

# Linguistics 222 – Introduction to Syntax

Course Syllabus

Department of Linguistics - Simon Fraser University – Fall 2016

INSTRUCTOR: **DR. MAITE TABOADA**

**Class:** Tuesdays 10:30-11:20, AQ4120 and Thursdays 9:30-11:20, AQ4140

**Office hours:** Tuesdays 1-2:30 pm (or by appointment)

**Office:** RCB 8206

**Phone:** 778-782-5585

**Course materials, information and announcements:** Available through Canvas (canvas.sfu.ca)

TEACHING ASSISTANT: **MS. QUEENIE CHAN**

**Office:** RCB 8109 (may change during the semester)

**E-mail:** qchan@sfu.ca

The Teaching Assistant should be your first contact for straightforward questions about the course

## Course Description

This course is an introduction to syntactic analysis and argumentation. It covers word classes (e.g., 'noun', 'verb') and grammatical categories ('tense', 'case'); simple and complex sentences, relative clauses; head words and their dependents (complements, adjuncts and specifiers); constituent structure, constituent structure tests, and tree diagrams; relationships within sentences (word order, accusative and ergative case systems and agreement, grammatical relations); and syntactic processes (passives, antipassives, applicatives). Problems and discussion will focus on many different languages in addition to English.

## Prerequisites

Required: Ling 220.

## Required Text

Tallerman, Maggie, 2015. *Understanding Syntax*. Arnold, London (4th ed.). ISBN: 978-0415746984

Note: Previous editions will not work. Material has been reorganized and updated for the fourth edition.

Make sure you get that one.

## Course expectations

1. Students are expected to **attend all classes and to arrive on time** so that classes may begin promptly. Announcements will be made at the beginning and end of classes regarding the assigned readings and the expectations for assignments.
2. Students are expected to **have read all assigned readings before class**. Because many students will be learning about a new field of study, some of the materials and concepts may seem fairly complex. You should probably read assigned readings and go over the lecture notes multiple times.
3. It is very important for students to **participate in class discussions and class activities**. Therefore, everyone must come to class prepared. Preparation includes carefully reading of the readings and assignments, noting any questions that you have.

4. Students will be responsible for **all materials** covered in the assigned readings and lectures. Assignments and exams will require students to refer to readings, lecture notes, and their own notes.
5. No late assignments will be accepted.
6. Following departmental policy, **make-up exams for in-class exams will not be given under any circumstances**. If you miss an exam, you will receive a grade of zero.
  - The only exception is if you are sick on the day of the exam. If you have to miss an in-class exam because of illness, you are required to contact me *prior* to the exam, if possible. When you return to class, I will need a note from your medical doctor specifying the date of your absence and the reason. There is a good chance that I will call the doctor to confirm the note.
  - If you have a doctor's note for the date of the exam, the weight of that exam will be re-allocated to the other course components.
  - Please check the following for further information on doctor's notes, and for a sample form that you can bring to your doctor: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/faq/sick-notes.html>
7. Students will be **respectful** of other students and the instructor. In particular, students will not talk while the instructor or another student is talking.
8. Students should familiarize themselves with the **Linguistics Department's Standards** on Class Management and Student Responsibilities at:  
<http://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/undergraduate/student-resources/department-standards.html>
9. **Cell phones**: please make sure that your cell phone (or any other noisy device, including alarms) is turned off, or at least silent, during class.
10. **Electronic devices**: You may use a laptop, tablet or similar device to take notes and work on class content. Please, make judicious use of electronic devices, as they can be distracting, to you and to other students. Do not use cell phones to text and do not use laptops and tablets to check online material that is unrelated to the class.
11. **Academic dishonesty** in all forms violates the basic principles of integrity and thus impedes learning. More specifically, academic dishonesty is a form of misconduct that is subject to disciplinary action and includes the following: cheating, fabrication, fraud, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. For more information on academic honesty and student conduct, please visit the following websites:  
<https://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2016/fall/fees-and-regulations/student-contract/academic-honesty.html>  
<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/teaching.html>  
A grade of "FD" may be assigned as a penalty for academic dishonesty.
12. Please note that students requiring accommodations as a result of a **disability** must contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (778-782-3112 or csdo@sfu.ca).
13. All student requests for accommodation for **religious practices** must be made in writing by the end of the first week of classes or no later than one week after a student adds a course.
14. This syllabus is **required reading**.

## E-Mail policy – Use Canvas

Please, DO NOT send e-mail to my SFU address. Use the messaging system in Canvas instead.

1. I cannot always respond to messages late in the evening or on weekends. If you send a message late on Friday or during the weekend, I might not reply until the following week.
2. I can only respond to questions that can be answered *in a sentence or two*. Questions requiring longer replies should be asked in class or during office hours.
3. Please proof-read your message to make sure that your question is clear. In addition, I would appreciate questions that are expressed in an appropriately polite manner.
4. Because of the large number of messages that I receive, it may be several days before I am able to reply to your message. It is often easier and faster to ask a question in class, or during office hours. You can also call me on my office phone (but note that number cannot receive text messages). I may also provide answers in class, or post on Canvas to the whole class, instead of replying to individual messages.
5. If your question is about course content or general course administration, you should consider asking within your study group first, or posting on Canvas, rather than sending a message to me individually.

## Information on copyright

In Canada, copyright law automatically protects written and creative works (e.g., text, art, music or performance), in all formats, as soon as they are created and until 50 years after the creator's death. The creator of the work (i.e., author, composer or artist) often owns copyright, though for published works the publisher may own copyright. A work does not need to be marked with © or a copyright statement to be protected. A copyright protected work cannot be copied (i.e., scanned, printed, downloaded, emailed or photocopied) without the copyright owner's permission, except in certain situations outlined in the *Copyright Act* (see SFU's Fair Dealing Policy for details).

Course materials such as PowerPoint slides, lecture notes, the lecture itself, assignments and exams are all protected by copyright. You are NOT allowed to reproduce them, mail them or upload them to any site for a purpose other than your own study.

SFU students, faculty and staff are required to abide by Canada's *Copyright Act* as well as SFU's copyright policies. Find information about what this means for students at SFU's copyright website, [copyright.sfu.ca](http://copyright.sfu.ca), or by contacting the Copyright Office at [copy@sfu.ca](mailto:copy@sfu.ca). If you are copying works, using them in presentations and projects, or sharing them with other students, you should familiarize yourself with the guidelines and limits contained in SFU's Fair Dealing Policy.

## Course Grade

The final grade will be calculated according to the percentages below. It will take into account class attendance and participation (especially for students who are close to the next letter grade).

COMPONENT	WEIGHT
Assignments	30%
Participation	10%
In-class exam 1	30%
In-class exam 2	30%

Classes will include lecture time, in-class activities, group work and discussion. We will be using the book for in-class exercises, so you probably need to bring it to class every day.

Assignments can be submitted alone, or as a group of 2-4 students. All students in a group will receive the same grade. Assignments will receive one of 3 grades: Pass, Fail, or Redo. Redo means that you will have to submit the assignment again.

In-class exams will be closed-book, essay format, with some short-answer questions. Students will be required to write essays describing natural language data from a variety of languages. Grades will be based on clear and logical argumentation using academically correct English. Prior to each exam, format will be further explained, and review sheets will be provided.

Attendance and participation in this class is essential. There will be a lot of in-class exercises and discussion, and it is important that you take part in those activities. You are allowed two unexcused absences for the entire semester. After that, each unexcused absence means that your participation grade will be lowered by 1%, up to the total 10%. You will earn participation points by attending class, completing in-class assignments, and participating in discussion, in class or on Canvas.

Percentage scores on assignments and other course components will be based on objective criteria. Final letter course grades will be computed from percentage scores on all the course components. The following table provides a rough estimate of grade breakdowns for the final grade. Due attention will be given to the verbal descriptions listed below. There is no university-wide standard scale. An instructor adopts a grade scale appropriate to the level and content of the course.

A+	100%	to 96.0%	Extraordinary performance
A	< 96.0%	to 91.0%	Excellent performance
A-	< 91.0%	to 86.0%	
B+	< 86.0%	to 81.0%	Good performance
B	< 81.0%	to 76.0%	
B-	< 76.0%	to 71.0%	
C+	< 71.0%	to 66.0%	Satisfactory performance
C	< 66.0%	to 61.0%	
C-	< 61.0%	to 56.0%	Marginal performance
D	< 56.0%	to 50.0%	
F	< 50.0%	to 49.0%	Unsatisfactory performance (fail)

## Grade Appeals

If a student wishes to contest the marking of an exam, assignment or paper, the instructor can agree to remark his/her entire exam at the instructor's convenience and not in front of the student. A grade reconsideration may raise the grade, lower the grade, or leave the grade unchanged, as stated in Policy T20.01, clause 2.4.4.

The only reason a grade change will be made is if there is an arithmetic error or if it has been determined that the exam, assignment or paper deserves a lower grade or a higher grade after it has been remarked.

The following **are not** reasons for reconsideration of a grade:

- The student is on probation.
- The student wants to get into Business or any other program.
- The student worked hard and thinks this should be a factor.
- The student does not like the grade scale.
- The student's score is x% below the next grade and would like the instructor to ignore the difference.

## Resources

A number of resources are available to the students in the class. The TA will be available for general help with readings and assignments.

The SFU Learning Commons is available to all SFU students, and provides assistance with learning, academic writing and reading strategies (<http://learningcommons.sfu.ca>).

Please note that **outside tutors or instructors are not allowed** in this course. The only allowed help is that provided by the tutors and staff in the SFU Learning Commons, by the instructor and TA, and by other students in the class.

## Tips for success

In general, students who do well in this course follow these principles:

- Follow the policies in this syllabus, and as outlined on Canvas
- Attend class regularly
- Complete all assignments and exercises, and do so on time
- Ask questions in class or during office hours
- Keep up with new material
- Work in groups or talk regularly to other students in the class
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Take accountability for their own actions and decisions

## Tentative Schedule for Ling 222, Fall 2016

Week	Date	Topic	Read (before class)	Assignments
1	Sept 6 Sept 8	Introduction. What is syntax?	1.1, 1.2	
2	Sept 13 Sept 15	Why do languages have syntax? Word classes. Verbs.	1.3 2.1, 2.2	Assignment 1 due: Exercises for chapter 1 (1-5)

3	Sept 20	Word classes. Nouns.	2.3	
	Sept 22	Word classes. Adjectives, adverbs, prepositions.	2.4-2.7	
4	Sept 27	<b>Class cancelled.</b>		Assignment 2 due: Ch. 2 (1-6)
	Sept 29	Looking inside sentences. Finiteness and auxiliaries. Subordination.	3.1, 3.2	
5	Oct 4	Major cross-linguistic variations.	3.3	Assignment 3 due: Ch. 3 (1-6)
	Oct 6	Review.		
6	Oct 11	<b>In-class exam 1</b>		
	Oct 13	Heads and their dependents, head-initial and head-final languages	4.1, 4.2	
7	Oct 18	Head-marking and dependent-marking languages	4.3	
	Oct 20			
8	Oct 25	Discovering the structure of sentences, relationships within the tree	5.1, 5.2	Assignment 4 due: Ch. 4 (1-6) – <b>Oct. 24</b>
	Oct 27	Developing detailed tree diagrams and tests for constituent structure	5.3	
9	Nov 1	Relationships within the clause, order of phrases within the clause	6.1, 6.2	Assignment 5 due: Ch. 5 (1-7)
	Nov 3	Case systems, agreement	6.3, 6.4	
10	Nov 8	Grammatical relations, free word order	6.5, 6.6	Assignment 6 due: Ch. 6 (1-6)
	Nov 10	Passive, antipassive	7.1, 7.2	
11	Nov 15	Applicative and causative constructions	7.3, 7.4	Assignment 7 due: Ch. 7 (1-6)
	Nov 17	Wh-questions, focus	8.1, 8.2	
12	Nov 22	Relative clauses	8.3, 8.4	Assignment 8 due: Ch. 8 (1-6)
	Nov 24	Asking questions about syntax	9	
13	Nov 29	Review		
	Dec 1	<b>In-class exam 2</b>		