday, December 7th

There is no Final for this course!!!

Required Text

Language Files, 12th edition. (2016). The Ohio State University Press. Note that this is **not** the most recent version. Please check Canvas for the availability of this book. Any additional readings are posted as PDFs as necessary.



Course Description and Learning Goals

Language is one of the fundamental capacities of the human species, and there are many interesting and meaningful ways in which it can be studied. This course explores the core components of linguistic theory: speech sounds (phonetics and phonology), word formation (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), and meaning (semantics). It also provides an overview of interdisciplinary ideas and research on how language is acquired and processed, its relation to the mind-brain and to society, and the question of whether the essential properties of language can be replicated outside the human mind (specifically, in chimpanzees or computer programs).

- Learn to view natural language, and humanity's capacity for it, as an object of scientific inquiry
- Understand the core subfields within linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and computational linguistics
- Create representations and implement methodology within these subfields
- Analyze and solve problems in novel natural language data
- Apply linguistic tools to critique and debunk common myths about language

Requirements

Attendance: I will **not** take attendance. However, much of the content relevant to succeed in the course will be provided by way of the lectures, and quizzes (discussed below) will take place in class and are unable to be made up without prior approval from me. In short, you won't do well if you don't come to class.

Quizzes: There will be 14 quizzes which will be administered randomly in class throughout the semester. These are spot-checks on course content, and anything covered prior to the quiz could appear.

Homework: There will be 4 assignments to complete throughout the course. They are rather involved, so don't wait until the last few days to begin! You may work on these in groups or consult with your classmates (and are encouraged to do so!), but the write-ups must be done individually.

Grading Policy: The two lowest quiz grades will be dropped. *Quizzes cannot be made up* without prior email-written approval from me *before* the quiz takes place, so *go to class!* Assignments should be turned in by 11:59pm on the due date given. Assignments will be graded within roughly 48 hours of this due date, and any assignments turned in after grading has taken place will not be accepted, unless prior email-written approval is given.

Final Grade Breakdown:

Requirement	% of final grade
Quizzes (12 x 4% ea.)	48%
Homeworks (4 x 13% ea.)	52%

Academic Honesty

WashU does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. For details, see:

- [WashU Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Guide to citing sources](#)

Student Resources

Students with Disabilities: Contact [Disability Resources](#) for assistance by phone at 314-935-5970 or by email at disabilityresources@wustl.edu. If you are student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from Disability Resources to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first week of the quarter. At this meeting, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course.

Title IX: Confidential support for sexual harassment or violence is available at WashU. More information about Title IX provisions can be found [here](#).

Course Schedule (Subject to Frequent Updates)

Readings should be completed before the class meeting of the day they are listed. For example, LF12 Ch.1 should be read before the class meeting time on 08/26.

Week 1: Fundamentals

Mon 08/24	Course overview and fundamentals	
Wed 08/26	Fundamentals: Design features	LF12 Ch.1

Week 2: Phonetics I

Mon 08/31	Consonants and vowels	
Wed 09/02	Phonetic transcription	LF12 Ch.2

Week 3: Phonetics II

Mon 09/07	No class (Labor Day)	
Wed 09/09	Acoustic phonetics	

Week 4: Phonology I

Mon 09/14	Phonotactics	LF12 Ch.3
Wed 09/16	Phonemes and allophones	

Week 5: Phonology II

Mon 09/21	Phonological rules and processes	
Wed 09/23	Phonology practice	

Week 6: Morphology I

Mon 09/28	Introduction to morphology	LF12 Ch.4
Wed 09/30	Morphological classification	HW1 DUE

Week 7: Morphology II

Mon 10/05	No class (Fall Break)	
Wed 10/07	Morphology practice	

Week 8: Syntax I

Mon 10/12	Introduction to syntax	LF12 Ch.5
Wed 10/14	Grammaticality judgments/constituency	

Week 9: Syntax II

Mon 10/19	Syntactic trees	
Wed 10/21	Arguments and adjuncts	HW2 DUE

Week 10: Syntax III

Mon 10/26 Syntax practice and review

Wed 10/28 Catch up day

Week 11: Semantics & Pragmatics I

Mon 11/02 Semantics: Meaning

LF12 Ch.6

Wed 11/04 Propositions and entailment

Week 12: Semantics & Pragmatics II

Mon 11/09 Semantics practice

HW3 DUE

Wed 11/11 Pragmatics: Meaning in context

LF12 Ch.7

Week 13: Semantics & Pragmatics III

Mon 11/16 Inference and implicature

Wed 11/18 Catch up day

Week 14: Computational Linguistics I

Mon 11/23 Automatic Speech Recognition

LF12 Ch.16

Wed 11/25 No class (Thanksgiving Break)**Week 15: Computational Linguistics II**

Mon 11/30 Text to Speech

Wed 12/02 Large Language Models

Week 16: Historical Linguistics

Mon 12/07 Lang. change and Lang. relationships

LF12 Ch.13

Wed 12/09 No class (Reading Day)**HW4 DUE**