



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY
Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

LING 227
Rap Linguistics
Winter 2022
Class time: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM
January: <https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/97088852169> (passcode in D2L)
February – April: ES 162

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Darin Flynn

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 12:30 – 1:30 PM or by appointment
(January: Zoom info in D2L; February – April: Office CHC 116)

E-MAIL: dflynn@ucalgary.ca (I will respond to e-mails within 48 hrs during weekdays)

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 403-220-6110 (February – April: Office CHC 116)

DESCRIPTION

"The leading music genre known as rap is dominated by language. This course explores how this creatively flourishing art-form relates to language science. An examination of the manipulation of sounds, words, grammar, and meaning in rap, and what it reveals about language in the mind and in society." (Calendar)

OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to identify frequent forms of rhythm (e.g., amphibrachic) and rhyme (e.g., "open o" assonance); salient features of nonstandard grammar (e.g., copula absence), lexicon (e.g., *n!gga*), and pronunciation (e.g., *pin-pen* merger); core meaning phenomena — literal (e.g., antonymy) and figurative (e.g., metaphor); rhetorical devices (e.g., epistrophe); and psycholinguistic mechanisms (e.g., priming). Students should also be able to discuss how such linguistic features and mechanisms may contribute to the popularity of emcees and their songs.

OUTCOMES

A broad understanding of how language works contributes to an appreciation of rap music, and vice versa. For instance, studying how words vary in pronunciation and prominence helps to understand how emcees create distinct "flows," and studying the latter helps to understand how language works. Similarly, examining how emcees manipulate sounds and meanings in their wordplay and storytelling can improve appreciation and understanding of how language is constituted and "done."

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

n/a

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

- *Book of Rhymes: The Poetics of Hip Hop*, by Adam Bradley (Basic Books, 2017)
 - \$22-ish at UofC Bookstore (cheaper/used 2009 version ok, but not ideal)



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

COURSE NOTES

- January:
 - All lectures will be synchronous and conducted by Zoom: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM
 - There will be some group work in Zoom's breakout rooms; your interactions with other students must be patient and respectful.
 - Attendance is not required but strongly recommended — the exercises practiced in class will help you succeed on assignments and exams. If you must miss a class, please watch the recording in D2L as soon as possible, to keep up with the course.
 - Because we will be recording classes (to be uploaded in D2L after each class), please keep your microphone muted unless you have a question, in which case please use the icon to put up your hand and/or unmute yourself, or else send a message in the chat.
 - Technology requirements:
 - A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates
 - A current and updated web browser
 - Webcam/Camera (built-in or external)
 - Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone
 - Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled
 - Stable internet connection

- February – April:
 - All lectures will be held in-person TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM in ES 162
 - Engagement in D2L is also essential in this course.
 - Your interactions with other students in class and in D2L must be patient and respectful.

- There is a term break (no classes) February 20–26.
- The last day of classes is Tuesday, April 12 (incl. review for final exam)
- Homework will be assessed in D2L (in Discussions and Assessments Dropbox). Requests for an extension in advance of the deadline will be considered and if approved, will incur no penalties. Late submissions without advance notice will incur a 10% deduction per day late.
- If you are ill or cannot complete a course requirement due to a personal emergency during the scheduled time, please let me know as soon as possible.
- **CONTENT WARNING:** There is strong language and content in rap music and therefore in this course. Students are free to be offended, but any student who cannot manage this intrinsic aspect of the course is encouraged to drop the course early, to make way for students on the waiting list.
- **ATTENDANCE:** There is no textbook in rap linguistics per se. So the real work of correlating rap and linguistics will take place in class (and in homework). Lectures notes will be available in roamresearch.com at class time and may be revised between lectures, based on class discussions. However, lecture notes will be in point form only and may omit certain details and examples presented in class. Moreover, there will be in-class practice exercises. Students should therefore make every effort to attend classes on time to avoid missing material and practice that might be crucial to homework and exams.

ASSESSMENT

- Homework:
 - 20 examples x 1%: 20%

Each student is expected to share — on twenty occasions — a striking example



Faculty of Arts

School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

from a rap song of something discussed in class. The topic to submit an example will be posted on D2L shortly after each lecture. Submit your example ideally before the next class (or within five days) in a new thread under the topic in the student examples forum under Discussions. A few examples from students will be presented at the beginning of the following lecture as recap.

- 2 assignments x 15% (Feb. 11, Mar. 25): 30%

There will be two exercise assignments given out as part of this course, worth 15% each. You will be given at least ten days to complete each assignment. These assignments will be described in detail when they are handed out.

- Exams:
 - Midterm (in class Mar. 1): 20%
 - Final (Apr. 19-29): 30%

There will be both a midterm worth 20% and a final exam worth 30%. The final exam is cumulative, but it will focus on topics and material covered in the second half of the class. Make-up exams will not be given except in the case of dire medical emergencies. The midterm exam will take place during class time on Tuesday, Mar. 1. The registrar-scheduled final exam will take place during April 19-29 (inclusive). A review will be held in-class during the last lecture on April 12.

GRADING SCALE

Course grades will be assigned on a distribution that is NOT more restrictive than the one below:

A+ 97-100%	B+ 84-88%	C+ 69-73%	D+ 54-58%
A 93-96%	B 79-83%	C 64-68%	D 50-53%
A- 89-92%	B- 74-78%	C- 59-63%	F 0-49%

- As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades.
- To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A, but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Criteria for Letter Grades

- A+ grade: Exceptional Performance. An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.
- A, A- range: Excellent Performance. Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.
- B range: Good Performance. Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.
- C range: Satisfactory Performance. Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All



Faculty of Arts

School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

- D range: Marginally meets standards. Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.
- F grade: Course standards not met. Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

Academic misconduct

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit: <https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>, and <https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>.)

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca

Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Links to information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.