

North American Indigenous Languages and Linguistics

LING 484/584

University of Montana

Autumn 2020

Instructor: Leora Bar-el

SYLLABUS

"The loss of Native American languages is a cultural tragedy of almost unimaginable dimensions, but it also puts at grave risk our ability to ever understand fundamental aspects of how we as humans are organized and function. In a very real sense, we will not be able to understand how English works until we understand how Meskwaki, and Mohawk and Navajo work..."
(Goddard 2004: 8)



The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. We honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

Office hours and contact information

 leora.bar-el@umontana.edu (she/her/hers)

 Weekly online office hours (Mountain Time) - follow Zoom link on Moodle:

- Wednesdays 11am-12pm
- Thursdays 4pm-5pm
- Fridays 2pm-3pm
- and by appointment (see below)

 For other meeting times, use my online scheduler (follow link on Moodle). Available meeting times will be updated weekly. You are welcome to sign-up for a meeting slot up to 24hrs before a selected time.

Course meeting times and modality

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30pm-1:50pm

Social Science 258 & Zoom (hyflex)

Note: the modality of our course may change. More information will be available.

Course description

This course is an overview of the languages of Native North America from a linguistic perspective. It has been suggested that "[n]early 300 distinct mutually unintelligible languages are known to have been spoken north of the Rio Grande" (Mithun 1999: 1). These languages constitute more than 50 language families and exhibit features that are different from more well-known languages of the world, and show variation among themselves. In this course we will look at a variety of grammatical features of Indigenous languages of North America and the ways in which some of them are described and analyzed by linguists.

Prerequisites and Co-convening

LING 470 is a prerequisite for this course. LING 584 co-convenes with LING 484 (see further information below on graduate student requirements).

General Education Advanced Writing designation

This course satisfies the [General Education](#) Advanced Writing requirement.

Moodle

This course has an [online supplement Moodle site](#) (click on Moodle NetID Login).

Technical Support

UMOnline: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [email](#); [website](#)

IT Central: 406-243-4357; [e-mail](#); [website](#)

Course Structure

Class meetings will include discussions based on readings, data sets, and other activities that explore the weekly topics, as well as student research and presentations, etc. Throughout the course we will be **reading** and **discussing** chapters and articles that explore linguistic properties of Indigenous languages of North America. The readings will be available from our course Moodle site (see below for our reading schedule). You are required to submit **four article summaries** over the course of the semester. Throughout the course you will complete several **short assignments** primarily based on the readings, which may include preparing discussion questions, answering questions, drafting research questions, compiling data, etc. Some of these short assignments may relate to your research project. This semester we participate in a mini **Wikipedia editathon** in which we draft edits of Wikipedia “stubs” or “starts” relating to Indigenous languages of North America. Finally, over the course of the semester you will develop and write a **research paper**. You will (i) submit a first draft of your **proposal**, (ii) revise and submit a **revised second draft** of your proposal, (iii) give an in-class **presentation** of your research, and (iv) **submit** your final research paper (see further information and due dates below).

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

- Be familiar with some classifications and orthographic representations of Indigenous languages of North America
- Be able to identify and analyze a variety of linguistic properties of Indigenous languages of North America
- Understand the endangerment status of Indigenous languages of North America and some of the ways in which communities are working to document and revitalize these languages.
- Be able to critically read, summarize and discuss claims and arguments from primarily linguistic literature
- Be able to give a presentation of your own linguistic research
- Be able to develop and write a linguistic research paper

Learning Outcomes: Writing

This course is an Advanced Writing course for the Anthropology and Linguistics Majors. The writing activities in this course are designed to help you be able to develop the following skills:

- Identify and pursue sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
 - Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
 - Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
 - Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
 - Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
 - Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation that are appropriate to the discipline
 - Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy
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Assessment (undergraduate)

Participation	10%
Short assignments	20%
Article summaries (4 x 5% each)	20%
Wikipedia editathon	10%
Research paper proposal (1 st draft)	5%
Research paper proposal (2 nd draft)	5%
Research paper presentation	10%
Research paper	20%

- **PARTICIPATION:** You are required to attend every class, come to class prepared, having completed the assigned readings, assignments, etc., and actively participate in class discussions and activities on a regular basis. Unexcused absence or lateness will result in deductions to your participation grade.
- **SHORT ASSIGNMENTS:** Throughout the semester, you will complete a variety of short assignments based primarily on our readings, which may include preparing discussion questions, answering questions based on readings, drafting research questions, compiling data, etc. Some of these short assignments may also relate to your research project. Some assignments will be completed/due in class and others will be uploaded to Moodle. Short assignments will be announced in class and posted on Moodle throughout the semester.

- **ARTICLE SUMMARIES:** You will submit summaries of four of our readings over the course (see schedule for the designated articles). Summaries must be uploaded to Moodle before class on the day that the reading is scheduled to be discussed in class. We will have an in-class workshop on writing summaries for which you will submit a draft summary.
- **WIKIPEDIA EDITATHON:** We will edit Wikipedia “stubs” or “starts” relating to Indigenous languages of North America.
- **RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** Your proposal is in three phases – you will bring three possible research topics to class for our discussion of research proposals. You will submit a first draft of your research proposal to Moodle. You will revise and expand your proposal and upload a second revised draft of your proposal to Moodle. Further information about developing a research proposal will be available.
- **RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS:** Presentations of your research take place in Week 13. Further information about presenting your research, as well as a presentation schedule, will be available.
- **RESEARCH PAPERS:** The final version of your research paper is due **by 9am November 25** (during Finals Week). Further information on writing research papers will be available later in our course.

Assessment (graduate)

Participation	15%
Short assignments	15%
Article summaries (4 x 5% each)	20%
Wikipedia editathon	10%
Research paper proposal (1 st draft)	5%
Research paper proposal (2 nd draft)	5%
Research paper presentation	10%
Research paper and abstract	20%

In addition to undergraduate requirements, graduate students will be required to (i) take the lead on in-class discussion of 1-2 of the assigned readings, and (ii) write a conference-style abstract of your research paper. Graduate student work is also expected to be of a more advanced nature. Further information will be made available to graduate students.

Grading criteria

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

Required readings

- Throughout the course we will be reading book chapters and articles on a number of topics. Required readings will be posted in the weekly sections of our course Moodle site. See below for the list of proposed readings and schedule.
- Several readings are from the following book:
 - Mithun, Marianne. 1999. *The Languages of Native North America*. Cambridge University Press.
 You are not required to purchase the book, though you may find it a useful resource and might want your own copy.
- Additional readings may be assigned over the course the semester. They will be available on Moodle.

Mansfield Library

- As a result of restrictions on course reserves at the [Mansfield Library](#) due to COVID-19, I have not set up course reserves this semester. If the class feels that a course reserves would be beneficial, we can discuss that as a group.
- The library has a number of relevant books in its collection, including reference grammars of Indigenous languages, as well as, but not limited to, other volumes focused on Indigenous languages of North America, such as:
 - Goddard, Ives (ed.). 1996. *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 17: Languages*. William C. Sturtevant (series editor). Washington: Smithsonian Institution.
 - Campbell, Lyle. 1997. *American Indian Languages: the historical linguistics of Native America*. New York: Oxford University Press. [available as an ebook at Mansfield Library; requires Ebook Central login]
 - Mithun, Marianne. 1999. *The Languages of Native North America*. Cambridge University Press.

Other resources

- There are numerous other sources cited in the volumes above. There are also several online resources that focus on Indigenous languages of North America, such as:
 - [International Journal of American Linguistics](#) [online subscription available through Mansfield Library; permalink; may require NetID login].
 - [University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics](#) (UBCWPL & UBCOPL).
 - Proceedings of conferences focused on Indigenous language families, such as the *Papers of the Algonquian conference* ([papers since 2007](#); [papers prior to 2007](#)), or the [Papers from the International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages](#) (published by UBCWPL – see above).
- Note that linguistic research on Indigenous languages of North America is not restricted to journals or books focused on languages of this part of the world, so avoid limiting your searches.
- Occasionally I will point you to further readings on the topics we discuss. You are welcome to speak to me about advice on additional materials to consult. If you find articles, links or other material that you think the class would benefit from, send them to me and I will post them on Moodle as appropriate.
- If the library does not own a resource that you are looking for, you can request it through [Interlibrary Loan](#) (ILL). See also the Library's [Research and Find Materials](#) page for additional information.
- Looking for more help at the library? Explore the resources on the [Mansfield Library website](#), use their chat or e-mail feature, or visit the Reference Desk in person.

UM Writing and Public Speaking Center

[The University of Montana Writing and Public Speaking Center](#) provides one-on-one tutoring to students from any discipline, and at any level, as they write or prepare presentations for any course. Welcoming all students, the center provides a learning environment where students can engage in supportive conversations about their work and receive feedback at any point during their process. To make an appointment and learn more about the center, visit [their website](#).

Course Policies and Procedures

- **ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to attend every class and be an active participant. Unexcused lateness or absences will result in deductions to your grade. You are responsible for any missed material.
- **RESPECT YOUR CLASSMATES:** Arrive to class on time. You are responsible for all material covered, including announcements, questions/answers, etc., that may occur at the beginning of class. If you are late, be courteous and avoid being disruptive. If you anticipate being late to class regularly (e.g., due to a work schedule, a class on the other side of campus, etc.), inform me as soon as possible.
- **STUDENT CONDUCT CODE:** You are expected to be familiar with the *University of Montana Student Conduct Code*, which is downloadable from the [Community Standards webpage](#). You are also expected to be familiar with the University of Montana Academic Policies and Procedures, which can be found on the [Academic Policies and Procedures webpage](#).
- **E-MAIL:** Course information will be circulated by e-mail to your UM e-mail address (usually via Moodle, but in some cases, directly to your individual e-mail address). Check your UM e-mail account often. **You are responsible for ensuring that you are able to receive any course information circulated by e-mail.**
- **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:** Using the Moodle learning environment requires your computer to be set up to view and download documents (.pptx, .ppsx, .docx, .pdf), webpages, etc. More information can be found on the [UMOnline student support website](#). Contact UMOline for assistance: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [UMOnline technical support e-mail address](#). If you are new to the Moodle Learning Environment, please visit [UMOnline](#), follow the **Moodle NedID Login** link, and once you have logged in, click on the **Moodle 101 for Students** (under Useful Links). Note that UM students get access to a free license of [Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus](#).
- **SUBMITTING WORK:** Unless otherwise indicated, completed work must be typed and uploaded to Moodle as .pdf or .docx files.
- **COURSE ACCOMMODATION:** The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#) (DSS). If you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, and you have not yet registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406-243-2243. If you are already working with Disability Services your responsibilities are to contact me as soon as possible. I will work with you and Disability Services to

discuss reasonable and appropriate accommodations. For more information, visit the [Disability Services for Students](#) website.

- CULTURAL AND CEREMONIAL LEAVE (see [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)) "Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor."
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Fonts

- North American Indigenous Languages use several different orthographies and there are also a variety of transcription conventions used in the field, thus special fonts may be needed to create and view some documents in this course.
 - Whenever possible, I use **Doulos SIL** in this course, a free font available for both Mac and PC operating systems. You may want to use this font in your own work. The font can be downloaded from the [Doulos SIL Download webpage](#). Instructions on how to download and install the fonts will vary depending on your computer and operating system. Some advice and links are available from the [Doulos SIL Installing and Using Fonts webpage](#).
 - You may find websites such as the [IPA Chart Unicode Keyboard webpage](#) useful – this site allows you to copy and paste/insert symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) into your documents. There are similar sites as well as other websites that provide further information about phonetic fonts.
 - [Languagegeek](#) is a website providing free tools such as fonts, keyboards, etc. for Indigenous languages of North America.
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Academic honesty

- All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students must be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).
 - You are welcome (and encouraged!) to work together with classmates, but you must write up your submitted work on your own.
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Basic Needs

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campus resources:

- The [UM Food Pantry](#) is located in UC 119. Emergency food for students can be accessed from there and from satellite food cupboards across campus.
 - The [ASUM Renter Center](#) offers information, support and referrals for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity.
 - [TRIO Student Support Services](#) serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students, or have documented disabilities. Services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring. Students can check their [eligibility online](#).
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Coronavirus

This Autumn 2020 semester, we find ourselves in the midst of a pandemic. Although the modality of our course may change, it is important to be aware of the **expectations** on the UM campus this semester, as well as the **resources** available to help navigate Autumn 2020. If you have questions, please ask.

- Mask use is required in the classroom. Be sure your mask is worn correctly for the entire duration of class. Familiarize yourself with the [UM Mask Policy](#).

- Pick up your [Healthy Griz Kit](#). The expectation is that you will clean your personal work space when you arrive for class and before you leave the classroom. Become familiar with the locations of hand sanitizer and disinfectant “refill” stations.
- Classrooms may have one-way entrances/exits to minimize crowding. Please watch for signage.
- Avoid congregating outside the classroom before and after class.
- Our classroom seating has been arranged to ensure social distancing and support contact tracing efforts. Please do not move the desks/chairs.
- Class attendance will be recorded to support contact tracing efforts.
- Avoid drinking liquids and eating food within the classroom as it requires mask removal. If you need to drink some water, please be sure that you replace your mask properly afterwards.
- Self-assess your health regularly. Stay home if you feel sick and/or if you develop COVID-19 symptoms. Contact [Curry Health Center](#) (406) 243-4330 if you develop symptoms.
- Remain vigilant outside the classroom to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- Stay informed and up-to-date:
 - [UM Coronavirus Updates](#)
 - [UM Healthy Fall 2020 Plan](#)
 - [UM Keep on Learning](#)
 - [Curry Health Center](#)

Protect yourselves and each other. We are all in this together.

Proposed Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Readings*	Deadlines**
Part I: overview, classification, representation					
1	Thurs	Aug. 20	Course overview		
2	Tues	Aug. 25	Why study North American Indigenous languages? Language endangerment in North America	Goddard 2004	
	Thurs	Aug. 27	Language classification and contact	Campbell 2013, Ch.6 [§6.1-6.3; p.159-173]; Campbell 1997, Ch.9 [p.330-331; also select one North American linguistic area on p.331-344 to read]	
3	Tues	Sept. 1	Orthographies & transcription conventions	Ch.1 [§1.2, 1.7; p.20-22, 34-36] Hinton 2001 Trueman et al 2018	
Part II: Aspects of grammar					
	Thurs	Sept. 3	Phonetics & phonology	Ch.1 [§1.1, 1.3-1.5; p.15-20, 22-30]	
4	Tues	Sept. 8	Phonetics & phonology (cont'd) <i>Writing article summaries</i>	Bird 2016	Draft Bird summary
	Thurs	Sept. 10	Polysynthesis Interlinearization	Ch.2 [intro and §2.1; p.37-39]	

* Some readings may be removed from our list, additional readings may be assigned, and readings/topics may be rescheduled. Updates will be announced in class and on Moodle. “Ch.” refers to sections from *The Languages of Native North America* (Mithun 1999). Readings will be available from our course Moodle site.

** Unless otherwise noted, work must be uploaded to Moodle by 12:30pm Mountain Time (before class) on the day it is due. Short assignments are not listed in this schedule but will be announced in class and posted on Moodle.

5	Tues	Sept. 15	Incorporation & lexical suffixes	Ch.2 [§2.2; p.39-56]	
	Thurs	Sept. 17	Incorporation in Inuktitut	Sherkina-Lieber & Murasugi 2015	Sherkina-Lieber & Murasugi summary
6	Tues	Sept. 22	<i>Developing a research proposal</i> Lexical categories	Ch.2 [§2.3; p.56-67]	Three potential research topics
	Thurs	Sept. 24	Person, number, gender	Ch.3 [§3.1-3.3; p.68-103]	
7	Tues	Sept. 29	Gender in Tunica Verbal number in Skwxwú7mesh	Heaton & Anderson 2017 Bar-el 2008	Heaton & Anderson OR Bar-el 2008 summary
	Thurs	Oct. 1	Control	Ch.3 [§3.6; p.127-131]	Research proposal draft 1
8	Tues	Oct. 6	Tense, aspect, mood	Ch.3 [§3.8- 3.9; p.152-186]	
	Thurs	Oct. 8	Tense/Mood in Ktunaxa Tense/Aspect in Cree	Laternus 2011 Wolvengrey 2006	Laternus AND Wolvengrey summary
9	Tues	Oct. 13	Spatial relations	Ch.3 [§3.7.1; p.132-136]	
	Thurs	Oct. 15	Determiners & evidentiality in ʔayʔajuθəm	Huijsmans et. al 2020	Huijsmans et. al summary
10	Tues	Oct. 20	Predicates & arguments	Ch.4 [§4.1; p.187-193]	Research proposal draft 2
	Thurs	Oct. 22	Grammatical relations & case	Ch.4 [§4.3; p.204-229]	
11	Tues	Oct. 27	<i>Writing research papers</i> Obviation & direction marking in Kutenai	Appelbaum 2019	
	Thurs	Oct. 29	<i>Presenting research</i> Discourse in Blackfoot	Bliss 2012	
Part III: Further issues, remaining questions					
12	Tues	Nov. 3	Election Day – No Classes		
	Thurs	Nov. 5	The role of linguists/linguistics in language revitalization Resources for/about Indigenous languages	Gerds 2017 Bar-el et al. to appear	
13	Tues	Nov. 10	Student presentations		Schedule TBA
	Thurs	Nov. 12	Student presentations		Schedule TBA
14	Tues	Nov. 17	Course wrap-up		Research papers due by 9am Nov. 25

Readings

- Appelbaum, Irene. 2019. Double-Obviatives and Direction-Marking in Kutenai. [Proceedings of the 30th Western Conference on Linguistics. Volume 24, WECOL 2018](#). Trevor Driscoll (ed.). 18-24.
- Bar-el, Leora. 2008. [Verbal number and aspect in Skwxwú7mesh](#). *Recherches linguistiques de Vincennes* 37:31-54.
- Bar-el, Leora, Megan Stark, and Samantha Prins. To appear. Resources for and about Indigenous Languages: Examining Online Collections. *KANNAITSITAPI MATAKOKSOKSISSTSI'TSI'POWA OOTSI'TSI'POHSOWA. Bringing together our community, our teachers and our scholars*. Selected papers of the 25th Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium. Lisa Crowshoe, Inge Genee, Mahaliah Peddle, and Joslin Smith (eds.).

- Bird, Sonya. 2016. A phonetic study of the “K sounds” across generations of SENĆOŦEN speakers. *Papers of the 51st International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages (ICSNL)*, UBCWPL Vol. 42. 19-36.
- Bliss, Heather. 2012. Marking the boundaries: Blackfoot preverbs in narratives and elicitation. *Papers from the Workshop on Structure and Constituency in Languages of the Americas (WSCLA) 17*, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics (UBCWPL) Vol. 36. 1-14.
- Campbell, Lyle. 2013. Linguistic Classification (Chapter 6). In *Historical linguistics: an Introduction (3rd edition)*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. 159-186.
- Campbell, Lyle. 1997. *American Indian Languages: the historical linguistics of Native America*. New York: Oxford University Press. [available as an ebook at Mansfield Library; requires Ebook Central login]
- Gerds, Donna B. 2017. Indigenous Linguists: Bringing Research Into Language Revitalization. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 83(4): 607-17.
- Goddard, Ives. 2004. Endangered Knowledge: What we can learn from Native American Languages. *AnthroNotes* 25(2): 1-8.
- Heaton, Raina, and Patricia Anderson. 2017. When animals become human: grammatical gender in Tunica. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 83(2):341-63.
- Hinton, Leanne. 2001. New Writing Systems. In Leanne Hinton and Kenneth Hale (eds.), *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* Chapter 19. San Diego: Academic Press. 239-250.
- Huijsmans, Marianne, D. K. E. Reisinger, and Lisa Matthewson. 2020. Evidential Determiners in ʔayʔaʃuθəm. *Papers for the International Conference on Salish and Neighboring Languages 55*, UBCWPL, Reisinger et al. (eds.). 165-182.
- Latunus, Rebecca. 2011. Future Expressions in Ktunaxa. *Papers of the 46th International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages*, *University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics* Volume 30, John Lyon and Joel Dunham (eds.). 157-163.
- Mithun, Marianne. 1999. *The Languages of Native North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [selected chapters/sections listed in the schedule above]
- Sherkina-Lieber, Marina and Kumiko Murasugi. 2015. Noun incorporation and case in heritage Inuktitut. *Proceedings of the 2015 annual conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association*, Santa Vīnerte (ed.). p.1-15.
- Trueman, Alex, Louise St. Amour, and Heidi Harley. 2018. Implementing orthography. *Proceedings of the Workshop on the Structure and Constituency of Languages of the Americas (WSCLA) 21*, UBCWPL 46, Keough et al. (eds.). 254-265.
- Wolventrey, Arok. 2006. Prospective Aspect in the Western Dialects of Cree. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 72(3): 397-407.

This syllabus is subject to change