

LING 201: Introduction to Language

Last updated 9 April 2024.

The College of Staten Island, CUNY

Spring 2024

Day/Time: Tuesdays, 6:30–8:10 (in-person)
Throughout the rest of the week (remote, asynchronous)

Room: 2N-219

Website: <https://ling201spr2024.common.gc.cuny.edu/>

Instructor: Joseph Pentangelo

Joseph.pentangelo@csi.cuny.edu

- Please include “Ling 201” in the subject line of any emails to me.
- Please do not email me at joseph.pentangelo@cix.csi.cuny.edu. I no longer have access to this inbox.

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 5:30–6:30pm, 2S-225 (in-person)

Email me to set up remote office hours.

Catalogue Description:

4 hours; 4 credits. This course is an introduction to the study of language. It explores the following relationships: language and society; language and culture; language and thought; language and biology. For English majors and minors, this is designated as an ENH linguistics course. NOTE: Not open to students who have already completed ENH 230. Prerequisite: ENG 151. Requirement Designation: Regular Liberal Arts.

1. Course Requirements and Grading

1.1. Modalities

This is a hybrid class, meaning that there are synchronous in-person and asynchronous remote portions each week. You are required to engage fully in each of these modalities. Lectures, quizzes, and exams will all take place during the in-person portion of class. Readings, blog posts, and essays will be done during the remote portion of class using the class website. Discussions will take place both in-person and on the class website.

1.2. Class Website

This class does not make use of Blackboard. Instead, our [class website](#) is part of the CUNY Academic Commons. Our class site hosts the syllabus, readings, slides, and assignments. It is also the platform you will use to post your blog posts, have online discussions, and submit

essays. In order to make full use of the class website, you must have an account on the CUNY Academic Commons and join our class website. We will dedicate a portion of our first in-person meeting to getting this set up. If you miss this class, please email me (contact info above) or come to my office hours and I'll help you with this.

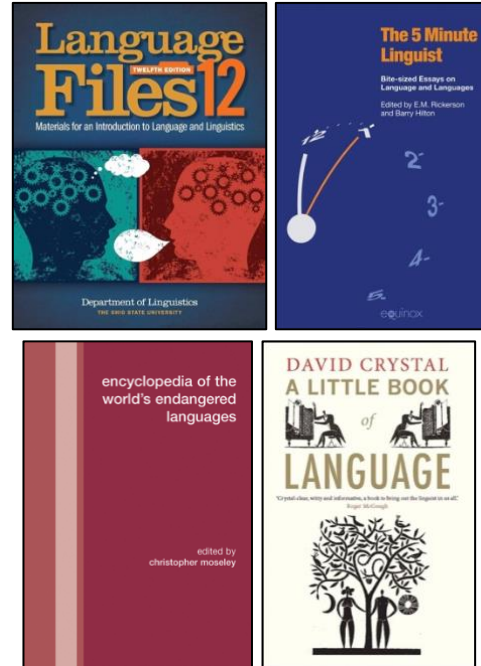
1.3. Required Readings

All readings are available on the Readings page of our course site. The password to access this page will be shared with you during our first in-person class meeting.

Our readings come from the following four books:

- *Language Files*, 12th edition (2016)
- *The 5 Minute Linguist*, edited by E.M. Rickerson & Barry Hilton (2007)
- David Crystal's (2010) *A Little Book of Language*
- *Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages*, edited by Christopher Moseley (2007)

Expect to read approximately 20pp. per week.



1.4. Grade Breakdown

- Discussion/Participation (30%)
- Exams (20%)
- Quizzes (20%)
- Blog Posts (20%)
- Final Paper (10%)

Grade key:			
A	93%+	B-	80–82%
A-	90–92%	C+	77–79%
B+	87–89%	C	70–76%
B	83–86%	D	60–69%
		F	<60%

1.4.1. Discussion/Participation

Active and engaged participation is essential both to learning and to demonstrating knowledge. You are required to participate regularly during our class meetings, as well as to respond to the weekly discussion topics posted to the class website. Discussion responses must be submitted by 11:59pm on Friday.

1.4.2. Exams

There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Each of these will be graded out of a possible 10 points (i.e. 10% of your overall grade). The midterm will cover materials from the start of class

up to date of the midterm, and the final will cover materials from the midterm to the end of the semester. The final is not cumulative. Exams are open-book and in-person.

1.4.3. Quizzes

There will be a total of 12 quizzes, given at the start of each class, on subject matter from the reading due that day. Each quiz is graded out of a maximum of 2 points (i.e. 2% of your overall grade). The two lowest-scoring quizzes will be dropped, giving you a possible maximum of 20 points for your quiz grade. Quizzes are closed-book and in-person.

1.4.4. Blog Posts

There will be a total of four blog posts, each graded out of a maximum of 5 points (i.e. 5% of your overall grade). Details for each will be announced a week or two before they are due. These will be posted on our course website.

1.4.5. Final Paper

There will be one final paper, due at the end of the semester, on a topic of your choosing (and my approval).

1.5. Attendance

You are expected to attend each in-person class meeting. If you know that you will have to miss a class (due to illness, family emergency, etc.), please let me know ahead of time or as soon as possible and you'll be granted an excused absence. With an excused absence, we can work out a way for you to make up that day's missed quiz. You won't be penalized for any excused absences.

In the case of an unexplained/unexcused absence, your quiz grade for that day will be a 0, which will presumably be one of the two dropped quiz grades.

1.6. Extra Credit

There will be a chance to earn up to 5 overall points with an extra credit quiz. Details to come later in the semester.

2. Class Policies

2.1. Artificial Intelligence

The use of ChatGPT or similar artificial intelligence software to generate your submission for academic work, including blog posts, essays, and online discussion posts, is completely

prohibited and will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment. A second offense will lead to a failing grade in the class.

2.2. Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Cheating:

You are referred to the College of Staten Island's Academic Integrity Policy found here: <https://csi-undergraduate.catalog.cuny.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy>

Collaborating or forming a study group is encouraged, but this does not mean that you are allowed to copy one another's work, nor the work of others outside of this class. Do not share your answers to exams or quizzes with other students in any way. Do not post assignments or other course materials on CourseHero or similar websites.

2.3. Statement on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

This class, like all classes at CSI, follows the institution's [Reasonable Accommodations Policy](#). If you need such accommodations, you are referred to the Office of Accessibility Services: <https://csi-undergraduate.catalog.cuny.edu/student-services/office-of-accessibility-services>

3. Course Calendar

3.1. Weekly Expectations

Each week, you will:

- Do the assigned reading(s) (usually <20pp) before class meets on Tuesday.
- Take a quiz on the reading(s) at the start of class on Tuesday.
- Respond to that week's online discussion topic before 11:59pm on Friday.

On certain weeks, there will also be blog posts, which will be due before 11:59pm on Friday, essays, which will also be due before 11:59pm on Friday, and exams, which will take place in class.

3.2. Changes or Updates

Note that this calendar, like everything in life, is subject to change. You'll be kept apprised of any changes and an updated syllabus will be posted on the class website in a timely manner.

3.3. Calendar

The below calendar is largely self explanatory. Readings must be done before class, quizzes and exams will be done in class, and blog posts and essays will be submitted before 11:59pm Friday.

Not shown are the online discussion posts, which take place weekly and are also due before 11:59pm Friday.

On the Reading column below, the books are referred to with the following abbreviations:

- LF = *Language Files*
- R&H = *5 Minute Linguist*
- C = *A Little Book of Language*
- EWEL = *Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages*

And of course, TBD means “to be declared.”

	DATE	TOPIC	READING	QUIZ	BLOG	EXAM	ESSAY
1	1/30	Introduction					
2	2/6	What is language?	R&H 7–14, 62–66	1			
3	2/13	Descriptivism & Prescriptivism	R&H 75–78; LF 13–19	2			
4	2/20	The Sounds of Language	C 21–33; R&H 124–127	3	1		
5	2/27	The International Phonetic Alphabet	LF 42–63	4			
6	3/5	Phonology	LF 108–121	5			
7	3/12	Phonology Continued + Midterm Review	LF 122–140	6	2		
8	3/19	Midterm				1	
9	3/26	Meaning	LF 246–256	7			
10	4/2	Semantics	LF 257–265	8			
11	4/9	<i>No class. Enjoy!</i>			3		
12	4/16	Morphemes and Morphology	LF 154–170	9			
/	4/23	<i>No class. Enjoy!</i>					
/	4/30	<i>No class. Enjoy!</i>					
13	5/7	Language Change	R&H 21–28, 33–36; C 131–137	10			
14	5/14	Language Endangerment + Final Review	EWEL vii–xvi; other pp. TBD	11	4		
15	5/21	Final				2	1