Introduction to Linguistics  
Spring 2013

O'Leary Library 517  
Thursdays: 4 – 6:20 pm

Instructor: Dr. Miriam Margala  
miriam_margala@uml.edu

Office hrs: O'Leary Library 512, Thursdays 2:20-3:50 pm and/or by appointment

All language, literature and literacy teachers benefit from understanding of how language in general works. This course is designed to help students to understand and use in their language teaching the basic concepts, methods and approaches of linguistics. The following are some of the topics covered in the course:
- phonetics (sounds/sound inventory of a language)  
- phonology (how we understand and organize the sounds and patterns)  
- morphology (word structure, morphemes; how smaller units of meaning make up words)  
- syntax (sentence structure, how words make up sentences)  
- semantics (how we understand and parse sentences, structural ambiguity, context within sentences)  
- pragmatics (how context impacts meaning on a textual level)  
- social aspects of language (dialects, sociolects, language change, etc.)

Although most of the examples will involve English, for comparative and contrastive purposes other languages will be used (no need to understand them). Students will be encouraged to come up with as many of their own examples as possible – the more languages the merrier. In addition, the course develops and strengthens skills in logical reasoning and problem solving, which are invaluable in any field.

Course Goals
- In addition to studying/learning linguistic concepts, approaches and methodologies, stimulating curiosity about language, what it reveals about the human mind, behavior, attitudes and cultures is an important aim in this course.
- To increase ability in critical thinking, analysis, problem-solving, hypothesis formulation and evaluation, and written expression.
- To understand that language is a dynamic system; every speaker brings his/her own background to it. Also, we will emphasize the interrelatedness of the individual language speaker and his/her language community so that
you have a strong intellectual background to be able to apply your knowledge of linguistics in other areas of your professional and private lives.

- To develop an ability to become a more informed literature reader/writer/teacher.
- To understand and appreciate our deep relation with the language.

- **By the end of the course**, you should:
  - Be able to understand and work with the basic concepts and methodologies of linguistics.
  - Be able to discuss language issues in an informed way.
  - Be ready to further your knowledge in this field (for example, taking an intermediate linguistics course).

A good way to start/a good question to ask:

*Language is what makes us human, but how does it work?*

**Attendance policy**

If you miss more than three classes, you will need a doctor's (or other) official note; otherwise, your participation/attendance grade will be lowered. It is your responsibility to catch up with the course work/assignments. ALWAYS talk to me (email counts) – I will try to find ways to help you.

**Grading scheme**

- Participation (active!)/attendance 15%
- Weekly assignments 35% (due at the beginning of each class)
- **Midterm** paper 25% (topics to be discussed)
  - **Due:** March 28/2013 at the beginning of the class

- **Final** take home exam: **April 24, LAST CLASS** 25% (short, longer and essay type questions)
  - **Due:** April 25 by 6:00pm (Friday)

**Please note:** I will always reward extra work. For example, you may choose to add an extra exercise to your weekly assignment. Also, I will include a few extra questions on the final exam. You’ll get additional points for each extra question you answer **correctly and fully**. Remember, weekly assignments count for 35% of your overall grade. If you are not handing them in consistently, you are losing a lot of points. If you have any problems, always talk to me.
You will find the official grading scheme @: http://www.uml.edu/Registrar/Grades-and-Transcripts/grading.aspx

**Instructional Resources and Disability Accommodations:**
The Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services provide many resources, including tutoring in writing: [http://class.uml.edu/](http://class.uml.edu/). In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will provide accommodation for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. Their office is on North campus, in Cumnock Hall C6, phone: 978-934-4574, e-mail: Disability@uml.edu. This documentation is confidential.

**A note on classroom conduct:**
In this class, and in all classes at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, students are expected to exhibit professional and respectful behavior that is conducive to a mutually beneficial learning environment in the classroom. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: text messaging, listening to music, cell phone use (other than the campus alert system), late arrivals, early departures, use of laptops for other than class purposes, disrespectful comments or behavior, intentional disruptions, failure to follow faculty directives. Students in violation of these standards may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

**It is essential that you follow UMass-Lowell's policies on plagiarism:** [http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm](http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm)
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<td>- course info</td>
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<td>- linguistics – intro</td>
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<td>- Chapter 1: Language: a Preview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 31/2013</td>
<td>Phonetics</td>
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<td>Mar 07/2013</td>
<td>Historical linguistics</td>
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<td>Mar 14/2013</td>
<td>Classification of Languages; Indigenous Languages of North America <em>(Spring Break – NO assignment)</em></td>
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<td>(even though this is the week of Spring Break, this chapter is very self-study friendly and interesting)</td>
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<td>Mar 21/2013</td>
<td>First Language Acquisition (address any issues from Mar 14 reading material)</td>
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<td>April 04/2013</td>
<td>Psycholinguistics/Brain and Language</td>
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