
Historical Linguistics

LING 350/3.0 – Syllabus

Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Fall 2020

Instructor: Prof. B. Bjorkman
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Drop-In Hours: TBD, but several times each week (or by appointment)
These will be held via Zoom (LINK) and are **drop in**

~*Remote Logistics*~

With Fall definitely being remote, and the plans for the Winter still undetermined, you might be wondering how your courses are going to work! LING 350 this term will involve a mixture of **synchronous** (aka real time or live meetings) and **asynchronous** (accessible at any time) communication—but all synchronous sessions will be recorded and made available after the fact.

All live class meetings will take place via **Zoom**, at the following link: LINK

Our **timetable** slot is Tuesday 1:00–2:30 & Thursday 11:30–1:00. All synchronous sessions will take place in this slot, but will usually last 30-60 minutes instead of the full scheduled 1.5 hours.

Each week will follow the same basic schedule:

- Guide + Announcements Video (5-10 minutes), posted every **Monday**
- 2–3 Short Content Lectures (about 15 minutes each), posted every **Monday**
- Live class session: Technical Practice + Problem Solving, every **Tuesday**
- Check-in survey, due in the evening on **Wednesday**
- Live class session: Live Q+A and Review, every **Thursday**
- Material for next week posted on **Friday**

In weeks where an assignment is due, it will always be due in the evening on **Thursday**.

Each week there will also be a written topic guide, which will complement the recorded content lectures, as well as from the textbook (*Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* by Lyle Campbell). There will also be sample practice problems posted each Monday, with a solution released on Wednesday.

There is also a **discussion board** for this course, and there may also be a **Discord or Slack server**. Both of these are spaces for you to talk to each other about anything related to this course, though I will also be around to answer questions as needed.

I will also have **drop-in office hours**, held via Zoom. You can show up to these with questions about this course, or with any other topic you'd like to talk about!

Course Description

From the course calendar: This course introduces the linguistic study of historical language change. The focus is on principles and method in the study of phonological, morphological and syntactic change. Case studies will be drawn from a cross-section of languages, including but not limited to members of the Indo-European language family.

Recognizing that Queen's is located on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory, the course will also draw case studies from the Algonquian and Iroquoian language families, as well as from other families of languages spoken in Canada.

Textbook

- *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* (3rd edition) by Lyle Campbell. MIT Press.

Because this semester is remote, I have **not** ordered copies of this textbook through the campus bookstore. I encourage you to try to order it through a local independent bookstore; it is also available new and used online from Amazon. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any problems acquiring a copy.

The textbook has been considerably revised and expanded from earlier editions; if you acquire a copy of the first or second edition, it will be up to you to check with your classmates for any differences or inconsistencies.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Understand the key concepts, methodologies, and theoretical approaches in diachronic linguistics.
- Apply the comparative method when analyzing novel historical data, to identify possible relationships between languages and reconstruct a hypothetical proto-language.
- Evaluate descriptions or analyses of particular historical linguistic data, by identifying the predictions they make and testing them against further data.
- Relate specific historical data to theories of languages change, and evaluate these theories against the predictions they make.

Grading Method

All components of this course will receive letter grades which, for purposes of calculating your course average, will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale. Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queens Official Grade Conversion Scale. Explanations of both scales can be found on the following page: http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/sites/default/files/policy_on_grading.pdf.

Grading Scheme

<i>Coursework Component</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Assignments (4 total, 15% each)	60 %
Topic Proposal	5 %
Annotated Bibliography	7 %

Peer Review	5 %
Research Paper	15 %
Surveys & Engagement	8 %

Course Website: onQ

Like most courses at Queen's, this course has an onQ website. This is where all material for this course will be posted. To receive emails notifying you of updates and announcements from the course website, you must turn on onQ notifications. I strongly recommend that you do this!

~*Course Requirements*~

Readings

Lectures and in-class exercises in this course will build on material covered in the assigned reading for each week. It is therefore important that you read the assigned chapter (or at least make a first effort at reading it) before watching related videos or attempting related exercises.

There will also be written Topic Guides posted to onQ; you should be sure to read these in addition to the assigned sections in the textbook.

Content Lecture Videos

Material that would usually be covered in live lectures will instead be covered in 2-3 short Content Lecture videos, posted at the beginning of each week. These will typically be between 10 and 20 minutes long. You are responsible for all material that is covered in these Content Lectures, including points that are not covered in the textbook.

Live Class Sessions / Practice Exercises

On most Tuesdays during the term, part of the class will be spent working collaboratively on exercises that apply the concepts covered in readings and lectures. These exercises will not be graded, but they are intended to prepare you for problems on upcoming assignments, and participating in this portion of the class will potentially contribute towards your engagement grade.

Assignments

There will be four assignments due over the course of the term. These assignments will be based on the textbook and class lectures, but will require you to analyze novel historical data. They are intended to test your comprehension of material we have covered, as well as your ability to extend concepts beyond the lectures and reading.

Assignments will be due Thursdays at 11:30 p.m, and must be submitted electronically as **PDF** documents via onQ. All assignments will be posted to onQ at least two weeks before they are due. Submissions in any other format (hardcopy, submitted by email, uploaded in another file format, etc.) will not be accepted. You may handwrite or type submissions, but handwritten submissions must be scanned and uploaded as PDFs. If it is ever the case that I cannot read your handwriting, your answer may be marked incorrect and you will be required to type future assignments.

You are welcome to collaborate on assignments, but your submission must be written up individually, and you must list everyone you worked with on the first page of the assignment.

Research Paper

At the end of the term, you will submit a short research paper (5-10pp) on some issue in historical linguistics. There is a sequence of assignments leading up to this paper (Topic Proposal, Annotated Bibliography, Peer Review). More detailed instructions will be posted on onQ.

Surveys

Each week there will be a short survey posted to onQ (formatted as a “Quiz”). These will not test your understanding of course material, but might ask you what you found clearest/least clear from the week’s lectures, what questions you have, or to provide an example of some phenomenon covered this week.

These will usually be evaluated for completion only, though if you regularly give extremely minimal responses this may be factored into your final “Surveys and Engagement” grade.

Engagement

“Engagement” refers to your interaction with me and with other students in the course. Conscious engagement with each other is particularly valuable in a remote semester, when we won’t have the chance to interact in person with one another.

Engagement includes any (or all) of: coming to my office hours, participating in the onQ Discussion Board (or other chat platform, if it exists), working on the weekly exercises (in class or on your own time), asking questions or contributing to small groups in live Zoom class sessions, or other activities that you feel qualify.

At the beginning of the semester, we will work collaboratively as a class to determine the grading criteria for the “Surveys and Engagement” portion of your grade—what level and type of engagement is needed for an A, a B, a C, etc. Then at the end of the semester you’ll submit a short description of how you’ve engaged with me and with other students during the term, and what grade you assign yourself.

~*Policies*~

Late Policy

All course work must be submitted on the due dates listed in the Course Calendar; in general, I do not accept late work. Please do speak to me if you feel you need an extension on a specific assignment, however, for whatever reason.

If you know in advance that you need to make arrangements to submit an assignment at an alternate time due to, you must contact me in advance and confirm arrangements at *least* 24 hours before the original due date. In cases of unforeseeable emergencies (admittance to a hospital or other serious medical emergency, death in the family, etc.) I ask you contact me as soon as you can easily do so, and to submit a request for Academic Consideration; for students in Arts & Science this can be done through the online portal:

<https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/undergrad-students/academic-consideration-for-students>

Email

The use of your official Queen's University email is required for all correspondence in this course. For all emails relating to this course, please "LING 350" in the subject line, and include your full name in the body of the message.

Contacting the instructor

The best way to get in touch with me is by email. I try to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week. I am not usually accessible by email over the weekend, so if you send an email on Friday, do not expect a response until Monday. You are welcome to drop in with questions during office hours (listed above), or to make appointments for other times during the week (arranged by email). I am often in my office at times other than my office hours, and you are welcome to stop by; if I'm not able to talk then, I'll be happy to make an appointment for another time.

What to call me

Most instructors at Queen's go either by their first, or by the titles *Professor* or *Dr.* followed by their last name. In LING 350, I am happy to be addressed in either way, either as "Bronwyn", or as "Professor Bjorkman" / "Dr. Bjorkman".

Recording Policy

All class meetings will be recorded and made available afterwards. If for some reason you wish to make your own recording of class meetings, please contact me before doing so. Under no circumstances should recordings of lectures be posted online or otherwise shared with anyone not registered in the class.

Academic Accommodations

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. The Senate Policy for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities was approved at Senate in November 2016 (see <https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/student-policy-index/>). If you are a student with a disability and think you may need academic accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the QSAS website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/>

Whether or not you are registered with QSAS, I would like to remind you that the resources of the Queen's Learning Commons and Student Wellness Services are available to all students. Please let me know if I can help you connect with any services on campus.

I also encourage all students to approach me at any point in the term to discuss circumstances that may affect your participation in the course. These might be personal, related to physical or mental health, or arising from issues in your family. The sooner I know about these, the earlier we can discuss what adjustments to the class might be possible in a particular situation.

Related to this: many students experience food or housing insecurity at some point during their studies. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect performance in this course, is urged to contact me or Student Wellness Services for support. Links to this and other resources at Queen's and in Kingston will be posted to onQ.

Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances

Queen's University is committed to providing academic consideration to students experiencing extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control and are interfering with their ability to complete academic requirements related to a course for a short period of time, not to exceed three months. Students receiving academic consideration must meet all essential requirements of a course. The Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances was approved at Senate in April, 2017 (see <https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/student-policy-index>).

Each Faculty has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances. Arts and Science undergraduate students can find the Faculty of Arts and Science protocol and the portal where a re-quest can be submitted at: <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/accommodations>. Students in other Faculties and Schools who are enrolled in this course should refer to the protocol for their home Faculty.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities: <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senateandtrustees/principlespriorities.html>).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1: <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/2011-2012-calendar/academic-regulations/regulation-1>), on the Arts and Science website (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/academic-integrity>), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

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