# Linguistics 613: Phonological Theory                    Fall 2008

## SYLLABUS

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|---|---|
| **Time** | T H 1-4 |
| **Place** | SS 821 |
| **Web** | https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/webapps/login/ |

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| **Professor** | Suzanne Curtin |

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| **Office** | SS 842 |
| **Phone** | 403-220-73927 |
| **Office hours** | To be announced |
| **Email** | scurtin@ucalgary.ca |

## Presumed background

The course is open to graduate students in linguistics. I assume that you are familiar with:
- distinctive features
- feature geometry
- natural classes
- phonemes
- allophones
- alternations
- underlying representations
- rules
- rule ordering

## Description

This is the first of two courses in the graduate phonology sequence (613, 713). This semester we will survey phonological theory from SPE[1] through OT[2], focusing on types of phonological rules and their interaction, phonological opacity, the cycle, and metrical stress theory. The relationship between rules and constraints will be discussed throughout the course, with OT introduced at the end.

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[1] Chomsky, Noam and Morris Halle (1968). *The Sound Pattern of English*. New York: Harper & Row.

[2] Prince, Alan and Paul Smolensky (1993 [2002]). *Optimality Theory: Constraint interaction in generative grammar*. Technical Report CU-CS-696-93, Department of Computer Science, University of Colorado at Boulder, and Technical Report TR-2, Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. [ROA 537-0802]

**Course goals**

The graduate phonology course sequence is intended to provide you with the background necessary for (i) understanding and evaluating current and past literature in phonology, and (ii) carrying out your own research in phonology.

| **Requirements:** | **% of grade** |
|---|---|
| • Readings with study questions | 20% |
| • Participation in class discussion (note that this implies attendance) | 10% |
| • Homework assignments | 70% |

Readings

- Articles: available to be photocopied in the main office.
  A short set of study questions (to occasionally turn in) will accompany most readings. This is to keep everyone up to date, lead to better class discussions, and will help you focus on the key points of each reading.

**Homework assignments**

Each assignment will give you a set of data and require you to state the generalizations present in the data set and provide a detailed analysis, written up in prose form. Assignments will be handed out a week before they're due, and will be due in class.

**Collaboration**

Please collaborate on readings and assignments, but write up your assignments separately. Meeting with your classmates regularly to discuss course material is strongly recommended. I recommend that you set up one evening a week to meet somewhere to work on the readings and homework assignments.

**Course outline** (subject to adjustment)

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment due |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sept 9 | Course overview<br>Rules and extrinsic ordering | K&K Ch. 3 (30 pp.) | |
| 2 | Sept 16 | Phonological opacity I & II | K&K Ch. 4 (60 pp.) | 1. Malagasy |
| 3 | Sept 23 | Principles of rule application | K&K Ch. 8, 9 (96 pp.)<br>Anderson 1984, ch. 9 (10 pp.) | |
| 4 | Sept 30 | Principles of rule ordering | Anderson 1984, ch. 10 (29 pp.)<br>Kiparsky 1973 (18 pp.) | 2. Sudanese Arabic |
| | | The duplication and conspiracy problems | K&K Ch. 10 (424-436) (13 pp.)<br>Kisseberth 1970 (16 pp.) | |
| 5 | Oct 7 | The cycle I | Kiparsky 1982 (45 pp.) | 3. Kalinga I |
| 6 | Oct 14 | The cycle II | Kiparksy 1993 (37 pp.) | 4. Chamorro |
| | | Surface constraints in phonology | Haiman 1972 (12 pp.)<br>Sommerstein 1974 (24 pp.) | |
| 7 | Oct 21 | Rules and constraints: triggering | Myers 1991a (29 pp) | 5. Ponapean |
| | | Direct and indirect licensing | | |
| 8 | Oct 28 | Rules and constraints: blocking | McCarthy 1986 (57 pp.)<br>Myers 1991b (7 pp.) | 6. Metaphony |
| | | The too-many-solutions problem | | |
| 9 | Nov 4 | Metrical stress theory: the grid and feet | Kager 1996 (36 pp.) | |
| 10 | Nov 11 | No class | | |
| 11 | Nov 18 | Metrical stress theory: weight effects | Hayes 1985, ch. 7 (37 pp.) | 7. Axininca |
| 12 | Nov 25 | Intro to OT 1 | Prince & Smolensky 1993, 2002 excerpt (71 pp.) | |
| 13 | Dec 2 | Intro to OT 2 | | 8. Kalinga II |
| | | OT and syllables | | |

**Explanation of grades**

I will follow a common practice, according to which grades for graduate students mean the following:

A+:  performance exceeds expectations for a graduate student in linguistics
A:    performance meets expectations for a graduate student in linguistics
A-:  performance is slightly below expectations for a graduate student in linguistics
B (+): performance just makes it as far as expectations for a graduate student in linguistics
-- merits a passing grade
B (-): performance is unsatisfactory for a graduate student in linguistics
C: (rarely used) you can imagine what it means


**Workload**
You should expect to spend on average 10 hours a week outside of class on readings and assignments for this course. The reading load varies a lot from week to week, so you may want to read ahead in the slow weeks.


**Personal note**

People are drawn to studying phonology, or linguistics in general, for different reasons. Some researchers are motivated by an interest in big questions of cognition, or big philosophical questions. Some come to linguistics from an interest in particular cultures and their languages. Others are interested for more practical reasons. I was originally drawn to the field mainly because phonological patterns are just…cool (i.e., puzzles are fun, I guess). So in class I still like to take time for appreciation and enjoyment of data. I hope that you will find a similar enjoyment in the class.