INTRODUCTION TO SYNTAX

Dates: 09/02–12/11 | Time: MW 12:30pm–01:44pm | Venue: LAP 252 | Instructor: Tue Trinh | Email: tuetrinh@uwm.edu | Office hour: Monday 02:00pm–04:00pm & by appointment (524 CRT)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to generative syntax. The noun “syntax” means that we will be concerned with the rules by which words are put together to make sentences. The adjective “generative” essentially means that we will try to be as explicit as possible and adhere to basic principles of scientific inquiry. The course is designed for students with no background in theoretical linguistics. However, it offers more advanced students who attend an opportunity to widen as well as deepen their previous knowledge.

COURSE REQUIREMENT & GRADING POLICY

In order to understand the materials to be discussed in class, it is absolutely imperative that you come to class, participate in the discussion and do the assigned readings/homeworks. There will be a midterm and a final exam, which you need to take in order to pass the class. It is strongly recommended that you come to office hour at least once during the semester.

This course meets approximately 45 hours for 3 credits. For each hour of class, students are expected to put in at least an equal amount of time for reading and doing homeworks. Class materials will be posted on the D2L class site. Please make sure you have access to this site and check your UWM email regularly for updates.

Grades are weighted as follows: participation 10%, homeworks 20%, midterm 30%, final 40%. The grading scale is 90–100 A, 80–89 B, 70–79 C, 60–69 D, 0–59 F. The “+” sign will be added to your letter grade if your number grade ends with “6” or higher.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Department of Linguistics adheres to campus uniform policies regarding participation of students with disabilities, accommodations for religious observances, academic misconduct, student complaints, grade appeals, sexual harassment, attendance, and assignment of a grade of “incomplete.” Students who will be missing classes due to religious observances, or those who have handicaps or other problems that will affect their class work or ability to take examinations, should see me early in the semester so that we can make arrangements. See the links provided below for more details on UWM policies. As stated above, students have certain rights to file appeals or grievances. Documents that outline these rights and describe the grievance procedure in the College of Letters and Science are accessible at http://www.uwm.edu/letsci/pdf/grievance_procedure.pdf.

For more information on university policies regarding students with special handicaps and other issues please consult http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf. Medical absences – with documentation provided by a doctor or other health care professional – will be excused. Other absences will be excused at the discretion of the instructor only. This syllabus is a projection of how the course will progress. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus, add or delete material, at any time.

Please refer to the UWM Catalogue for policy guidelines regarding withdrawals, incompletes, plagiarism, and academic misconduct: https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf
CLASS SCHEDULE

What follows is a very ambitious syllabus which is made with the best of intentions and which will almost certainly have to be altered during the course of the semester. All students are expected to do the required readings, while the non-required readings are meant for more advanced students who wish to attempt a more in-depth study of the relevant topics. There will be lecture notes which summarize the materials. The lecture notes will cover everything you need to know in order to answer every question on the exams.

Week 1 – Constituency, Categorization

Week 2 – Phrasal Categories, Constituency Tests, Subcategorization, Projection Levels, Extended Projection Principle

Week 3 – Theta Roles, Theta Criterion, PRO, Control, Case Assignment

Week 4 – Head Movement, Do-Support, Head Movement Constraint
Week 5 – Wh-Movement, Attract Closest, Pied-Piping, Left Branch Condition, Doubly Filled Comp Filter


Week 6 – A-Movement, VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis, Unaccusativity, Passivization, Raising, Condition on Extraction Domains


Week 7 – Binding Theory, Typology of Traces, Late Merge, Adjunction


Week 8 – Midterm on 10/20, Agreement, Feature Valuation, Phase Impenetrability Condition


Week 9 – Split CP, Little v, Double Object Construction

Week 10 – Phases, Successive Cyclicity, Island Conditions


Week 11 – Right Node Raising, Scrambling, Cyclic Linearization


Week 12 – Logical Form, Covert Movement, Quantifier Raising


Week 13 – PF-Movement


Week 14 – Ellipsis, Review for final


Final exam on 12/18, 12:30pm-02:30pm, regular classroom