

**PSY 341K - Language Processing
Syllabus Version 1***

Unique number: 43915

Class time: T Th 11:00 - 12:15 PM	Location: NOA 1.124
Instructor: Dr. Zenzi M. Griffin	TA: Jamil Bhanji
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Instructor Website: www.psy.utexas.edu/griffin	
Course Website: Blackboard	
Phone: (512) 232-8062 (e-mail is recommended)	
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Office hours: Tue 12:15-1:15; Fri 12-1; & by appointment	Office hours: Mon real 1-2, Mon chat 4-5, & by appointment

***Syllabus Version 1**

A syllabus should be an agreement between an instructor and students in a course. Version 2 of the syllabus will incorporate feedback from student responses and therefore may be somewhat different.

Course Description:

This undergraduate course provides an introduction to psycholinguistics, which uses methods and theory from cognitive psychology to understand how people use language to express themselves (i.e., speaking or language production) and to understand what other's say (i.e., language comprehension). Classes will be composed of lectures, exercises, and discussion. Topics include the relationship between language and thought, the representation of meaning, speech errors, parallels between signed and spoken languages, the time courses for preparing various aspects of utterances and articulating speech, speech perception, and spoken word recognition. The course is recommended for students with an interest in language or cognitive science, as well as those interested in language acquisition, automatic speech recognition and generation, or communication.

Course Objectives:

This course is an introduction to psycholinguistics, the study of the psychological processes of language use. The goal of the course is to:

- (a) introduce students to the field of psycholinguistics;
- (b) familiarize students with methods and terminology from psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology;
- (c) provide examples of how information is evaluated from a scientific perspective; how psychological research is conducted; and how psychological findings are communicated.

The objectives of the course will be accomplished through the combination of readings, lectures, exercises, and assignments. The lectures will not exactly follow the textbook. Information from both lectures and readings will be needed to do well on exams.

Pre-requisites: The Psychology Department will drop all students who do not meet the prerequisite: PSY 301 General Psychology with a C or better.

Required reading:

Carroll, D. W. (2008). *The Psychology of Language* (5th ed.). Belmont CA: Wadsworth. [Students are encouraged to work out a sharing plan to keep costs down.]. The 2004 (?) version is acceptable and some other related textbooks such as Harley (2001), which is available as an e-book through UT.

<http://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/record=b6564494~S29>

Plus journal articles which will be posted on Blackboard.

Office Hours

Come to the instructor's or TA's listed office hours or e-mail for an appointment. The TA will also have a virtual office hour when he will be available on-line to chat.

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Grading

Assignment	Points	Percentage of final grade
Homework		
Discussion posts	360	36%
Exercises	140	14%
Take home midterm	200	20%
Take home final	300	30%

Straight-scale with no curve:

A = 93 - 100	C+ = 77 - 79
A- = 90 - 92	C = 73 - 78
B+ = 87 - 89	C- = 70 - 72
B = 83 - 86	D+ = 67 - 69
B- = 80 - 82	D = 63 - 68, etc

Homework Assignments

Homework assignments will largely consist of posting comments and questions about readings to an online discussion board on Blackboard and replying to other students' posts. In writing posts, students are encouraged to relate course content to their own experiences and interests, and to think about relations among course topics and links to other fields. Each post should be a full paragraph (at least 150 words). In the case of questions, the text should provide a context for the question, consider possible answers, or argue why the question is important. Further guidelines and an example entry will be available on Blackboard. Postings may receive full credit (15 pts) or no credit (e.g., for lack of clarity, not providing some context or justification for a question, for inconsiderate responses to others' posts, irrelevant content). Interesting questions submitted by students may be used in exams. **Homework assignments are due on Tuesdays by 11 pm.** No credit will be given for late homework assignments. There will be 14 Discussion Boards (1 per week, not counting Spring Break) across the semester. Students are expected to post 1-2 times each week for a total of 24 posts. Of these, at least 6 posts should be responses to posts by other students. Exercises will be posted on Blackboard or conducted in class. **Unless otherwise specified, homework assignments will only be accepted via Blackboard.**

Exams

Exams will be conducted via Blackboard and posted at least 5 days before they are due. They will be composed of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. They will be open-book and open-notes, but must be completed without the aid of any other person. The standard for earning points on exams will be very high because they are open book. The mid-term will be due by **10 pm on Saturday, Feb. 27** so that the grades can be included in intra-semester reports to the Dean. The final exam is scheduled for Saturday, May 15, 7:00–10:00 pm, so it will be due by **10 pm on Saturday, May 15.**

Any re-grading requests for the midterm must be submitted to the TA via email no later than 14 days after the assignment is returned to prevent a flood of requests at the end of the semester. Include a brief note indicating what is being disputed and why.

Extra credit

Students may earn up to 30 points (3% increase in points towards final grade) by posting more than 24 times on the Blackboard Discussion boards (although no more than 2 posts per week will count towards extra credit) and writing short critiques of psycholinguistic articles (pre-approved by instructor or TA). Each extra post that receives full credit will be worth 5 points. Short critiques are worth up to 10 points each. Students may also submit ideas for extra credit assignments via email up before April 7.

Religious Holidays

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes

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scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence.

Emergencies, absences, late exams, and other problems

If a student becomes ill or has some other crisis that seriously affects the student's ability to attend class or complete assignments, the student should contact the instructor **as soon as possible via email**. The *earlier* the instructor knows that there is a problem, the more likely it is that arrangements can be made to minimize the impact on academic performance. Please be considerate to other students and stay home if you have something contagious. Note that there are many resources available via the Dean of Students:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/quickref/index.php>

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Unless excused or other arrangements are made, late exams will be penalized 5% of the maximum possible points for submissions within the first 12 hours of the deadline, 10% penalty for those within the first 24 hours after the deadline, and then a penalty of an additional 10% of total points possible for each 24-hour period following the deadline. Exams will not be accepted 5 days after the due date.

Students with Disabilities

Students who require special accommodations need to provide the instructor with a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259-voice or 471-4641 - TTY). This letter should be presented to the instructor at the beginning of the semester (by January 31) and accommodations should be discussed at that time. No accommodations will be made for students without this letter. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. For more information see

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

Academic Integrity

"The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."

<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>

All students are assumed to have read the Honor Code and consented to be bound by it. Violations of the Honor Code are taken extremely seriously and the instructor will recommend that violators receive a failing grade for the course (not just the assignment). Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- Use or provision of prohibited assistance during exams.
- Collaboration on assignments that are intended to be completed individually.
- Plagiarism, defined as the use of the **ideas** without attribution.

All assignments in this course are to be completed without the assistance of any other person or group unless otherwise indicated. If you have any questions, please ask.

Courtesy

Do not carry on unrelated conversations during class. You may think that you are being subtle when you pass notes, but it's usually obvious. The instructor reserves the right to confiscate any such communications. Please turn off or silence cell phones during class. If you must have one on vibrate, sit near the door, and answer the phone outside of the classroom. In general, avoid entering or leaving class during a lecture, but if it is anticipated and unavoidable, take a seat near the door. If you bring a laptop to class, try to sit near the back so other students will not be distracted by reading your notes or watching you slay dragons.

Dissemination of course materials

Lecture notes, homework assignments, exams, and announcements will be posted on Blackboard. The instructor will post lecture notes promptly AFTER lecture (so surprises will not be given away). Alert the TA as

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soon as possible if you cannot access Blackboard. Note that notification of scheduled downtime and unexpected disruptions are posted on the Blackboard login page.

Summary of Course Requirements

Students are expected to:

- 1) attend classes, ask clarification questions, and contribute to discussions;
- 2) read the textbook and supplemental readings;
- 3) complete homework assignments and exams and submit them by their due dates;
- 4) show reasonable courtesy to the instructor and other students, on-line and in class.

Rough Schedule

Day	Date	Disc. post	Topic	Questions	Textbook
T	19-Jan		Introduction		
Th	21-Jan		Brain & Language	How can language processing go wrong?	Ch.1, Ch.13
T	26-Jan	1			
Th	28-Jan		Animal Communication	How many words can a dog understand?	17-27 (Ch.2)
T	2-Feb	2		What can primates say?	
Th	4-Feb		Language & Cognition	Does your language shape the way you think?	Ch.14
T	9-Feb	3		Why does it seem like we think in words?	
Th	11-Feb		Language production	Are speech errors Freudian slips?	Ch.8
T	16-Feb	4		Why are people's names so difficult to remember?	
Th	18-Feb		Language production	Why don't we speak more fluently?	
T	23-Feb	5		What can we do to increase fluency?	
Th	25-Feb		Word Meaning		Ch.5
Sa	27-Feb		Take home midterm due		
T	2-Mar	6			
Th	4-Mar		Speech perception	Why do old people understand you better face-to-face than over the phone?	Ch.4
T	9-Mar	7	Spoken word recognition		249-263 (Ch.10)
Th	11-Mar				
T	16-Mar		Spring Break		
Th	18-Mar		Spring Break		
T	23-Mar	8	Sentence Comprehension	How are inferences manipulated in advertising?	Ch.6
Th	25-Mar			How do we understand figurative language?	
T	30-Mar	9	Discourse Comprehension	How do we understand stories?	Ch.7
Th	1-Apr			How can I better remember what I read?	
T	6-Apr	10	Dialogue	Why is it easier to understand friends than strangers?	Ch.9
Th	8-Apr				
T	13-Apr	11	Signed languages	How is processing a signed language like processing a spoken language?	27-33 (Ch.2)
Th	15-Apr				
T	20-Apr	12	Reading	Why is it hard to learn to spell/read?	
Th	22-Apr				
T	27-Apr	13	Bilingualism	How do you fit two languages in one head?	310-321 (Ch.11)
Th	29-Apr				
T	4-May	14	Review		
Th	6-May				
Sa	15-May		Take home final due		