

FL 100

INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE

Instructor: Dr. Christy, 204 Wesleyan Hall (enter through Wesleyan 209)

Office Hours: TBA

Text: *The Study of Language, Third Edition* by George Yule.
Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006. ISBN: 0-521-54320-7

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, students should:

- have gained an understanding of the basic principles of language (phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic)
- have grasped the development of language, and writing, from both diachronic (language origin and history) and synchronic (language acquisition and usage) perspectives
- have gained an understanding of the ways in which languages relate to one another within distinct language groups
- be broadly familiar with topics such as animal communication, sign language, first and second language acquisition, language and the brain, dialectal variation, and language and culture

Procedure:

The objectives will be discussed through a systematic presentation of lectures complemented by in-class discussions in which assigned readings in the text will be interpreted within the framework of the lectures and of the students' own language experiences and intuitions about language. Accordingly, the course is conceived as a 'hands on', participatory learning experience. Throughout the course attention will be called to key linguistic terms by way of charting the major components of modern linguistics. The course will be additionally enriched through the showing of a number of pertinent videos. A series of **four quizzes, each covering five chapters**, will assess students' grasp of the material.

Homework: Reading assignments and preparation of *Study Questions* accompanying each chapter of *The Study of Language*.

Grade: Your grade will be based on your completion of homework assignments, performance on quizzes, score on the final exam (optional)*, and on your participation in class discussions, as follows:

Homework: 20%

Quizzes (4 @ 15% each) 60%

Participation: 20%

*(Final Exam: A score of 80% or higher on this *comprehensive* exam will raise the final score by one letter grade.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: FL 100 (3) *Introduction to Language*. A summary, for all undergraduates, of what is known about human language; social and regional dialects; origins of words; diversity and universality in language structure; phonetics; changes in language; language acquisition; the relation of language to other aspects of human inquiry and knowledge.

- I. Outcomes : Upon completion of this course, students will have a sound foundation in
 - The structures and fundamental cognitive and grammatical principles underlying language
 - The relation of fundamental linguistic principles to conceptualizations of the origin(s) of language and writing, and the developmental stages of writing systems as reflective of these underlying principles
 - The methods employed in diachronic and synchronic linguistics, as applied to the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of natural language, and with particular regard to language change
 - The International Phonetic Alphabet as a tool for recording and analyzing language
 - The linguistic and social dimensions of dialects, sociolects, idiolects, and linguistic registers
 - The nature and study of language acquisition and function in relation to brain lateralization and trauma
 - The application of linguistic principles to second-language learning, sign language, and cases of language deprivation.
- II. Methods: The above-listed outcomes will be achieved through
 - Reading the text, *The Study of Language, Third Edition* (2006)
 - Classroom discussion of *Study Questions* associated with each chapter
 - Viewing, in whole or part, of such relevant videos as *In Search of the First Language* (NOVA), *Sign, Symbol, and Script: Origins of Written Communications and the Birth of the Alphabet* (FFH), *Secrets of the Rosetta Stone* (THC), *The Human Language Series* (PBS), *The Sociolinguistics of Language* (IM), *Secret of the Wild Child* (PBS), *American Tongues*, *The Story of English* (PBS)
- III. Evaluation: Progress in achieving these outcomes will be assessed using
 - Daily review of chapter *Study Questions* and additional related material presented in lectures
 - Daily discussion of concepts presented in class videos
 - Four Quizzes
 - Final Exam

Course Syllabus Statement: Accommodation

It is the policy of the University of North Alabama to afford equal opportunity in education to qualified students. If you have a disability that may prevent

you from meeting the course requirements, contact the instructor within the first three class sessions to file a Student Disability Statement and to develop an accommodation plan. Course requirements will not be waived but accommodations will be made to allow you to meet the requirements, provided that you are timely in working with the instructor to develop an accommodation plan.