

University of Western Ontario
Linguistics Program
LING9600A/4248A: Introduction to Generative Syntax
Fall 2020

Instructor: Michiya Kawai (mkawai@uwo.ca) Wednesday: 09:30-12:30
Office: HUC-A-214
Office Hours: Tu: 14:30-15:30, or by appointment
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COURSE OBJECTIVE:

- To acquire the basic knowledge of the current transformational syntax
- To become fluent in the current linguistic research methods
- To understand the issues for the current research program(s) in syntax
- To perform syntactic research

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Critical analysis of the development of transformational generative grammar. We will examine various aspects of generative syntax (and minimalist approach to syntax), using Feidin's (2012) presentation as a starting point.

The course will be conducted through lectures and classroom discussions based upon the reading materials, students' individual research, and other materials. Students are required to select a small research topic for the term paper, do research in consultation with the instructor, and write a short (20± single-space) page term paper.

Students are expected to actively participate in discussion and conduct their own research.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

Feidin, Robert. 2012. *Syntax: Basic Concepts and Applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Suggested Background Readings:

Chomsky, Noam. 1956. Three models for the description of language. *IEEE Trans. on Info. Theory*, Vol. 2.3: 113–124.

Chomsky, Noam. 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. Categories and Transformation. In *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist Inquiry. In Roger Martin, David Michaels, and Juan Uriagereka eds., *Step by Step: Essays on Minimalist Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

Cook, V. J., and Mark Newson. 2007. *Chomsky's Universal Grammar: An Introduction*. 3rd Edition. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Lasnik, Howard. 1990. Syntax. In Daniel N. Osherson and Howard Lasnik eds., *Language: An Invitation to Cognitive Science Volume I*, 5–21. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

- Lasnik, Howard. 1995. The forms of sentences. In Lila R. Gleitman and Mark Liberman eds. *Language: An Invitation to Cognitive Science Second Edition* Volume I, 283–310. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.
- Lasnik, Howard, with Marcela Depiante and Arthur Stepanov. 2000. *Syntactic Structures Revisited: Contemporary Lectures on Classic Transformational Theory*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.
- Lasnik, Howard. 2005. Grammar, levels, and biology. In James McGilvray ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Chomsky*, 60–83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There will be one (take-home) mid-term assignment, and one final paper. These constitute 30% and 50%, respectively, of the final grade. Tentative due dates for these two evaluations are found in the schedule below. Class participation via Zoom and preparation (background research) constitutes 20%. This may include short (surprise) quizzes regarding the reading materials; such quizzes, if used, will not count 5% or more of the final grade. Given the small number of our class meetings, you are expected to attend all the classes. If you have a problem related to the course delivery platform, please contact the instructor.

POLICIES AND STIPULATIONS

The dates for paper dues, once established, are absolute.

The proposal for the final term paper, which states the problem(s) you would like to discuss, method of the investigation, and the references, must be submitted and accepted by the instructor.

EXAMINATION POLICY

Special examinations. “A special examination is any examination other than the regularly scheduled examination. Special exams will be allowed only on receipt of medical documentation verifying a serious illness that kept the student from writing the exam as originally scheduled. Such documentation is strictly confidential and kept in the student’s file...”

“Special exams will not be granted for occasions such as employment interviews, weddings, bar mitzvahs, family reunions, vacations, misreading the exam timetable, or oversleeping. Neither will special exams be granted in order to facilitate transportation arrangements, such as booking flights for home for Christmas or summer vacations. It is the policy of Huron [University] College to discourage informal arrangements by faculty which circumvent this regulation.”

- The plagiarism statement can now be found at <http://www.uwo.ca/huron/handbook/FASSonPlagiarism.pdf>
- The style manuals can now be found at http://www.huronuc.ca/library/research_guides_and_handout

Prerequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites. If you do not have the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in this course, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Technology

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited, to laptops, PDAs, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Related Policies and Notes:

For the Policy on Accommodation for Illness and a downloadable SMC see

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

For downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Students seeking academic accommodation on illness grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

With regards to elements worth less than 10%, which means “pop-in-class quizzes”, students may complete it outside the class, with the instructor’s permission.

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/scheduling.pdf

Linguistics 9600A/4248A Syntax I Tentative Schedule

- 09/09 Introduction: Defining the scope of this course
Business Matters, Requirements, etc.
General background concerns. RF: Ch1
- 09/16 Starter questions and goals
RF Ch1–2
Cf. Lasnik 2000 Introduction, 2005
- 09/23 RF: Ch3–4
Tools for description: Constituencies and Phrase Structure
Context Free Grammar vs. Merge
- 09/30 RF: Ch4
More on phrase structure and merge
- 10/07 RF: Ch5–6
VP internal structure and displacement (transformation)
- 10/14 RF: Ch5–6
TP-internal structure, displacement, and move vs. merge
- 10/21 FR: Ch7
Clausal structure, displacement and interpretation
- 10/23 MIDTERM Due**
- 10/28 FR: Ch7
I-to-C movement, etc.
- 11/04 Fall Break**
- 11/11 FR: Ch8
Wh-movement, the syntactic component (Alice and Bob)
- 11/18 FR: Ch8
Wh-movement, locality, phases and Alice and Bob
- 11/25 FR: CH8–9
More on Alice and Bob: Ellipsis, Sluicing, Predicate raising, etc.
- 12/02 FR: Ch9
Structure of syntax, and any other questions.
- 12/04 (Fri) Final Paper Due**

12/09

FR: Ch1-9
Review and Wrap-Up