ARTS3690 Course Outline

School of Humanities and Languages

ARTS3690 Language Universals and Linguistic Typology
S2, 2015

This course outline should be used in conjunction with the Moodle site of the course. There will be regular updates throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to consult the site regularly.

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1. **Course Staff and Contact Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Convenor and Lecturer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dr Mengistu Amberber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>9385 2299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>Thursday 2-3, or by appointment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dr Efrosini Deligianni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>9385 2188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>Wednesday 4-5, or by appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Course Details**

| Units of Credit (UoC) | 6 |

**Course Description**

This is a level 3 subject that explores the unity and diversity of languages by focusing on structural properties (morphology, syntax, and semantics) from both formal and functional perspectives.

**Course Aims**

1. This course will enable students to explore the nature of language universals (properties shared by all languages), and language variation (the ways in which languages vary from each other).

2. The course aims to enable students to understand that the incredible surface variation we find between the languages of the world is systematic and can be studied in the same way as biological diversity is studied in the life sciences.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Identify basic conceptual and empirical issues in the study of the unity and diversity of language focusing on morphology and syntax;

2. Develop basic analytical skills in typological linguistics covering phonological, lexical and grammatical categories across a wide range of languages.

**Graduate Attributes**

Students will be encouraged to develop the following Graduate Attributes by undertaking the selected activities and engaging with the knowledge content. These attributes will be assessed within the prescribed assessment tasks.

1. Understanding of the knowledge base of typological linguistics as one of the major approaches to the study of language;

2. Skills in critical analysis;

3. The ability to engage in independent and reflective learning.
3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

The course is an integral component of the Linguistics undergraduate curriculum. The course is included to enable students to develop skills in extracting and synthesizing information regarding linguistic diversity. It is estimated that there are over 6,000 languages spoken in the world today. Most of these languages are endangered and are in urgent need of documentation and description. The skills and knowledge acquired in undertaking a course in Language Universals and Linguistic Typology are critical to the training of linguistic professionals who can engage in the documentation and description of languages.

4. Teaching Strategies

The teaching strategies involve seminars, group discussions, and class presentations. The course has a seminar-style interactive format where students will be required to lead discussion through class presentations. A key component of the course involves what is called 'Adopt a Language' where students will be assigned one language and extract and synthesise grammatical information on the basis of available reference grammars and other scholarly articles on the language. Students will be required to make detailed presentations on the grammatical properties of their adopted language. While there will be some short introductions to the theories in lecture format, most time will be spent on interactive group discussions considering key concepts and issues. Students will be expected to do set reading tasks weekly and provide a concise summary and critical reflection of the material. It is expected that at the end of the course, students will feel they have a good grounding in linguistic typology and a critical understanding of the unity and diversity of languages.

5. Course Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task**</th>
<th>Length/duration</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal: a summary of and reflection on the weekly chapters/articles</td>
<td>500 - 800 words/week</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation I</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Weekly (Week 4 – 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation II</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Weekly (Week 8 – 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final essay</td>
<td>2500 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Due on: 30 October 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that assessment tasks and schedule are subject to revision.  
**Further details and specific instructions about the assignments will be provided in a separate document.
**Please Note:** The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/)

### Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see [https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html](https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html)

### Submission of Assessment Tasks

Assignments which are submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from [https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/](https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/). It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignments must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

### Late Submission of Assignments

The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

- An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).
- The late penalty is the **loss of 3%** of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.
- Work submitted **14 days after** the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.
• Work submitted **21 days after** the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/)

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

### 6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

The complete Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines can be read [here](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/).

If you wish to request an extension for submission of an assessment task you need to do so via myUNSW using the Special Consideration section. You will need to submit documentary evidence in support of your request.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

### 7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

• A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

• If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Timetable Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.

• Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.

• A student who arrives more than **15 minutes late** may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

• If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority,
and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

- Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.

- If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.

- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.

- A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.

- A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

- The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course’s learning outcomes and volume of learning.

- **A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).**

- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.**

### 8. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf)

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

### 9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The
University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: [http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/). They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here: [http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf](http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf)

### 10. Course Schedule

To view course timetable, please visit: [http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/](http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic and Lecture Content</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 July</td>
<td>Introducing the course; administrative matters; historical background to typology</td>
<td>OHLT Chapters 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 1)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 August</td>
<td>Methodological Issues; the problem of sampling; explaining language universals</td>
<td>OHLT Chapters 4-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Week 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 August</td>
<td>Parts-of-speech systems; Typological distinctions in word-formation</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol.I, Ch. 1; Shopen, Vol. III, Ch. 1; OHLT Ch. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 August</td>
<td>Lexical typologies; inflectional morphology</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. III, Chapters 2 &amp; 3; OHLT, Ch. 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Week 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 August</td>
<td>Gender and noun classes; Aspect, tense, mood</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. III, Ch. 4; Shopen, Vol. III, Ch. 5; OHLT Ch. 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Week 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 September</td>
<td>Word order</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. I, Ch. 2; OHLT Ch.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Week 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9 September</td>
<td>Noun Phrase structure; The major functions of the noun phrase</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. II, Ch. 3; Shopen, Vol. I, Ch. 3; OHLT Chapters 15 &amp; 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16 September</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. I, Ch.4</td>
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</table>
### Week 8

| 23 September (Week 9) | Passive in the world’s languages; Voice systems | Shopen, Vol. I, Ch. 6; OHLT Chapters 17 & 18 |

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### Mid-semester break 28 September-5 October

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### Week 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 October (Week 10)</th>
<th>Coordination; Complementation</th>
<th>Shopen, Vol. II. Chapters 1 &amp; 2; OHLT Ch. 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 October (Week 11)</td>
<td>Relative Clauses; Adverbial Clauses</td>
<td>Shopen, Vol. II, Ch.4; Shopen, Vol II, Ch. 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Week 11

| 21 October (Week 12) | Speech act distinction in grammar; semantic typology | Shopen, Vol I, Ch. 5; OHLT Ch. 23 |

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*Topics and schedule subject to revision.*

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## Course Resources

### Main and required readings


http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780511619427
http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780511619434
http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780511618437

The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Typology (OHLT), 2010/2012 [eBook available at the UNSW Library].


### Additional and recommended readings


### Websites

[Please visit the Moodle site of the course for more resources]
12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

13. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au

14. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html

15. Other Information

myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links: https://my.unsw.edu.au https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html

OHS

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

Special Consideration
In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html

**Student Equity and Disabilities Unit**

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.