

# SYLLABUS

## ENGL 240-01: Introduction to Linguistics

### Fall 2023

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**Instructor:** James A. Berry, Ph.D. (he/him)      **Email:** jberry@uwsp.edu  
**Office:** CCC 441  
**Office hours:** Mon/Wed, 2:00–3:00 p.m., Tue/Thu, 1:00–2:00 p.m., and by appointment  
**Class meets:** Tue/Thu, 9:30–10:45 a.m.      **Classroom:** CCC 214

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*The University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point occupies lands inextricably connected to the Ho-Chunk people and their sacred language, Hoocqk, and to the Menominee people and their sacred language, Omāēqnoomenēw-wēqnaesen, since time immemorial. We must acknowledge the deep Ho-Chunk and Menominee love for their languages and honor all those who speak and care for the Indigenous languages of Wisconsin. These other languages include: Mă’eeekuneeweexthowāakun (Mohican), Hulunīixsuwaakun (Munsee), Ojibwemowin/ Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe), Ukwehuwehnéha (Oneida), and Bodwéwadmimwen/ Neshnabémwen (Potawatomi).*

*Languages are key to the past, present, and future well-being of Indigenous nations. Collectively, we share an exigent responsibility to arrest language loss due to settler-colonialism; to support revitalization efforts; and to seek linguistic justice for Indigenous peoples.*

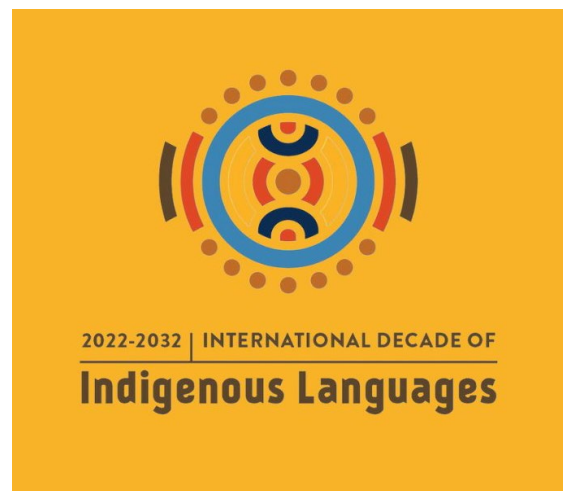
*(Adapted from Enwejig land and language acknowledgment, UW–Madison)*

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a general introduction to the study of language. It includes an overview of basic concepts and methods of language study and introduces some of the core areas of linguistics research: **phonetics and phonology** (the sound system), **morphology** (the structure of words), **syntax** (the structure of phrases and sentences), **semantics** (how words relate to meaning), **pragmatics** (how meanings are generally situational), and **language contact** (how language speaker groups interact and change languages).

In class, our focus will usually be on English as an example, because English is the language we all have access to. However, we will also examine other languages of the world, particularly **indigenous languages**. This will align our coursework with the aims of UNESCO’s International Decade of Indigenous Languages. <https://en.unesco.org/idil2022-2032>

Studies estimate that by the year 2100, 50 to 95 percent of the world’s languages will be **extinct**. The IDIL’s mission is to bring attention to this



critical situation. We will focus on understanding what *has already been* and *will soon be lost* without continued and supported efforts.

Everyone comes to this class with inherent knowledge of at least one language. What we want to explore is **metalinguistic knowledge**: basically, the things you don't know that you already know. By learning how all languages work, we will better understand the interrelatedness of language, its innateness, and its social setting.

As part of our indigenous focus, we will also examine how the field of linguistics has been connected to the colonial history of the last 500 years and the effects that history has had on our understanding of language. Linguistics, like many other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, is highly Eurocentric; it is crucial to be aware of this while recognizing the significant contributions the discipline offers.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the semester, you should be able to

- understand, use, and explain the various structural subsystems of language, including
  - *phonetics* and *phonology* (the sound system)
  - *morphology* (the system of word construction)
  - *syntax* (the system of phrase and sentence structure)
  - *semantics* (the system of meaning at both the word and sentence level)
  - *pragmatics* (the ways in which meaning and situation interact)
- apply your understanding of these subsystems to the examination of an indigenous language with which you are unfamiliar
- recognize the ways in which colonialism has affected language use around the world
- discuss the importance of language preservation efforts

### REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

#### **Rental:**

Dawson, Hope C., Antonio Hernandez, and Cory Shain, Editors. *Language Files*, 13<sup>th</sup> Edn. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2022.

#### **Other:**

*Ethnologue*

<https://www.ethnologue.com/>

*Oxford English Dictionary* (UWSP Library site)

<https://www.oed.com/>

Other materials will be available on Canvas.



**MY CLASSROOM PHILOSOPHY:**

One of the reasons I was drawn to linguistics as a field of study is that it combines the *universality* and *diversity* of the human experience. Language, it is often argued, is what makes us human. Therefore, it is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, a strength, and a benefit.

We will use materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your contributions are encouraged and appreciated—after all, language is something we all share and bring with us. Please question my assumptions and your own and let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students.

I ask of you at all times to be respectful and thoughtful toward others; aggressive and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Our classroom will be a place where all involved can feel brave enough to exchange ideas. As a class we will work together to understand and appreciate a variety of viewpoints.

*NOTE: If you have experienced a bias incident (an act of conduct, speech, or expression to which a bias motive is evident as a contributing factor regardless of whether the act is criminal) at UWSP, you have the right to report it using this [link](#). You may also contact the Dean of Students office directly at [dos@uwsp.edu](mailto:dos@uwsp.edu).*

**LATE WORK AND PROBLEM SOLVING:**

If you cannot turn in an assignment by the deadline, please notify me **by email** as soon as you can (preferably before the due date) to discuss an extension. Deadlines exist for a reason, but we all know that **things happen**.

I encourage you to communicate with me **when things do happen**: reach out before or after class, during office hours, over email, or by appointment any time we are both available. Please discuss concerns with me at the earliest possible time—while we both have options. I am generous with students who consult with me while issues are concerns, rather than crises.

***It's important for us both to recognize and understand when too much time has passed to recover an assignment, or even a semester.***

Of course, if an emergency situation does arise, please let me know when you are able.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:*****Indigenous Language Project:***

Our Indigenous Language Project (or ILP) will be the cornerstone of this class, worth about two-thirds of the grade. It will be split into five mini-projects, each covering different aspects of the language you choose. These are listed below:

1. *ILP Introduction*: For our first ILP assignment, you will choose a language. I will provide a list of approximately 50 indigenous languages from around the world. You may choose from this list or by consulting the *Ethnologue*, which lists nearly all the known languages (numbering more than 7,100!). Your choice must be considered *indigenous*—and we will come up with a definition for our class. In this first assignment, you will examine the current status of the language in the world.
2. *Phonetics and Phonology*: In the second assignment you will return to your language, examine its sound system, and present its phonemes. You will complete an IPA chart of consonants, vowels, and any non-pulmonics or other marked characteristics. Using English as a starting point, you'll compare and contrast the sounds of your language. You'll also consider any significant allophones and some simple phonotactics of your language.
3. *Morphosyntax*: The third assignment for our project will build on our discussions of morphology and syntax. You're likely to see just as many differences (or perhaps more!) between your language and English in the ways that we construct words, phrases, and sentences as you did with the sounds. Again, you'll compare and contrast your language with English, this time with morphological typology, with affixation, with word order, and with parameters such as PRO-drop and Topic-Comment.
4. *Semantics and Pragmatics*: The fourth assignment will cover meaning. You'll examine lexical semantics, again comparing to English. Many languages differ from English with regard to cardinal and relative directions, color terms, word categories, body parts, kinship terms, etc. You'll also look at issues such as politeness, directness, the ways that social structures affect language, etc.
5. *Reflection*: During finals week, you'll submit a reflection essay in which you consider what you've learned from our classwork and the ILP. I will provide a prompt that will help you look over the semester and your linguistic journey.

**Checkpoint quizzes:**

There will be three quizzes that will cover the different topics we discuss. These will mostly concern the in-class discussions and materials we cover. They will be relatively low stakes.

**Reading assignments:**

You will be assigned readings from the text (and occasionally from other sources) that are to be completed before class. Make sure to bring your text to class, as we will use several of the exercises in each chapter for small-group and large-group work.

**Attendance and participation:**

Much of your learning will take place in our classes, so you should attend on a regular basis. What, exactly, does this mean in the age of Covid? For this class, "attendance" means being in the classroom **when it is possible for you to do so**.

Three and a half years after the start of a pandemic, these continue to be unprecedented times. We're trying to hold a "normal" class while our lives have changed in many ways.

I will take attendance with a sign-in sheet after the first week. Two important rules:

- 1. PLEASE FOLLOW ALL UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES WITH REGARD TO ANY DISEASE.**
- 2. PLEASE DO NOT COME TO CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.**

Aside from illness or other significant event (family emergency, etc.), you will have **2 freebie absences**. You can take them without notifying me. If you miss more than 2 classes (again, aside from significant life events such as illness/family emergency), each missed class lowers your attendance grade (e.g. 3 missed classes = A-; 4 = B+; 5 = B; etc.).

**Grading:**

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Indigenous Language Project     | 65%        |
| (ILP Introduction 10%)          |            |
| (Phonetics/Phonology 15%)       |            |
| (Morphosyntax 15%)              |            |
| (Semantics/Pragmatics 15%)      |            |
| (Reflection 10%)                |            |
| Checkpoint quizzes              | 25%        |
| (3 @ 8.33% each)                |            |
| <u>Attendance/participation</u> | <u>10%</u> |
| <br>TOTAL                       | <br>100%   |

**Grading scale:**

|             |             |             |             |           |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 93-100% = A | 87-89% = B+ | 77-79% = C+ | 67-69% = D+ | 0-59% = F |
| 90-92% = A- | 83-86% = B  | 73-76% = C  | 60-66% = D  |           |
|             | 80-82% = B- | 70-72% = C- |             |           |

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

***Student academic disciplinary procedures:***

*UWSP 14.01 Statement of principles.*

The Board of Regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff, and students of the University of Wisconsin System believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin System. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

*UWSP 14.03 Academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.*

- (1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:
  - (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;

- (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
- (f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(2) Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

***Commitment to integrity:***

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class, and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

**FERPA:**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides students with a right to protect, review, and correct their student records. Staff of the university with a clear educational need to know may also have to access to certain student records. Exceptions to the law include parental notification in cases of alcohol or drug use, and in case of a health or safety concern. FERPA also permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent, to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

Lecture materials and recordings for ENGL 240 are protected intellectual property at UW–Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation.

***Regent Policy Document 4-1***

Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any

person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

**EQUAL ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

UW–Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe their disability.

If modifications are required due to a disability, please contact the Disability Resource Center to complete an Accommodations Request form. Phone: 715-346-3365 or Room 108, Collins Classroom Center.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:**

In the event of a medical emergency call 911 or use campus phone. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.

In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. See [www.uwsp.edu/emergency/Pages/floor-plans.aspx](http://www.uwsp.edu/emergency/Pages/floor-plans.aspx) for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span structures (gyms, pools or large classrooms).

In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet 200 yards away from building. Notify instructor or emergency response personnel of any missing individuals.

Active Shooter – RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. If trapped, hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Call 911 when it is safe to do so. Follow instructions of emergency responders.

See UW–Stevens Point Emergency Procedures at [www.uwsp.edu/emergency/Pages/emergency-procedures](http://www.uwsp.edu/emergency/Pages/emergency-procedures) for details on all emergency response at UW–Stevens Point.

**DAILY SCHEDULE (Note: subject to change)**

| <u>Date</u>                        | <u>Material covered</u>  | <u>What is due</u>                                       |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Week 1</b><br>T/R<br>9/5-7      | Introduction to class and syllabus<br>Background survey: what do you bring to class? |  |
| <b>Week 2</b><br>T/R<br>9/12-14    | Ch. 1: Intro. to studying language<br>Beginning/researching the ILP                  |  |
| <b>Week 3</b><br>T/R<br>9/19-21    | Ch. 2: Phonetics<br>Phonetics and the ILP  | <b>ILP Introduction due</b>                              |
| <b>Week 4</b><br>T/R<br>9/26-28    | Ch. 2 cont.<br>Ch. 3: Phonology  |  |
| <b>Week 5</b><br>T/R<br>10/3-5     | Ch. 3 cont.<br>Phonology and the ILP   |  |
| <b>Week 6</b><br>T/R<br>10/10-12   | Ch. 3 cont.<br>Ch. 4: Morphology   | <b>Checkpoint quiz 1<br/>ILP Phonetics/Phonology due</b> |
| <b>Week 7</b><br>T/R<br>10/17-19   | Ch. 4 cont.<br>Morphology and the ILP  | <b>***NO CLASS OCTOBER 19***</b>                         |
| <b>Week 8</b><br>T/R<br>10/24-26   | Ch. 5: Syntax  |  |
| <b>Week 9</b><br>T/R<br>10/31-11/2 | Ch. 5 cont.<br>Syntax and the ILP  |  |
| <b>Week 10</b><br>T/R<br>11/7-9    | Ch. 6: Semantics   | <b>Checkpoint quiz 2<br/>ILP Morphosyntax due</b>        |



| <u>Date</u>                       | <u>Material covered</u>                        | <u>What is due</u>                    |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 11</b><br>T/R<br>11/14-16 | Ch. 6 cont.<br>Semantics and the ILP           |                                       |
| <b>Week 12</b><br>T/R<br>11/21-23 | Ch. 7: Pragmatics                              | <b>***NO CLASS NOVEMBER 23***</b>     |
| <b>Week 13</b><br>T/R<br>11/28-30 | Ch. 7 cont.<br>Ch. 11: Language and Culture    |                                       |
| <b>Week 14</b><br>T/R<br>12/5-7   | Ch. 11 cont.<br>Pragmatics/Culture and the ILP | <b>Checkpoint quiz 3</b>              |
| <b>Week 15</b><br>T/R<br>12/12-14 | Ch. 12: Language Contact<br>Course wrap-up     | <b>ILP Semantics/Pragmatics due</b>   |
| <b>Finals week</b><br>T 12/19     |  | <b>ILP Reflection due (4:45 p.m.)</b> |