

# Language and Culture

## ANT 3620-6882

### Spring 2015

Instructor: Ben Burgen

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Office: Turlington Hall B335

Office Hours: M 11:00am – 12:30 pm & W 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Classroom: TUR L005

Course Meeting Time: MWF period 6 (12:50 – 1:40pm)

Grader: Haiyan Xing

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#### **Course Description**

This course is intended to provide a basic introduction to linguistic anthropology. The course will highlight how language reflects and creates thought, culture, and power relations. Language is a central feature of all human cultures, yet we often take it for granted in our daily lives despite the fact that we are involved in linguistic activities almost constantly. This course will investigate the ways that language functions in a wide range of cultural contexts and will emphasize the importance of language to anthropology more generally. Students will learn how to think more critically about the ways in which they employ language in their everyday life and will be encouraged to reflect on the ways that language shapes and structures human thought and interaction.

The primary objectives of the course are listed below.

At the end of the class students will be able to:

1. Describe and explain the variety of ways that language is used in daily life;
2. Identify, summarize, and discuss the ways that language enables, structures, and constrains human interaction;
3. Classify and discuss the ways that linguistic anthropology is used to study human cultures;
4. Build critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

#### **Required Textbook:**

Blum, Susan D. (ed.)

2012 **Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.**

Oxford University Press.

ISBN: 9780199840922

#### **Supplemental Materials:**

In addition to the required textbook, additional readings will be made available with the intention of familiarizing students with current scholarly work being performed by UF anthropology faculty and graduate students. Where possible we will have in-class presentations by UF anthropologists about their work.

All supplemental course materials will be available through the course e-learning website.

**Note:** The instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule in response to unforeseen circumstances or opportunities. However, no changes will be made to the exam schedule or assignment due dates.

### **Course Structure and Requirements**

#### **Quizzes (20%)**

Ten (10) pop quizzes (each worth **2%**) will be given during lecture over the course of the semester without prior notice. Only students who have an officially excused absence will be allowed to make up a quiz.

Excusable absences are defined by official UF policy. Excusable absences include religious holidays, illness, family emergency, and UF athletic or extracurricular activities.

Further information on this policy can be found online at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

In order to receive excused absences students must make a good faith effort to inform the instructor in advance. Students are responsible for making up course material covered during their absence whether excused or unexcused. Students are advised to visit the instructor during office hours with any questions about material covered during their absence.

#### **Exams (50%)**

Three (3) exams will be held for the course (two exams worth **15%** each and a final exam worth **20%**). Each exam will cover materials from class readings, films, and discussions up to the date that they are taken. The final exam will be comprehensive. Exams will be composed of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions.

#### **Critical Thinking Assignments (15%)**

Over the course of the semester you are required to write three (3) short papers (between 500 and 750 words) at **5%** each. At the end of each Friday lecture I will list some *Questions for Reflection*. You may choose one of these questions (clearly identify the question you are addressing at the beginning of your paper) as the prompt for your critical thinking paper. You may only submit one paper per week and you must turn in your paper for a particular Friday question on the following Monday.

#### **A/V Research Project (15%)**

You are required to perform an audiovisual research project in the form of a PowerPoint presentation which is related to a specific theme in linguistic anthropology addressed in the class in a specific cultural context. This is a collaborative project and should be prepared by a team of between two (2) and four (4) students. The project will take place in two (2) phases:

1. **Preliminary Description (5%)** (Due Feb. 2) - You must submit a 500 word minimum summary of your A/V project outlining the theme and cultural context on which your project will focus. At this time you must provide at least two (2) academic sources that you will use.

2. **Final Draft (10%)** (Due April 17) – You must digitally submit to the instructor a PowerPoint presentation with voice narration of approximately 5 minutes by the beginning of class.

**Extra Credit:** Two extra credit assignments will be made available during the course of the semester each worth **2.5%** for an available total of **5% extra credit**. Any extra credit received will be added to the sum total of the grades received for coursework at the end of the semester.

**Late Work:** No late work is accepted unless the student meets one of the approved excused absences and has the required documentation.

**Grade Dispute Policy:** Any concerns about grades must be voiced within 48 hours of the time that they are posted. Otherwise, all grades become final after the 48 hour deadline.

### **Final Grade**

Final grades are assigned out of 100 total points using the grading scale below.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Tot % of points	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

A **grade of C–** is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit.

Additional information on UF grading policy can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Classroom Behavior Rules**

#### **Harassment and Discrimination**

“Harassment” is defined as conduct that (1) is of any type (written, oral, graphic, or physical) (2) is directed towards or against a person because of their personal status (i.e. race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy or others) and that (3) unreasonably interferes with the individual’s work, education, or participation in activities or programs at UF or creates a working or learning environment that a reasonable person would find threatening. “Discrimination” is defined as a conduct that (1) adversely affects any aspect of an individual’s employment, education, or participation in activities or programs at UF, and (2) is based on one or more personal characteristics listed above. Any student who feels their rights have been violated are asked to confront the offending party, should that not resolve the issue, or the student is uncomfortable with confronting the offending party they may file a complaint with UF Department of Human Resources.

**Cell phones, computers, touch pads and other smart devices:** College students are adults and capable of making informed decisions. Use of cell phones, computers and touch pads will not be actively policed. However, students are asked to please be respectful their fellow students in the course as well as the instructor, who will not appreciate continued distractions.

**Course evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> . Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/> .

### **Academic Honesty**

The importance of academic honesty is paramount. There will be severe penalties for any act of plagiarism, deception, or fraud. University guidelines relating to academic honesty can be found on the undergraduate catalog website as well as at the Dean of Students website. Specific information regarding university expectations of appropriate student conduct are listed in the student honor code at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

### **Plagiarism & Cheating**

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas and words without acknowledging their authorship. Any act of plagiarism or cheating will result in a zero for the assignment and may be referred to the Dean of Students for further discipline.

### **Campus Resources**

Any student experiencing a crisis or other problems which interfere with their ability to pursue academic coursework or affect their general wellbeing is encouraged to make use of the university's counseling resources. The University Counseling Center and Student Mental Health services both provide confidential counseling to current students for free. Information on the University Counseling Center can be found at [www.counsel.ufl.edu](http://www.counsel.ufl.edu) and for Student Mental Health at [www.hsc.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs.htm](http://www.hsc.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs.htm)

### **UF Counseling Services**

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. [University Counseling and Wellness Center](#), 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
2. [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
3. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
4. [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

The office of the Dean of Students is available to coordinate accommodations for students with special needs. This includes the registration of disabilities, accommodations for classroom access, adaptive computer equipment, and interpretation services. Students requesting assistance should first register with the Disability Resource Center. **Students should then present appropriate paperwork to the instructor by the drop/add period deadline.** More information is available at [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) or (352) 392-8565.

### **Course Outline**

January 7 (W) – Review of Syllabus & Introduction to Course

#### **Part 1 – The Nature of Language**

January 9 (F) – Unit 1: Smiles, Winks, and Words

January 12 (M) – Unit 1: Nature of the Linguistic Sign

January 14 (W) – Unit 2: The Origin of Speech

January 16 (F) – Unit 2: Signing and Speaking

January 19 (M) – HOLIDAY

January 21 (W) – Unit 2: Symbol and Structure

January 23 (F) – Unit 3: The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language

January 26 (M) – Unit 3: Metaphors We Live By

January 28 (W) – Unit 3: Language and Mind

January 30 (F) – Unit 4: Language Acquisition and Socialization

February 2 (M) – Unit 4: What No Bedtime Story Means

February 4 (W) – Unit 4: The Pragmatics of Reading Prayers

February 6 (F) – Unit 5: What Is Writing?

February 9 (M) – Unit 5: How the Brain Adapted Itself to Read

February 11 (W) – Unit 5: The Peek-a-Boo World

February 13 (F) – Unit 5: The Quest for Authentic Connection

February 16 (M) – Unit 5: Why All the Fuss?

February 18 (W) – Unit 5: Literacies in the Lives of Urban Youth

February 20 (F) — EXAM 1

February 23 (M) – Unit 5: Homo Somnians: Humanity in the Age of the Internet

**Part 2 – Language and Society**

February 25 (W) – Unit 6: Chinese, English, Spanish – and the Rest

February 27 (F) – Unit 6: Bad Language, Bad Citizens

SPRING BREAK

March 9 (M) – Unit 6: Language Education Policy – Arabic Speaking Countries

March 11 (W) – Unit 6: The Language Ecology of Singapore

March 13 (F) – Unit 6: Bilingualism en casa

March 16 (M) – Unit 6: Serious Games: Code-Switching

March 18 (W) – Unit 6: Most of the World's Languages Went Extinct

March 20 (F) – Unit 6: Indigenous Language Endangerment and the  
Unfinished Business of Nation States

March 23 (M) – Unit 6: Competing Discourses on Language Preservation  
along the Shores of the Baie Sainte-Marie

March 25 (W) – Unit 6: Stop, Revive, Survive: Lessons from the Hebrew Revival

March 27 (F) – EXAM 2

March 30 (M) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch. 29, 30)

April 1 (W) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch. 31, 32)

April 3 (F) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch. 33, 34)

April 6 (M) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch.35, 36)

April 8 (W) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch. 37, 38)

April 10 (F) – Unit 7: Language and Identity (ch. 39, 40)

April 13 (M) – Unit 8: Discourse, Performance, and Ritual (ch.41, 42)

April 15 (W) – Unit 8: Discourse, Performance, and Ritual (ch. 43, 44)

**Part 3 Language as Social Action**

April 17 (F) – Unit 8: Discourse, Performance, and Ritual (ch. 45)

April 20 (M) – Unit 9: Language Identity (ch. 46, 47)

April 22 (W) – Unit 9: Language Identity (ch. 48) + Review for final exam

The FINAL EXAM will be conducted during scheduled exam time listed in the course catalog.