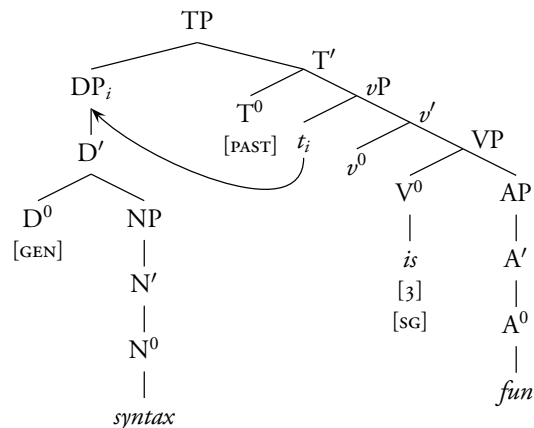Oakland University
College of Arts and Sciences
Fall 2016

LIN(GUISTICS) 304
Introduction to Syntax

1 Basic Course Info

1.1 Instructor Details

Professor:	Matthew (Matt) Tucker
Office:	1018 Human Health Building
Email:	matthewtucker@oakland.edu
Telephone:	(248) 364-8848

Note: I'm unlikely to answer the office phone outside of business hours. The best way to contact me is via Moodle or email, but note that I cannot guarantee a response in less than 24 hours.

1.2 Course Description

Fundamentals of syntactic analysis using data from a variety of languages.

1.3 Prerequisites & Credits

Prerequisites Successful completion of LIN 201 with a grade of 3.0 or higher.

Credits 4 undergraduate credits. A score of 2.0 or higher is required for credits to count toward the linguistics major.

1.4 Course Format

The the course will be composed of biweekly meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students will be expected to complete several in class quizzes, several written problem sets, an in-class midterm examination, and a comprehensive take-home final examination.

1.5 Course Meetings

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00 pm – 2:47 pm, 1031 Human Health Building.

1.6   Office Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm & by appointment. Office hours start 6 September.

1.7   Linguistics Department Contact

The Linguistics Department administrative office assistant is Linda Hubarth and her office is in the Human Health Building, room 1024. She can be reached at (248) 370-2175, but she only works between 8:30–4:30 on business days. Do not expect her to be available outside of this time. She should not be contacted for routine course issues; I should be your first point of contact for this course.

1.8   Textbook

Carnie, Andrew. 2013. *Syntax: A generative introduction*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, **third edition**. ISBN: 978-0-470-65531-3.

This textbook is required for this course and you must get the third edition. Older editions are not very similar to the third, so please do not get the first or second editions. You *do not* need to get the workbook that is advertised with the book.

 The textbook should be available at the Bookstore and Outlet alphabetized under "LIN;" please contact me if that is not the case. If legitimate financial hardship prevents you from purchasing a copy of the third edition, please come speak to me outside of class.

1.9   Moodle/Course Website

There is a Moodle for this course and you should already be registered. Please let me know if that is not the case. **All course content related questions should be posted in the "Course Content Questions" section of Moodle *before* emailing me.** This allows all students to benefit from a single answer from me. I will check Moodle daily and respond to questions on there before anything else. If Moodle is down, you have communications of a private/personal nature, or you are not sure where to submit something, please feel free to email me directly.

 I will be attempting to use Panopto to record part or all of the course lectures. These videos should be viewed as a study aid and not a substitute to attending lectures. While I will make every effort to post the majority of the course content in video form on Moodle, I cannot guarantee that this will work or that this will capture all of the course content.

2   Course Goals

This course is an introduction to generative/formal syntactic theory. At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:
   • articulate the goals and methods of syntactic theory and what kinds of data syntacticians use for constructing theories.
   • understand syntactic categories, constituent structure, phrase structure rules, and syntactic transformations.
   • know where to find primary research articles in linguistics and how to approach reading them.
   • know how to assess syntactic argumentation and construct arguments of one's own.
   • draw syntactic trees and use bracket notation to abbreviate constituent structure.
   • have sufficient knowledge to move on to LIN 404, if desired.

3   Course Requirements

This section outlines the expectations for your participation in this course and any policies specific to these expectations. Please note that **it is your responsibility to ensure that you adhere to these requirements.** I will be happy to discuss with you (in office hours or by appointment) your standing in the course, but it is your responsibility to ensure you understand and meet all requirements.

3.1   Reading & Quizzes

This class will be primarily textbook-based, and as such, the reading is integral to your understanding in this course. **You will not do well in this course without doing the reading.** All readings are to be completed by the date listed in the syllabus.

Unless otherwise specified, the readings are to be from the Carnie textbook, which can be found in the bookstore under "LIN" or in the textbook outlet. Please bring the textbook to class with you for reference. There may be other readings from primary research articles or other books; I will distribute these as needed.

There will be weekly **short reading quizzes** on either Tuesday or Thursday (unannounced) which could cover any reading assignments that have already been due that week (*i.e.*, a quiz on Thursday could cover Tuesday's reading, too; Tuesday quizzes will of course not presuppose you have read ahead to Thursday). Quizzes will be graded 1 (pass) or 0 (fail) and are designed only to ensure that you have done the reading. You will not struggle with the quizzes if you do the reading. For computation of the final grade, the two lowest quiz scores will be dropped.

If you miss a quiz due to a missed class, you can do substitute a 150 word (minimum) summary of the reading to be submitted via email no later than the day after the missed class. If there is an excused absence then more time may be given for the summary, on a case-by-case basis. There are no other exceptions for this policy unless they are arranged in advance of the absence.

3.2   Problem Sets

There will be regular problem sets in this class. It is vitally important that you complete these since, in addition to forming the majority component of your grade, they are crucial to developing an intuitive understanding of syntax. Assignments will be graded on a 20-point scale and are designed to assess consolidation of the course material and proficiency with syntactic analysis. Equal weight will be given to both arriving at the correct answer *and* providing the correct argumentation for that answer.

Problem sets should be written up in prose format, with each major problem given its own section with appropriate prose discussion. Learning to write like a linguist is a key component of this course, and therefore **it is not sufficient to simply turn in a numbered list of the answers to each problem. Assignments thus formatted are subject to a substantial grade penalty.** Please ensure that all syntactic trees are clear and easy to read. Trees which are cramped or illegible will be treated as largely incorrect. If you are unsure of your ability to draw clear trees, please use *phpSyntaxTree*.

Problem sets are due **in person or on Moodle** at the start of class on the day listed in the syllabus/on the deadline date. **Late assignments will not be accepted for any credit. No exceptions will be made to this policy.** If you anticipate being absent or unavailable when the assignment is due, you may submit it to me electronically before it is due in class. If you have no internet access and cannot even e-mail, you should bring a copy to Linda Hubarth while she is in her office so the time of submission can be confirmed. **You are responsible for confirming that any electronically submitted assignments are properly received and in the proper file format.** Deadline extensions will not be granted for missing or corrupted submissions.

Please make sure that you have some way to refer to your answers after you turn in the homework. Either bring a second copy of your answers to class with you or bring your computer/tablet with the electronic version of the solutions. We will go over the solutions to problems in class together.

See the section on group work below for the policy on collaboration on homework assignments.

3.3   Midterm

There will be a midterm exam on **Thursday 13 October in class**. The exam will be comprehensive up to that point and will be graded out of 100 points. Unless there is a serious medical emergency, **no make up exam will be given without prior arrangement made with me in writing (e-mail) before 3 October. No exceptions.**

3.4   Final Exam

There will be a **comprehensive, take-home final exam** for this course graded out of 100 points. It is due to me by **3:00 pm, 13 December, 2016** in paper form. If there are mitigating circumstances, I will allow you to arrange an electronic submission, but this must be set up with me in advance. I will distribute the final exam questions after the last lecture of the course.

3.5   Extra Credit

Forum Contributions   For every thoughtful and relevant post you make to a forum on the class Moodle site you will earn one extra credit point. For every 10 points you will earn 1 extra credit percentage in the class, up to a maximum of 5% towards your total final grade. A maximum of 10 points can be earned per week. For example, if your grade total in other components of the course comes to 74, but you have 32 EC points, your grade will get bumped up to a 77.2. Posts can be questions, answers, comments, or links to relevant websites or references. In order to qualify for a point, questions must be topical. It is fine to post a question like "What page is the definition of a passive on?" but you will not receive a point for that. It is fully up to the discretion of Professor Tucker to determine which posts deserve a point. Please do not spam the forum in an attempt to earn extra credit. Participation in the forums should follow standards of academic conduct and general 'netiquette'. Any criticism should be constructive and well-intentioned. Be respectful of your peers, do not violate anyone's privacy, do not troll, and do not violate rule #1.

Optional Reading Reports   Additionally, I will occasionally post "optional readings" on Moodle which will be primary research articles in Linguistics on the topic that we are discussing. If you take it upon yourself to read one of these articles and submit a 500 word summary/response of the reading (to me, electronically), I will award you up to one full course percentage point based upon the clarity of your response.

　　Regardless of which route you go toward earning extra credit, there is a maximum of 5% extra credit in this course. There are no exceptions to this policy.

4   Evaluation

4.1   Weighting

The following weights will be applied to each of the above components when assessing your final grade for the course:

Component	Weight
Quizzes	20%
Problem Sets	50%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%

For quizzes and homework assignments, the average score for that component will be used in the weighted overall average. For each course evaluation component, I will convert your numerical mean into a percentage and then enter that into the weighted average. For example, if you get an average of 18.5 on the written problem sets, then I will enter $(18.5/20)*0.5 \approx$ 0.46 into your final grade for the problem sets component. **There will be no extra credit given in this course over and above the forum participation and reading options outlined above.**

4.2   Numeric Correspondence

The final grade will be given on the OU numeric scale, with the following correspondence to percentage scores:

3.6–4.0 **(A)**		3.0–3.5 **(B)**		2.0–2.9 **(C)**		1.0–1.9 **(D)**	
98–100	4.0	89	3.5	79	2.9	69	1.9
96–97	3.9	87–88	3.4	78	2.8	68	1.8
94–95	3.8	85–86	3.3	77	2.7	67	1.7
92–93	3.7	83–84	3.2	76	2.6	66	1.6
90–91	3.6	81–82	3.1	75	2.5	65	1.5
		80	3.0	74	2.4	64	1.4
				73	2.3	63	1.3
				72	2.2	62	1.2
				71	2.1	61	1.1
				70	2.0	60	1.0

Any grade below 60 is an F, with a numerical value of 0. Only grades of 2.0 and higher can be counted for credit toward the Linguistics major.

I will make every effort to (a) give you regular feedback on your performance in the course and (b) alert you if you are in danger of failing (around the drop deadline and then again after the midterm). If you are concerned about your grade or progress, you should be proactive and come see me in office hours. Final grades will not be changed unless it can be demonstrated that there was an error in determining the grade.

5 Miscellany

5.1 Absence Policy

There is no attendance policy in this class insofar as no part of your grade is dependent upon me counting your presence or absence in meetings of the course. However, **you will not do well in this class if you do not attend the meetings. Meetings may cover additional material which is not in the textbook or readings which you can be held responsible for in evaluation.** Written work for the course (problem sets, exams, *etc.*) cannot be turned in late without prior arrangement. Prior arrangements must involve a reasonable excuse for missing class. In-class quizzes cannot be made up later, but see the section on quizzes for replacement work in the event a quiz is missed.

The OU Excused Absence Policy applies in this class, but has some components which involve student responsibilities before absences are considered excused. See `https://wwwp.oakland.edu/provost/policies-and-procedures/`, but in particular:

> This policy for university excused absences applies to participation as an athlete, manager or student trainer in NCAA intercollegiate competitions, or participation as a representative of Oakland University at academic events and artistic performances approved by the Provost or designee. *Practice or rehearsal for any event is not eligible for consideration as an excused absence.* [emphasis mine]

and

> Students shall inform their instructors of dates they will miss class due to an excused absence prior to the date of that anticipated absence. For activities such as athletic competitions who schedules are known prior to the start of a term, students must provide their instructors during the first week of each term a written schedule showing days they expect to miss classes. For other university excused absences students must provide each instructor at the earliest possible time the dates that they will miss.

Religious observances are an excused absence but please inform me about them in advance, where possible. If you need to leave class for a short term religious reason (*e.g.*, to perform *salah*), please do so as unobtrusively as you can.

5.2 Special Needs

If you have any special academic or social needs please let me know if whichever way is comfortable for you (email, personal meeting, *etc.*). Please make every effort to do so at the beginning of the course. Academic accommodations must be registered with the Office of Disability Support Services. See their website at `https://wwwp.oakland.edu/dss/` for more information.

5.3 Group Work

Students are especially encouraged to collaborate on homework assignments — *in fact, many of the assignements will be very difficult to complete solo.* Regardless of whether you work alone or in a group, **you must type up and submit your assignments individually and list whether you worked alone or, if in a group, who you collaborated with.** Failure to disclose collaborations is considered a violation of academic integrity policies at OU.

The final exam must be undertaken alone. No collaboration is allowed.

5.4   Add/Drop

The OU policies on Add/Drop will be followed in this course. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to these policies and to keep me informed. For reference, the following dates are relevant for this course (but are subject to change and the Office of the Registrar's dates supersede anything written here):

- **8 September:** Last day to add a class w/o instructor permission.
- **15 September:** Last day to add a class w/ instructor permission.
- **16 September:** All drops after this date incur a 'W.'
- **3 November:** Last day to withdraw from a class.

5.5   Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, and/or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The following is a *non-exhaustive* list of examples of unacceptable conduct for this course:

- copying an assignment or exam from another student, with or without that student's knowledge.
- collaborating on assignments without providing the names of collaborators on the written submission.
- using material from *any* other source (slides, handouts, books, articles, video lectures, *etc.*) in homeworks, exams, or written assignments without proper citation.

Violations of the academic integrity policy for this class will result in **dismissal from and failure of** the course for all students involved. Violations will also be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

5.6   Civility Policy

The faculty of the Linguistics Department regards classroom civility as crucial to a beneficial learning environment. The conduct of both students and professors should contribute to a respectful, engaged, and productive classroom culture. All class members are responsible for maintaining and protecting an ethic of civility. Accordingly, the following guidelines for appropriate conduct have been established for all Department classes.

Once class has begun, turn off cell phone and pagers, and refrain from side conversations and interpersonal remarks. Address personal and/or other non-course related problems to your professor before or after class or during office hours. Avoid noisy rustling of snack food containers. Casual comings and goings are not acceptable; if you need to miss a class, come late or leave early, inform your professor in advance. In any case, if you arrive late or must leave early, do so as unobtrusively as possible, *e.g.*, sit near a door to the room. Familiarize yourself with the course syllabus and requirements, due dates for assignments, and test dates. It is your responsibility to complete requirements on time.

Your cooperation in maintaining and protecting an ethic of civility is appreciated.

6   Tentative Schedule

(Subject to and likely to change. The current schedule will always be on Moodle.)

Month	Date	Lecture Topic	Reading(s)	HW Due
September	1	Intro to {course, syntax}		
	6	Generative syntax, I	1.0–1.4	PS #1
	8	Generative syntax, II	1.5–1.7	
	13	Intro to syntactic categories	2.0–2.2	
	15	Lexical vs. functional categories, subcategories	2.3–2.5	
	20	Constituency, intro to trees and brackets	3.0–3.3	PS #2
	22	Constituency tests, I	3.4–3.6	
	27	Constituency tests, II		
	29	Intro to structural relations	4.0–4.3	PS #3
October	4	C-command, grammatical relations	4.4–4.6	
	6	Binding Theory: Constriants	5.0–5.2	PS #4
	11	Binding Theory: Domains	5.3–5.6, Barss & Lasnik (1986)	
	13	**Midterm Exam**		
	18	X-Bar Theory: Basic terms	6.0–6.3	
	20	X-Bar Theory: Trees & word order	6.4–6.7	
	25	X-Bar Theory: Functional layers	7.0–7.2	
	27	X-Bar Theory: CPs & TPs & DPs	7.3–7.4	
November	1	θ-Theory: Preliminaries	8.0–8.2	PS #5
	3	θ-Theory: The lexicon & Projection	8.3–8.5	
	8	Agreement, inflection, tense	TBA	
	10	DP movement: passives & case	11.0–11.3	PS #6
	15	DP movement: more passives & raising	11.4–11.7	
	17	Intro to raising & control	15.0–15.1	PS #7
	22	Raising & control: typology	15.2–15.3	
	24	**No Class — Thanksgiving Break**		
	29	Empty categories, *pro*-drop	15.4–15.5 & Rizzi (1982)	
December	1	Final preparation, course review, 404 Preview		PS #8

*Final exam due **3:00 pm, 13 December, 2016***