

LING 686-001 Morphology–Fall 2018
T 7:20-10 p.m., Innovation Hall 330

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Office hours: T 4-6p and by appointment

If you have questions, concerns, or want feedback about any aspect of this course, please contact me via email, make an appointment to come see me, or drop by during office hours or whenever my door is open!

Prerequisites: LING 306 or 520 (Introduction to Linguistic Structure) at GMU, or equivalent

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the concepts, methods, and problems of morphology, the linguistic study of word formation. We will be considering data from many different languages, and investigating how those languages are similar and different in terms of how they form their words. We will also consider some of the development of morphological theory.

Resources

All course policies, calendars, assignments, and readings from outside the textbooks will be posted on our Blackboard site. The copy of the syllabus posted there will always be the most up-to-date one, and supersedes the one handed out on the first day.

Required texts:

- Haspelmath, Martin, & Andrea Sims. 2010. *Understanding Morphology*. Routledge. ISBN: 978-0340950012.
- Cowan, William, & Jaromira Rakušan. 1998. *Source Book for Linguistics*. John Benjamins. ISBN: 978-1556195167.
- Other readings from primary source material, posted on Blackboard

Course Requirements

- It is important that you attend class regularly, since we will be working through lots of new concepts, data sets, and analyses together.
- PARTICIPATION/IN-CLASS WORK: Attend class regularly, ask questions, participate in the class. We will work through problem sets in class. Class time will generally be spent ½ on presentation and discussion of key concepts and ½ on problem sets and work on your semester projects. In order to keep up with the material, you *MUST* prepare by reading the assigned readings *before* class.
- PROBLEM SETS: You will be given data sets to work through and answer questions about. You're encouraged to work together on these, but you *must* turn in your own work (in your own words) and you *must* write the names of the people you worked with on the top of your assignment. Graduate students will be assigned additional (and/or more challenging) problems as well.
- EXAMS: We will have two take-home exams (essentially extended problem sets).

- **SEMESTER PROJECT:** Throughout the semester, you will be working closely with two languages (other than English) of your choosing. You will be gathering information on how these languages form words, and comparing the languages to each other. You will produce several “mini-reports” throughout the semester that will help you progress towards your final product. The last day(s) of class will be devoted to brief presentations of your overall findings to your classmates. The final product will be a ~10 page (double spaced) analysis of what you’ve found and how your languages compare. Graduate students will produce a longer paper (~15 pages double spaced) that includes this same type of comparison, but also includes formal morphological analysis.
- **ARTICLE ABSTRACT (graduate students only):** You will be responsible for providing an argument outline and 500-word abstract of an article during the semester. This will be distributed to your fellow students as an aid in comprehension.

Grading Breakdown

Grading is based on a point system. There are 1000 possible points, and your final grade is determined by the total number of points earned. Graduate students are assessed based on more, and more challenging, problem sets and project requirements, as well as the article abstract. Assignments are “curved” for difficulty when needed—that is, for a difficult problem, a wrong answer might still receive 80% of the possible points. Note that a wrong answer will (almost) always receive more points than a missing answer!

Undergraduate students:

<i>In-class activities/participation</i>	100 points (out of 130; lowest 3 scores dropped)
<i>Problem Sets (4)</i>	300 points
<i>Exams (2)</i>	200 points
<i>Language project</i>	400 points
<i>Mini-reports (4)</i>	200 points
<i>Presentation</i>	25 points
<i>Final write-up</i>	175 points

Graduate students:

<i>In-class activities/participation</i>	(required but not graded)
<i>Problem Sets (4)</i>	300 points
<i>Exams (2)</i>	200 points
<i>Language project</i>	400 points
<i>Mini-reports (4)</i>	100 points
<i>Presentation</i>	25 points
<i>Final write-up</i>	275 points
<i>Article outline/abstract</i>	100 points

Course Policies

Technology

Please silence and put away all electronics before class (unless you have prior approval from me to take notes with a laptop). If you need to be accessible by phone for family or emergency reasons, please find a way to do so that is respectful to your classmates.

Late Work

Late work is generally not accepted. Please contact me *before* the due date if there are (extremely) extenuating circumstances that you think will prevent you from completing an assignment on time.

Communication and Grades

My scheduled office hours are reserved just for you! Please come by, if only to say ‘hi’, at least once during the semester. Don’t wait until you are feeling really lost to come talk to me. You’re also welcome to come by and talk any time I’m in my office with the door open. Otherwise, just send me an email with your available times and we’ll make an appointment.

I will, from time to time, email you on your Mason account with important information. It is your responsibility to check your email daily in order to receive these messages. During “business” hours (8-5, M-F) I will make every effort to answer your email within a few hours, though it may take up to 48 hours. I often respond to emails after 5 p.m. and on weekends, but if you need a quick answer, please be sure to contact me during the day and during the workweek.

I will keep the Blackboard grade book current; this is where you should check your grade during the semester. If you see anything you feel to be a mistake, please let me know.

Diversity and Inclusion

As you know, George Mason University is an incredibly diverse institution. This course will provide an inclusive environment for learning about the science of language. Please show respect for your fellow students and the experiences and identities they bring to our classroom. Many related resources are available for students at Mason, including through the [Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education \(ODIME\)](#), [International Programs and Services](#), [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Resources](#), and the [Military Alliance Program](#).

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence

Your education should be free from all forms of interpersonal harassment and violence. If you have been harassed, assaulted, or subjected to sexual misconduct or any other form of interpersonal violence, please seek assistance. Please note that as a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s [Title IX Coordinator](#) per [university policy 1412](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (703-380-1434), [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (703-993-2380), [Student Health Services](#), or [Mason’s Title IX Coordinator](#) (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).

Policy on Academic Integrity

Mason has an Honor Code (<http://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/>). Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes copying work from other students or other sources without proper citation, and allowing others to copy from your work. If you are unsure about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please don’t be afraid to ask me. Students are encouraged to work together on homework assignments; however, each student must turn in his/her own work. If you work with someone else on a homework assignment, write the names of the individual(s) you worked with on the top of your assignment. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and can include a grade of “0” on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or further disciplinary action. All suspected honor code violations will be reported. *Please* come and talk to me if you feel that you are struggling in the course, and we will work together to help you succeed.

Accommodations for Disabilities

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ds.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Tentative Course Calendar (subject to change)

We may adjust our pace as we go through the semester, depending on the dynamics of the class. Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on the Friday after the class day listed unless otherwise noted. Readings for each week are posted on Blackboard.

Week 1: Introduction; What is morphology? 8/28
Week 2: Words and Rules 9/4 H&S Chs. 1, 2, 3 Halle 1973
Week 3: Words and Rules, Cont'd. 9/11 Problem set 1 due (9/14)
Week 4: Inflection and derivation 9/18 H&S Ch. 5 Mini-report 1 due (9/21)
Week 5: The Lexicon and Productivity 9/25 H&S Ch. 4 Williams 1992 sections 1&2 (ok to skim) H&S 6 Exam 1 due (9/28)
Week 6: Productivity and Paradigms 10/2 *Baayen 2005 H&S 8 Williams 1992 sections 3&4 Problem set 2 due (10/5)
Week 7: October break, NO CLASS 10/9
Week 8: Paradigms 10/16 *Finkel & Stump 2007 (Principal Parts & Morphological Typology) *Hay & Baayen 2005 (Shifting Paradigms: Gradient Structure) Mini-report 2 due (10/19)
Week 9: Structure and Compounding 10/23 H&S 7 Punske 2016 Problem set 3 due (10/26)
Week 10: Morphophonology, Clitics, etc. 10/30 H&S 10 *Zwicky 1985 (Clitics and Particles) H&S 9 Mini-report 3 due (11/2)
Week 11: Morphosyntax and Morphological Theory 11/6 Handout *Zwicky 1992 (Some Choices) Problem set 4 due (11/9)
Week 12: Distributed Morphology 11/13 Baker 1985 (Mirror Principle) Sections 1-3 *Sections 4-6 *Bobaljik 2002 (Syncretism Without Paradigms) Anderson 1982 (Where's Morphology?) Sections 1-3 *Sections 4-5 Siddiqi 2010 (Distributed Morphology)
Week 13: NO CLASS—RESEARCH DAY 11/20 Mini-report 4 due (11/20**!)

Week 14: Acquisition of Morphology 11/27 (Guest professor Dr. Lukyanenko)
Reading TBA Exam 2 due (11/30)
Week 15: Presentations 12/4
Research presentations in class
Finals Week
Final Paper Due Tues. 12/18, 10:15 p.m. (online)