Department of Spanish Studies, General Linguistics and Literature Theory  
University of Alicante  

**Linguistics 8806**

**Location:**
- **Semester I, 2009 (September 14-December 23):**  
  Monday – FI/3-12P  
  Wednesday – A1/1-42S
- **Semester II, 2010 (February 1-May 21):**  
  Monday – FI/3-12P  
  Wednesday – A1/1-42S

**Time:**  
12:00-1:40 PM, Monday  
2:00-2:50 PM, Wednesday  
3:00-3:50 PM, Wednesday

**Facilitator:** Irma M Muñoz Baell  
**Contact Information:**  
Office telephone: 96590-3718  
Office hours (Faculty of Education): check the Virtual Campus for regular office hours at the beginning of each semester - *other times by appointment*

**Virtual Campus Questions:**  
Please do not expect I will give you elaborate explanations through the Virtual Campus. Since I am responsible for more than 180 students, the time I can devote to Linguistics 8806 is limited. Please make optimal use of sessions and office hours to ask questions, using questions through the Virtual Campus for the ones that can be answered quickly.

**Course Syllabus**

**Academic year: 2009-2010**

This syllabus is subject to revision during the semester if class needs warrant. Any changes will be announced on the [Campus Virtual](#). It is your responsibility to check your Virtual Campus and attend class so that you know of revisions.

Reading assignments, task sheets and workshops handouts will be posted in .pdf format on the Campus Virtual. They will be made available after being distributed in discussion sessions. **If, for any reason, you miss a class, you are expected to download and prepare materials before you come to the next class session.**

**Course credits: 12 (15 ECTS)**

**Course Objectives**

Linguistics is intended to provide you with a broader context on linguistics and help you synthesize your linguistic knowledge. There are two main goals of this course: 1) to help you understand human language and the roots of modern linguistics; and 2) to help you develop the competence to formulate and carry out a research assignment, relevant for the area, with a high degree of independence and in a critical evaluating way.

Other aims of this course are:  
- To lead you to examine your own linguistic beliefs and attitudes and their application to practice.
To acquaint you with the basic concepts and terminology of the field of linguistics so that you can develop the ability to discuss linguistic questions using linguistic terminology.

To make you aware of both the diversity of language systems and their fundamental similarities.

To give you a reasonable taste of the major subfields of linguistics.

To assist you in acquiring reference material and in participating in academic discussion in the field concerned.

To equip you with some tools and techniques for linguistics analysis and to give you some practice in using these to discover the organizing principles of a language.

To acquaint you with the basic concepts necessary to further pursue linguistic studies, if you wish to.

**Course Requirements**

**Assigned readings:**

This course requires a considerable amount of reading. Some of the material presented will be relatively complex and may require careful study to be properly understood. You should, therefore, allow yourself enough time to read the material before you come to class. Doing the reading is **indispensable** for your understanding and your participation in class. Readings will be distributed in class and/or posted in .pdf format on the Campus Virtual sufficiently in advance. You are expected to read each assigned reading at least twice and do the pre-reading and post-reading in order to participate in class discussions. So, do not leave it for the day or evening before an assigned reading is due. In class we will attempt to pull together strands of the readings to show what fundamental issues and positions are represented and help you see the big picture. **You must be ready to discuss each assigned reading in class.** You may be called at random to answer questions and/or contribute to the discussion in class. Remember that your class work is enhanced by conscientious attendance and intelligent participation individually, in pairs and/or in group, and hurt by visible lack of preparation in class. Your reading assignments and discussion sessions grade will be based on both quality and effort.

**Attendance and Participation Policy:**

**Class attendance and participation are essential** as most class periods will be spent in discussion of the assigned readings rather than in detailed lecture-type presentations of the readings. Consequently, class participation is an integral part of students’ performance evaluation (see section Examination below). Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time, to remain in class for the entire sessions, to come prepare, and to participate in class discussions. If you have trouble with a concept, it is likely that other students are as well, so take advantage of class time to discuss those topics that you feel need clarification and discussion. This will ensure the exchange of ideas and the clarification of puzzling questions. If for some reason you find it necessary to arrive late, you will be responsible for all information, including announcements or changes to the syllabus made during your absence. If you are absent for the entire class session, you are also responsible for all assignments and other announcements made during the class meeting. Every unjustified absence (see section Examination ‘Absences due to illness or other reasons’ below) will lower your final grade. Finally, if you come to class without having prepared your assigned reading for that day, you will not be allowed to participate in that session, and you will be given a failing grade. “I didn’t know what I had to do for today” or “I couldn’t read it because I had problems downloading the file last night” do not constitute a reason for failing to prepare in-class discussions.

**Class etiquette:**

I expect you to respect one another, to respect me, and to respect yourself. To that end, I expect you to read and adhere to the following rules:

- Shut off your cell phone at the beginning of the class.
- Do not read newspapers in class.
- Do not make fun or verbally attack others. Discuss ideas, not people!!
- Take responsibility for making the class successful. It is your class. I am the facilitator but class discussion will be largely the “work” of you, not me. Ask yourself what you can do during each session to move the class forward in a positive way.
- Do not pack early. If, for any reason, you must leave early or you have an important call coming in, notify me before class.
- Do not chew gum or eat when the class is being conducted.
- Do not talk to other students during class hours, this distracts other students and this behaviour will count towards your participation grade.
- If you have any problem or concern with the course or with the facilitator, please come and see me during my office hours.

**Course Content**

**PART I. BEGINNING LINGUISTICS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE**

1. General conceptual goals.
2. Why study Linguistics.
3. Popular ideas about language.
   - The equality of languages.
   - The magic of language.
4. Prescription vs. Description.
5. The medium of language: speech, signing and writing.
6. The languages of the world.
7. Language and communication.
8. Understanding linguistic methods.

**PART II. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF LINGUISTICS**

1. Early history.
2. The Middle Ages and the Renaissance.
4. Twentieth-century linguistics.

**PART III. THE DIMENSIONS OF LANGUAGE ANALYSIS**

1. An introduction to phonetics and phonology.
3. The study of meaning: semantics and pragmatics.
4. Understanding discourse analysis.

**PART IV. INTERDISCIPLINARY FIELDS**

1. Historical Linguistics.
2. Sociolinguistics.
3. Psycholinguistics.

**PART V. RESEARCH PAPER**

**Calendar Weeks One to Three (September)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Week Two</th>
<th>Week Three</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 14</td>
<td>Wednesday, 16</td>
<td>Monday, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No teaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Faculty’s Opening Ceremony for first-year students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Course presentation: Linguistics 8806</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-2:50</td>
<td>12:00-1:40</td>
<td>2:00-2:50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Workshop I.</strong></td>
<td><strong>How to study Linguistics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part I. Beginning Linguistics</strong></td>
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<td>3:00-3:50</td>
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EXAMINATION

Your course grade will be based on the cumulative point total from the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Student Introductory Assignment (deadline: week 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Reading assignments and discussion sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Mid-term exam <em>(date, time and location will be announced at a later date)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Final examination (60% if you failed or chose not to sit the mid-term exam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Research paper (deadline: Semester II - week 14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Class presentations (semester II)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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[Note: students only get credit for correct answers. If you feel that I have graded anything incorrectly or improperly, please contact me outside of class, preferably during my office hours. I will be happy to address your concerns]

Late Policy. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements are made with me and you provide a written excuse.

Absences due to illness or other reasons. Health and compassionate concerns must be documented and notified within one week of having missed the class.

Honesty policy. I expect each student to do his/her own work. So, I have “zero tolerance” for cheating, plagiarism, submitting someone else’s work as one’s own, unauthorized collaboration on assignments and papers, using “notes” during exams, submitting work previously submitted for another course, or facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others. The penalties are severe!

Explanation of assignments

Student Introductory Assignment. The Student Introductory Assignment (SIA) consists of introducing yourself to me by letting me know your unique needs and expectations for this course. It is designed to let me know you are in class and facilitate interaction. It is due in the first class session of week 3. Even though this assignment is not graded, you must complete it and hand it in to me on time.

Final examination. The final will be cumulative for the entire course. It will consist of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and long answer questions. Dates: November 12, 2009 - May 25, 2010 - September 10, 2010.

Research paper. You will write a research paper (around 1,500 words, typed, doubled-spaced, 12 point type), due at the beginning of week 14 (Semester II). The main purpose of the paper will be to find out whether you understood the course material well enough to see the relationship among the data and to create some synthesis in your own mind, rather than to just regurgitate a more or less random collection of ideas. Keep in mind that this is to be an analytical paper, not simply a summary of your reading. No late papers will be accepted without proper medical justification. Further instruction about the paper will be given later in the semester (consult Research Paper Guide).

Class presentations. Each student will do an oral presentation in two topics (maximum 15 minutes per student for the Oral Presentations). Further instruction about the presentations will be given in: Workshop II – Preparing an oral presentation.

Class participation. Class participation involves regular attendance and active participation in group, pairs and classroom discussions. I will rely on you to evaluate your own participation as part of the final, but reserve the right to assign a grade if I feel that your self-assessment is inaccurate.
Special extra-credit (up to 1 extra point):

During the course, you may obtain extra-credit for the course if you participate in online discussions on the Virtual Campus forum ('Debates') for this course. **Participation is entirely optional and is not required for you to pass this course.** If you are interested in participating, please let me know **before week 4**. A linguistics discussion question/topic will appear in the discussion forum. The forum is to help promote student-to-student discussion; so I will not respond to each posting but will only moderate the discussion if necessary. You will be required to post a 150-200 word opening statement (each discussion question/topic) and then follow-up comments in English (minimum two) reacting to the ideas posted by other students. Those three postings MUST be placed on three different days! Although the tone of your discussion postings can be informal, I will expect them to be on a professional level. As with written assignments, the quality of your discussion postings will be graded on both content (50%) and presentation (50%). Since the purpose of special extra-credit is only to help you improve your final grade, no extra credit will be allowed until the regular work is done and you have passed the course.

**Recommended Texts**

The books listed below are recommended introductory texts to the fields of linguistic study we will be using in Linguistics 8806 (*all books are available in the Campus libraries)*:


**Recommended Supplementary Resources**

As a University of Alicante student, you have access to library resources necessary to complete your coursework. In addition, you can find a number of Internet resources which may be of use to you in this course on the Virtual Campus ('Enlaces'). Please be aware that Web addresses may change from time to time.