

SPNS491: ST: EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH (Fall 2017)

Classroom: Language Research Lab (LA331)
Instructor: Dr. Pablo E. Requena
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Office hours: by appointment
(Please e-mail me to schedule appointment)



Course Description

This course will teach you about language research in linguistics by allowing you to take part in a language research project. For students who develop a true interest in research, this course could be the stepping stone to more independent research, such as an Independent Study, Honors Thesis, Graduate School, or the like.

Prerequisites

Any UM student interested in language(s) can take this class. This include whether they are interested in knowledge more about how languages are used (corpus studies and big data studies), how it is that languages are learned (e.g. statistical learning) or processed in the mind (psycholinguistics). However, interested students will undergo a selection process before they can register. Instructor approval is required to register and the first semester in the lab students will work in a project assigned to them. For projects about particular languages (e.g. Spanish, Russian, etc.) declared language majors and minors are preferred.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENT TO BE FULFILLED THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS:
You won't be able to manipulate non-public language data until you pass the CITI training and you're successfully added to the project by the UM office of research protections (I take care of adding students to the project).

Course Objectives

After this course, you can expect to have:

- 1) Become familiar with research questions in language research.
- 2) Work under the supervision of Prof. Requena on projects that require the manipulation of language data.
- 3) Gained experience either designing experiments, collecting data or transcribing and/or coding for language data.
- 4) Gained insight into whether you would like to pursue independent research. A student who has been in the Lab for at least one semester may request to discuss an independent research project idea.

Materials and other requirements

1. Frequent access to UM email.
2. Access to a computer with internet access (there is one computer in the Lab, but students can also work on their personal computers on in a UM computer lab).
3. Openness to learn to use Dropbox and WhatsApp for Lab work and communications.
4. Access to Word, Excel, and software for reproducing audio (e.g. Windows media, iTunes).
Experience using this software is desired but training will be offered for students who need it.
5. Headphones (could be necessary for some projects).

Course Requirements and Grading

In this class we will be using a point system. This means that for each assignment you will receive points. You can easily predict the performance on the course as the semester unfolds by adding up the points you have so far and compare that to the table below:

1. Research and work ethics (10 points)

To the best of your ability, you will need to demonstrate that you abide to the highest standards of work ethics and research conduct. This includes not manipulating or fabricating data or completing assignments in a careless manner, for example. The CITI training which you will take the first week of class (**and which you must pass**) will teach you more about expectations for research ethics (such as treating non-public data responsibly, following guidelines of human participant protections, among other things). Violations of the research ethics code will not only result in lower grade in this class, but will also be reported to the office of research protections.

2. Responsibility in completion of assignments (60 points)

You are required to show very high responsibility in your work and completion of assignments. The grade for this section carries the most weight given that it implies you are completing the work on time and following the instructions.

3. Attendance (10 points)

You are required to attend a weekly lab meeting. You can only miss two lab meetings (personal emergency, school activity, trip, etc.). After missing two meetings, students will see their attendance grade decrease significantly.

4. Collegiality (10 points)

You are expected to contribute to an environment where we learn from research that others have made as well as from our mistakes. Every person at the LRL must behave in a way that shows professional collegiality and respect. Collegiality will be evaluated by your interaction with others in the lab, even to prospective members of the lab who may visit us. Collegiality will also be assessed in how you work with other lab members on a common project. Additionally, you should display collegiality in your interactions with the lab director.

5. Engagement and participation (10 points)

You are expected to be engaged in the work we do at the lab and show this by not only attending lab meetings and doing the minimum work required, but also by participating actively and engaging in discussions. There are many signs that show that a student is engaged. For example, an engaged student will do the readings that may be assigned, attend lab meetings, engage in discussions and ask relevant questions, come up with possible answers to questions, or even decide to apply for a scholarship to do research in the future, etc.

Grading scale

Letter grade	Points	Letter grade	Points
A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

Other Policies and Information

E-mail/Companion site/Moodle: All students must frequently access their email (or check What'sApp on their phone, if we use that for quick communication).

Extra credit: There will be no extra credit assignments in this class.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. See: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Special Considerations and/or Disabilities: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Office hours: One of the best ways to take full advantage of learning in this course is by coming to my office hours. I am anxious to guide you in your academic pursuits. Take advantage of the hours listed above or email me for an appointment if those times do not work for you. If you come for help with the course materials, please bring your notes and prepare your questions in advance.

Computer Use: In the work we do at the lab we usually use technology. However, we use it to work. This means that students should make sure that they are not easily distracted while working on their computers in a way that would affect their performance.

Important Deadlines (Voluntary for students who want to continue at the Lab)

Last Friday in October:

Deadline for spring-semester scholarships for UM **Undergraduate Student/Faculty Research Award** (<http://www.umt.edu/ugresearch/research-scholarships/um-scholarships.php>). If a student is interested in applying, they should start contacting Dr. Requena around in **September**, so as to be able to have time to put the proposal together.