Linguistics 464: Introduction to Syntax
Syllabus
Fall 2019: Sep 3rd - Dec 12th

M/W 12:30 – 1:45p
Place: MER 211
Instructor: Hamid Ouali
Office hours: W 10a-12p (walk in), or Mon through Fri by appointment
Office: Johnston 129
Email: Ouali@uwm.edu

Course description
This course investigates the syntax or sentence structure properties of human language. The focus here is on human language as a specific cognitive capacity restricted to humans, rather than on the individual languages (e.g. English, Arabic, Hindi) that are made possible by the existence of this capacity. For this reason, the course explores in detail many structural properties that are common across different languages, even those that clearly do not share a common recent past. A simple example: all languages have specific strategies to ask questions that make them different from affirmative sentences (e.g. English uses special question words — ‘who’, ‘what’ and so on — as most languages do). However, in English, one asks: ‘Who do you like?’, instead of ‘you like who?’, a possible word order one would find, for instance, in Chinese. We will learn the mechanics of Principles and Parameters/Minimalism, an approach that tries to explain, the common aspects among all human languages, for example a strategy to form a question, and the apparent differences across these languages, for example the word order of the question expressed in these languages.

Course Format: Face-to-face

Prerequisite:
Undergraduate Students: junior standing and Linguis 350.

Readings
Textbook: Required
Available at UWM Bookstore

Other readings will be posted on Canvas

Policies:
It is expected that students will come to class having prepared whatever readings and/or assignments have been scheduled for that day. All readings are required. Assigned work must be turned in at class time on the date that it is due, and cannot be accepted late (but see below).
Illness: If you must be absent from class for a legitimate reason (e.g. illness as documented by a note from a physician or other health care professional) on the day of an exam or when an assignment is due, you must notify me by email to let me know of your anticipated absence. This prior notification will form the basis for your being able to make up the exam or to turn in an assignment late. Students who will be missing classes due to religious observances, or those who have special needs that will affect their class work or ability to take examinations, should see me early in the semester.
so that we can make arrangements.

If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me within the first two weeks of classes and contact the Resource Accessibility Center for more assistance.

Linguistics subscribes to UWM policies on Students with disabilities (ADA), accommodations for Religious Observances, Academic Misconduct, Complaint Procedures, Grade Appeals, Sexual Harassment, Attendance and Safety. Information on the department and its programs can be found at the department's web-site, http://uwm.edu/linguistics/

Students have certain rights to file appeals or grievances. Documents that outlines these rights and describe the grievance procedure in the College of Letters and Science are on file in the Department of Linguistics in Johnston Hall 117. Consult the following website for more information on university policies regarding students: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf

The final grade is based on HW assignments, midterm exam, final exam, and the final paper. HW assignments are due on the dates announced in class and they **must be typed**. Handwritten assignments will not be accepted.

**Course Workload**

This class is a 3-credit course. It meets twice weekly for a total of 150 minutes a week, and a total of 34.5 hours for 15 weeks. You can expect to take at least 60 hours over the course of the semester reading the textbook and other required texts. There are also 8 homework assignments which you should expect to require at least 1 hour each (8 hours). You should reserve at least 20 hours to study for and take the midterm and final exam. You should also reserve 26 hours for the final research paper. In general, this class is likely to take 148.5 hours of your time.

**Learning outcomes**

By taking this course, students will develop a general background in syntax and syntactic theory which prepares them for more advanced courses and seminars in syntax and semantics. Students will become able to read advanced syntax literature. They will develop the skills to analyze different types of sentences across different languages. They will be able to use these skills, for example, to study and explain the commonality underlying the surface forms of interrogative clauses across languages. They will learn the mechanics of Principles and Parameters/Minimalism, an approach that tries to explain, the common aspects among all human languages, for example a strategy to form a question, and the apparent differences across these languages, for example the word order of the question expressed in these languages.

**Homework assignments**

There will be 8 homework assignments throughout the semester. These assignments will be in the form of syntactic problems where the students are expected to implement the technical tools acquired during class to analyze the structure of different sentences. Each HW-assignment is worth 10 points and the average total of the homework assignments will constitute 30% of the overall course grade. Each HW assignment will be announced in class and posted on D2L at least a week before it is due.
Final research squib: guidelines

Length:
The length requirement is 5 to 7 pages.

Format and rubric:
The paper should be structured like a “syntax” write-up, not like a “book report” or a literature review. This means we should see the following general structure to the paper:

(i) Introduction (10 points)
Think of this not as “all the background on the topic,” but instead as “the contribution this squib is making”—it should tell the reader what the squib’s main problem is, and the goal of each section of the squib that follows.

(ii) Descriptive generalizations (40 points)
Use the skills you’ve learned in this class. State the important generalizations about the data.
Present a sufficient amount of well-organized data to support your claims.
Organize the data so that the generalizations you want to support are easy to see.
Make it easy for your reader to evaluate your claims.

(iii) Formal analysis (40 points)
Use the tools of our syntactic theory to show the reader how your idea works. Again, use the skills you have been learning all semester: constituency tests and syntactic structure, structural relations, constraints, principles, and rules: Binding Principles and conditions, Theta Criterion, EPP, transformational rules (head-to-head movement and DP-movement).

Conclusion (10 points)
End with a concluding discussion that briefly recaps the problem you discussed and your analysis.

Papers are due on Dec. 16th.
pdf copy submitted using Canvas.
### Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Setting the stage: Generative Grammar.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/9-9/11</td>
<td>Generative Grammar, Parts of Speech.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 1, *Carnie: Ch. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/16-9/18</td>
<td>Constituency, Trees, and Rules.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/23-9/25</td>
<td>Constituency, Trees, Rules, and Structural Relations.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 3, *Carnie: Ch. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/30-10/2</td>
<td>Structural Relations, Binding Theory.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 4, *Carnie: Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/7-10/9</td>
<td>X-Bar Theory.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/14-10/16</td>
<td>Extending X-Bar Theory to the Functional Categories.</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 7</td>
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<td>10/21-10/23</td>
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<td>*Carnie: Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/28-10/30</td>
<td>REVIEW MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/4</td>
<td>MIDTERM EVALUATION</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Auxiliaries and Functional Categories</td>
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<td>11/11-11/13</td>
<td>Head-to-Head Movement</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 10</td>
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<td>11/18-11/20</td>
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<td>*Carnie: Ch. 10</td>
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<td>11/25</td>
<td>DP-Movement</td>
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<td>11/27-12/01</td>
<td>Thanksgiving recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/2-12/4</td>
<td>DP-Movement, WH-Movement, and Locality Constraints</td>
<td>*Carnie: Ch. 11, *Carnie: Ch. 12</td>
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<td>12/9-</td>
<td>1. Take Home Final Exam handed out</td>
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<td>12/11</td>
<td>2. Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Take Home Final Exam due</td>
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*Required material/readings

### Important dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed. Oct. 30th</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>12:30pm-1:45pm, MER 211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 27-Dec 1</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING RECESS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. Dec 9th</td>
<td>Take Home Final Exam handed out</td>
<td>12:30pm-1:45pm, MER 211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. Dec. 11th</td>
<td>Take Home Final Exam Due</td>
<td>12:30pm-1:45pm, MER 211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 16th</td>
<td>Final Research Papers due</td>
<td>By Midnight, -Canvas</td>
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### Evaluation:

1. Homework assignments 30%
2. Final research paper 20%
3. Midterm exam 25%
4. Final exam 25%

The grade scale is as follows:

- A = 93-100%
- A- = 90-92%
- B+ = 87-89%
- B = 83-86%
- B- = 80-82%
- C+ = 77-79%
- C = 73-76%
- C- = 70-72%
- D+ = 67-69%
- D = 63-66%
- D- = 60-62%
- F 59% and under.