
Introduction to Linguistic Analysis: Syntax

M/W/F – 11AM–11:50AM
Education building (ED), room 2018B

TEACHING STAFF INFORMATION

Instructor	Suzana Fong
Contact	suzana.fong@mun.ca
Office	Science Building (SN), room 3046
Website	https://sznfng.github.io/

OFFICE HOURS

When	Mondays, 3:15PM to 5:15PM Wednesdays, 3:15PM to 5:15PM (or by appointment)
Where	Science Building (SN), room 3046

- Office hours will start on Monday, September 9, 2024.
- Office hours will not be held on holidays.

APPOINTMENTS

- Please send me an [e-mail](#) to schedule a meeting outside of my office hours.
- If possible, contact me at least 24h before your intended meeting time.
- If you would like to schedule a Zoom meeting, please choose a time that does **not** coincide with my in-person office hours.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

This course offers an introduction to the syntax of natural languages as viewed by *Generative Grammar*. According to this framework, human beings are endowed with the unique capacity for language. Because we are born with this ability, we are able to have robust judgments about sentences that have never been uttered before as well as build and interpret sentences that have never been used by anybody else before. Likewise, this innate capacity accounts for why all children acquire at least one language, even when faced with an incomplete and fragmentary input.

In this course, we will delve into the main components of the grammar, including those responsible for establishing the relationship between nominals in a sentence (Binding Theory), for the form and distribution

of such nominals (Case Theory), for the combination between predicates and their subjects and objects (Argument Structure). We will also investigate fundamental operations of the grammar, as proposed by current developments of Generative theory, i.e. Agree and Merge.

At the end of this course, students will have a comprehensive picture of the workings of the grammar that underlie the syntax of natural languages. We will examine data from a diverse set of languages and language families, including English (Germanic), Mongolian (Mongolic), Brazilian Portuguese (Romance), Khanty (Uralic), Korean (Altaic), Lithuanian (Baltic), Acehnese (Austronesian), among others. This course is particularly well-suited to students who drawn to problem-solving and, likewise, to those interested in having first-hand experience analyzing data from different languages.

ACCESSIBILITY

- Accommodations for students with disabilities are provided in accordance with the [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy](#) and its related procedures.
- University policies and procedures pertaining to accommodations for students with disabilities can be found [here](#).
- Students who feel that they may require formal academic accommodations to address barriers or challenges they are experiencing related to their learning are encouraged to contact [Accessibility Services \(Blundon Centre\)](#) at the earliest opportunity to ensure any required accommodations are provided in a timely manner.
- You can contact Accessibility Services (Blundon Centre) by emailing blundon@mun.ca.
- You can also contact the instructor of this course in person or via e-mail. Otherwise, you can make an anonymous request through this form: <https://forms.gle/sKugU4jJpLaT6mfP7>. I receive a notification whenever this form is filled, so I will address your concern/request as soon as possible.

ASSESSMENT

Homework assignments	60%
Take-home exam	40%

- Following the topics discussed in class, a corresponding homework assignment will be posted on Brightspace (see [Schedule](#) below).
- Students will have one week to submit their solutions (see [Schedule](#) below; see also fn. 1).
- There will be a total of seven homework assignments.
- Each homework assignment will be worth *around* 15 points, totaling 100+ points—some assignments will have extra points. This is worth 60% of your final grade.
- At the end of the course, you will also complete a ‘take-home exam,’ i.e. a longer homework assignment that covers all topics examined in the semester. It is worth 100 points in total and corresponds to 40% of your grade.
- You will have around two weeks to complete this final assignment.
- **Late submission:** if you need an extension, please *send me an e-mail in advance* specifying when you will be able to submit your assignment.

PARTICIPATION

- Active participation of the students is built into my lectures and lecture materials. Your engagement is, thus vital, to the success of this course.
- Nonetheless, there is no participation grade in this course, in acknowledgment of the fact that students engage in the lectures in different ways.
- I do ask students to refrain from doing activities that do not pertain to the course as a whole or to a given lecture (e.g. doing assignments from another course or, indeed, from this course, endlessly scrolling on your phone/laptop, etc).

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- Feel free to use an electronic device such as a laptop or a tablet to e.g. take notes or look at lecture materials at your own pace.
- The classroom is large, so there should be enough space if you would like not to sit behind a laptop screen.

READINGS

- This course is based on the textbook *Introduction to Syntax*, written by the instructor of the course.
- It will be freely available to all students through Brightspace. Individual chapters will be posted prior to the relevant lecture.
- Slides and handouts will also be posted in advance in case you would like to use them to prepare for the lectures.

SCHEDULE

- The schedule below follows the [University Calendar](#). If you need accommodations for e.g. medical or religious reasons, please let me know!
- The schedule is subject to minor adjustments, depending on how much time we spend on each topic—this can vary from cohort to cohort. Please check weekly announcements on the course website.
- The reading for each topic listed is the chapter of the above-mentioned textbook with the same title.
- Below, '(continued)' denotes that the topic listed in the previous day is taken up again.

	DATE	TOPIC	HOMEWORK
W	Sept 4	Introduction to Generative Grammar	
F	Sept 6	(continued)	
M	Sept 9	The Internal Structure of Sentences	
W	Sept 11	(continued)	📅 Assignment #1 posted
F	Sept 13	(continued)	
M	Sept 16	(continued)	
W	Sept 18	How predicates combine with subjects and objects: Argument Structure	📅 Assignment #1 due

F	Sept 20	<i>(continued)</i>	
M	Sept 23	<i>(continued)</i>	
W	Sept 25	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #2 posted
F	Sept 27	The interpretation of DPs: Binding Theory	
M	Sept 30	<i>National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</i>	
W	Oct 2	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #2 due
F	Oct 4	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #3 posted
M	Oct 7	<i>(continued)</i>	
W	Oct 9	How predicates combine with indirect objects: ditransitives and applicatives	
F	Oct 11	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #3 due 📅 Assignment #4 posted
M	Oct 14	<i>Thanksgiving break</i>	
W	Oct 16	The form and position of DPs: case, agreement, and the operation Agree	
F	Oct 18	<i>No lecture: NELS conference¹</i>	
M	Oct 21	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #4 due 📅 Assignment #5 posted
W	Oct 23	<i>(continued)</i>	
F	Oct 25	Raising and control	
M	Oct 28	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #5 due
W	Oct 30	<i>(continued)</i>	
F	Nov 1	DP movement to Spec-TP: passivization and movement as Internal Merge	
M	Nov 4	<i>(continued)</i>	
W	Nov 6	<i>(continued)</i>	
F	Nov 8	<i>(continued)</i>	📅 Assignment #6 posted
M	Nov 11	<i>Remembrance Day</i>	
W	Nov 13		
F	Nov 15	DP movement to Spec-CP: interrogative sentences	📅 Assignment #6 due
M	Nov 18	<i>(continued)</i>	

¹To make up for the missed lecture, *Assignment #4* will include an additional exercise that can be done in pairs—if you choose this option, only one solution has to be submitted by both students (this applies to the additional exercise only). There is no requirement that this additional exercise be completed with a colleague. Because this assignment is slightly longer, its deadline will be a bit later too. More instructions will be given when *Assignment #4* is posted.

W	Nov 20	(continued)	📅 Assignment #7 posted
F	Nov 22	(continued)	
M	Nov 25	Two types of head movement: Amalgamation and Internal Merge of heads	
W	Nov 27	(continued)	📅 Assignment #7 due 📅 Take-home exam posted
F	Nov 29	(continued)	
M	Dec 2	(continued)	
Th	Dec 12		📅 Take-home exam due

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The submission of work that has been created by generative artificial intelligence (henceforth: AI) tools and presented as a student's original work is considered an academic offence in this course. Students may **not** use AI in any of the following ways:²

- Submitting an assignment presented as their own. This includes but is not limited to essays, research papers, computer code, and solutions to mathematical problem.
- Using AI as an aid to completing an assignment, such as paraphrasing from AI content.
- Submitting answers to any quiz, test, or exam question using AI solutions.

Students are **permitted** to use AI for learning activities and assessments and to assist in gaining a deeper understanding of the concepts. *You are requested to confirm instances of AI use in your submitted work.* Example uses include:

- Creating an assignment outline.
- Generating and collecting ideas and information for a paper or creative work.
- Proofreading and grammar checking.
- Creating a reference list.
- Comparing one's work with AI generated output.
- Critiquing AI generated output.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AND PLAGIARISM

“Academic integrity means taking full responsibility for the academic work you submit for your courses, so that your professors can evaluate you on the basis of your own understanding and effort. It means being honest and honourable in all academic pursuits, even in difficult circumstances. Students are expected to know and avoid academic offences; ignorance of an offence is not an acceptable excuse for committing it. Penalties could include reprimand, reduction of grade, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University” [[MUN Libraries](#)].

For more information, see MUN's regulations for [Academic Misconduct](#), specially §6.12.4.

²Adapted from: [CITL](#).

LATE POLICIES

ABSENCES OF FEWER THAN FIVE DAYS

A student is, at times, prevented from completing a part of the evaluation by illness or medical conditions of less than five calendar days' duration. In such cases, a student may apply for an alternate evaluation by declaring to the relevant instructor that the student has experienced such an illness or medical condition. See procedures [here](#).

ABSENCES OF FIVE DAYS OR MORE

A student who is prevented from completing a part of the evaluation by illness of at least five calendar days' duration, bereavement or other acceptable cause, duly authenticated in writing, may apply for an alternate evaluation. See procedures [here](#).