

## Linguistics 221, Introduction to phonetics and phonology

Fridays 9:30-12:20, SWH 10051

### Contact information

Instructor: Dr. John D. Alderete  
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Office hours: Tues noon to 1pm  
Prerequisite: Ling 220  
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### Course description

This course is an introduction to the sound structures of human language and the principles of phonetic and phonological analysis. Topics include: articulatory phonetics, phonetic transcription, English consonants and vowels, cross-linguistic phonetics; phonemic analysis, phonological processes, alternations, phonological rules, rule ordering. Emphasis will be on practical and analytical work with data from a wide range of languages. Careful analysis and clear written expression are important to success in the class.

### Required reading:

*Textbook:*

- Zsiga, Elizabeth C. 2013. *The sounds of language. An introduction to phonetics and phonology*. Wiley-Blackwell. Available at the bookstore.

### Weighting of course assignments

The course grade will be determined based on the following weighting system (detailed explanations are given below of each assignment type):

- Homework assignments (many): 15 % \*\*
- Midterms (Feb. 2, Mar. 16) 60 %
- Quizzes (Mar. 2, Apr. 6) 25 % \*\*
- No Final exam

\*\* Potential bonus points from Research Participation System – see below.

**Please:** input the dates of the midterms and quizzes in your calendar programs.

### **Course policies and expectations**

1. Attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend all classes and be active participants. This involves arriving to class on time, being engaged in lectures, and taking careful notes. Active listening is also key to participating, and it can be demonstrated by asking pertinent questions and incorporating discussion points in written assignments. The students that do the best in my classes are active participants.

2. Readings and lecture notes: Students are expected to have read all assigned readings before class. Lecture notes based on the reading and the class lecture will also be provided as an aid to understanding the textbook and readings. The lecture notes are just a skeletal treatment of the lecture, however, and are not a substitute for the class lecture. Because many students will be learning about a new field of study in this class, some of the materials and concepts may seem fairly complex. In such cases, students should read assigned readings and go over the lecture notes multiple times. A good practice is to go over all the lecture notes once a week, as they accumulate. Students are expected to bring the assigned textbook to all class sessions and assigned readings on the days that they are discussed.

4. Exams: If you have to miss an exam (midterm or quiz) because of medical reasons, you are required to contact me prior to the exam via email. When you return to class, I will need a Certificate of Illness from your regular medical doctor specifying the date of your absence and the reason. I will call the doctor to confirm the note. You must use the Certificate of Illness form from the SFU Health and Counselling website to document your illness and it must be signed by your regular doctor. Following departmental policy, make-ups for exams will not be given. If you have a Certificate of Illness for the date of one of the exams, the weight of that exam will be added to the weight of the other exams. Unexcused absence from an exam will result in a grade of 0 for it. Further, under no circumstances will students be allowed to write exams early. If you have travel or work plans during the semester, you are responsible for ensuring that they do not conflict with the examination schedule.

5. Academic dishonesty: 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 website:

<https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student.html>

If a student is found guilty of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty on a class paper, an assignment, or an exam, an academic dishonesty report will be written for that student. This report is filed in the department. The student receives a grade of zero for the paper, assignment, or exam. If more than one academic dishonesty report has been filed for a student, the case can be presented to the University Board on Student Discipline.

6. Email: I enjoy getting thoughtful questions over email, so students are encouraged to submit questions and comments to me via e-mail. Indeed, this is another way you can participate actively in the class. Because of the large number of e-mail messages that I receive, however, it may be a couple of days before I am able to reply to your message. As a courtesy, please: proof-read your email, provide an informative subject header containing the course number and important keywords, and obey the rules of polite email exchanges.

## Coursework

### Homework assignments:

- Homeworks are short focused problems designed to develop skills in the content areas of the class. The student is obliged to download each homework from the course website, print out and solve the problems, and submit in on Canvas the day it is due (see schedule).
- Homeworks are graded on the following basis. If the entire homework is completed, it can get either a 85% or 95%. If the assignment reflects careful organization and extended discussion of the problem, it will get a 95%. Otherwise it will get 85%. Partially completed homeworks get a 70%
- Homeworks are extremely useful for test preparation. If you master the homework problems, you will probably do well on the exams.
- In general, there are no late assignments accepted, but a late assignment can be made up with a 85% by doing an experiment using the Research Participation System (see below).
- Homeworks are to be submitted two week days prior to the day we discuss them in class.  
**Concretely, since our classes are on Fridays, the homeworks are due at noon on Wednesdays.** Please submit PDFs using the document submission system in Canvas. You can either generate them from a word processing program or scan them.

### Research Participation System:

The RPS system provides students with the opportunity to see how linguistic research is conducted, and it can enhance your understanding of course themes. For that reason, students can be rewarded for participating on one experiment in the following way. Use the RPS system to register for one study during the 12 weeks of the semester. One experimental study gives you one RPS credit. At the end of the semester, you can cash in the RPS credits in the following way. If you have missed a homework, you can use one RPS credit to get a 85% for the missed homework. You can do this for up to two homeworks. If you have not missed any homeworks, one RPS credit can boost one quiz grade by 4%. RPS credits can only be used to boost quiz grades once. Here is the link to the RPS website:

[https://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/research/research\\_participation\\_system.html](https://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/research/research_participation_system.html)

The midterms and quizzes, see schedule for the dates.

There are two midterms and two quizzes. All exams are cumulative up to the point of the test, but there will be a natural focus on the material we have discussed in class leading up to the test. See course expectations above on the departmental policy on missing exams.

## Tips for success

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

- Attend all classes.
- Review class notes regularly (i.e., before and after each class).
- Do all assignments and exercises on time.
- Ask questions in class or during office hours.
- Keep up with new material.
- Maintain a positive attitude.

## Course schedule

Please be advised that the schedule may change if more or less time is need for certain topics. SOL = Zsiga 2013 ‘The sounds of language’, the course textbook. See the web-enabled version of this schedule for weblinks to the lectures, homeworks, and the non-textbook readings. All important dates and assignments are in bold.

*Spring 2018, D200*

**Homeworks:** The instructor is not responsible for reminding the student when homeworks are due or providing a paper copy. Please download and print out the homeworks below and submit them on Canvas; **all homeworks are due at noon on a Wednesday**)

Jan. 5, Syllabus, Course introduction, Overview of articulatory phonetics  
Reading: SOL 1-11

**Jan. 10: Homework 1 due**

Jan. 12, English Consonants and Vowels  
Reading: SOL 14-29

**Jan. 17: Homework 2 due**

Jan. 19, Phonetic structures beyond English, Phonemics I  
Reading: SOL 33-45

**Jan. 24: Homework 3 due**

Jan. 26, Phonemic analysis II, Rules of English allophones, Transcription  
Reading: SOL 203-211

Feb. 2, **Midterm 1 (first 1 ½ hour of class)**, Physics and physiology of sound production  
Reading: SOL 76-89

**Feb. 7: Homework 4 due**

Feb. 9, Airstream mechanisms, Phonation type  
Reading: SOL 45-47, 79-85 (some review)

**Feb. 21: Homework 5 due**

Feb. 23, Phonological processes, Allophonic rules and levels of representation  
Reading: SOL 199-216 (some review)

Mar. 2, Neutralization rules, **Quiz 1 last 50 minutes of class**

Reading: SOL 225-232

**Mar. 7: Homework 6 due**

Mar. 9, Distinctive features  
Reading: SOL 254-272

Mar. 16, **Midterm 2 first 1 ½ hour of class**, Survey of phonological processes

Reading: SOL 232-250

**Mar. 21: Homework 7 due**

Mar. 23, Survey of phonological processes cont'd, Rule ordering

Apr. 6, Rule ordering cont'd, **Quiz 2 last 50 minutes of class**

No assigned reading