

LINGUISTICS 72100 – SYNTAX I

FALL 2020

THE GRADUATE CENTER, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Instructor: Jason Kandybowicz
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Office: Room 7400.05
Office hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday: 3:00-5:00pm, and by appointment

Class location: Room TBA
Class time: Wednesday: 11:45am-1:45pm

Practicum leader: LeeAnn Stover
Email address: lstove21@gmail.com

Practicum location: Room TBA
Practicum time: Monday: 2:00-4:00pm

Class website: Course materials will be posted to the course Dropbox folder:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/gim7mvgourfmcs/AAAahZNk19kMfxeE274SK1p5a?dl=0>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to Principles and Parameters Theory (P&P), the foundation of current mainstream generative approaches to phrase and sentence structure. P&P aims to explain the acquisition and cross-linguistic variation of syntactic phenomena by pursuing the idea that a pre-determined set of principles underlies the grammars of all languages and that the apparent differences we see among languages are the result of differences in parameter settings. Although we will examine similarities and differences between languages, English (and other European languages) will be a main point of reference in our understanding of the theory.

COURSE GOALS

Students in this course will gain specialized knowledge of the syntax of English as well as aspects of the syntax of other languages. Students will develop critical thinking skills, experience with argumentation and analysis, and familiarity with the scientific method.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be expected to be able to reproduce all core ingredients of P&P theory; apply P&P theory to perform syntactic analysis; demonstrate proficiency in syntactic argumentation; and engage with primary syntactic literature in the generative tradition.

TEXTBOOK

There is no required textbook or reading for this course beyond the class handouts. If you feel you'd like optional/supplemental reading, I can make some suggestions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

- Attendance and participation: 20%
- Midterm exam (take-home): 40%
- Final exam (take-home): 40%

Optional weekly exercises will be posted to the course Dropbox folder for practice. If you elect to complete these exercises, I will provide you with an answer key. There is no due date for these exercises.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All dates appear as approximations and are subject to periodic revision as needed.

CLASS	MONTH	DAY	TOPICS
1	August	26	Introduction, categories, constituency
	August	31	Practicum 1
2	September	2	Phrase structure trees & structural relations
	September	7	No practicum – Labor Day
3	September	9	X-bar theory
	September	14	Practicum 2
4	September	16	Theta theory & the lexicon
	September	21	Practicum 3
5	September	23	Head movement
	September	29	Practicum 4 (Tuesday = CUNY Monday)
6	September	30	Case theory
	October	5	Practicum 5
7	October	7	Binding Theory
	October	12	No practicum – Columbus Day
8	October	14	Practicum 6 (Wednesday = CUNY Monday)
	October	19	Practicum 7
	October	21	Control
9	October	26	Practicum 8
	October	28	A-movement: raising, passives & unaccusatives
10	November	2	Practicum 9
	November	4	A-bar movement: <i>wh</i> - movement
11	November	9	Practicum 10 (Midterm exam due)
	November	11	Constraints on <i>wh</i> - movement: islands, subadjacency & superiority
12	November	16	Practicum 11
	November	18	Constraints on <i>wh</i> - movement: <i>comp-trace</i> & crossover effects
13	November	23	Practicum 12
	November	25	No class – CUNY Friday
	November	30	Practicum 13
14	December	2	Null operators: relative clauses
	December	7	Practicum 14
14	December	9	Null operators: <i>tough</i> movement & parasitic gaps
	December	18	Final exam due (by 4pm)