



Arts & Social  
Sciences

School of Humanities and Languages

**ARTS2692 Syntax**  
**S1, 2014**

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## 1. Course Staff and Contact Details

Course Convenor, Lecturer and Tutor			
Name	Dr Mengistu Amberber	Room	MB241
Phone	9385 2299	Email	m.amberber@unsw.edu.au
Consultation Time	Wednesdays 2pm-3pm		

## 2. Course Details

Units of Credit (UoC)	6	
Course Description	This course focuses on syntax – traditionally defined as the study of the grammatical relation between words within the sentence. The course approaches the study of syntax from the perspective of generative linguistics. It explores the philosophical and methodological foundations of the generative linguistics framework with particular reference to the place of syntax in the study of the human language faculty. The course investigates a number of key theoretical constructs that attempt to account for both universal and language-specific syntactic phenomena. Topics in syntax include: recursive phrase structure rules, constituency, syntactic dependencies, transformations, and lexical relations.	
Course Aims	1.	This course will enable students to understand the conceptual and empirical foundations of generative syntax and interpret basic syntactic formalisms and descriptions.
	2.	The course aims to enable students to develop basic analytical skills in the syntactic analysis of data from English and other languages.
Student Learning Outcomes	At the end of the course students should be able to:	
	1.	understand the conceptual and empirical foundations of generative syntax
	2.	apply basic techniques of syntactic analysis
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 syntax as one of the major components of theoretical and descriptive linguistics;
	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.

### 4. Teaching Strategies

The teaching strategies involve lectures and tutorials. The tutorials are designed to foster individual problem solving skills as well as engagement in collaborative teamwork.

### 5. Course Assessment

Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Learning Outcomes Assessed	Graduate Attributes Assessed	Due Date
Three tutorial quizzes	20 minutes each	20%	1, 2	1, 2, 3, 4	Weeks 3, 5, 7
Class test I	1 hour	15%	1, 2	1, 2, 3, 4	On: 8 May (Week 9)
Class test II	1 hour	20%	1, 2	1, 2, 3, 4	On: 22 May (Week 11)
Take-home Problem Set**	2 hours	45%	1, 2	1, 2, 3, 4	Due on: 12 June

*\*Please note that assessment tasks and schedule are subject to revision.*

*\*\*The take-home problem set is handed out **one week** prior to its due date.*

**Please Note:** In addition to fulfilling the above assessment requirements, students are expected to attend at least 80% of their lectures and tutorials in order to pass the course.

### 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>

### 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/>. 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

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Late assignments will attract a penalty. Of the total mark, 3% will be deducted each day for the first week, with Saturday and Sunday counting as two days, and 10% each week thereafter.

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. Attendance/Class Clash

### Attendance

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Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. Explanations of absences from classes or requests for permission to be absent from classes should be discussed with the teacher and where applicable accompanied by a medical certificate. If students attend less than 80% of their possible classes they may be refused final assessment.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the student misconduct policy.**

### Class Clash

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A student who is approved a permissible clash must fulfil the following requirements:

- a. The student must provide the Course Convenor with copies of lecture notes from those lectures missed on a regular basis as agreed by the Course Convenor and the student.
- b. If a student does attend a lecture for which they had secured a permitted clash they will still submit lecture notes as evidence of attendance.
- c. **Failure to meet these requirements is regarded as unsatisfactory performance in the course and a failure to meet the Faculty's course attendance requirement. Accordingly, Course Convenors will fail students who do not meet this performance/attendance requirement.**
- d. Students must attend the clashed lecture on a specific date if that lecture contains an assessment task for the course such as a quiz or test. Inability to meet this requirement would be grounds for a Course Convenor refusing the application. If the student misses the said lecture there is no obligation on the Course Convenor to schedule a make-up quiz or test and the student can receive zero for the assessment task. It should be noted that in many courses a failure to complete an assessment task can be grounds for course failure.

## 7. 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/>. 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>

## 8. Course Schedule

To view course timetable, please visit: <http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/>

Week	Topic and Lecture Content	Readings
6 March (Week 1)	Introduction	Chapter 1 (textbook)
13 March (Week 2)	Parts of speech	Chapter 2
20 March (Week 3)	Constituency, trees, and rules	Chapter 3
27 March (Week 4)	Structural relations	Chapter 4
3 April (Week 5)	Binding Theory	Chapter 5
10 April (Week 6)	X-bar Theory	Chapter 6
17 April (Week 7)	Extending X-bar Theory	Chapter 7
<b>***Mid-semester break 18<sup>th</sup> April to 27<sup>th</sup> April***</b>		
1 May (Week 8)	Constraining X-bar Theory & Head-to-Head movement	Chapter 8 & 10
8 <sup>th</sup> May (Week 9)	Class Test I	
15 May (Week 10)	<i>DP</i> movement & <i>Wh</i> movement	Chapters 11 & 12
22 <sup>nd</sup> May (Week 11)	Class Test II	
29 <sup>th</sup> May (Week 12)	Summary & Conclusion	
* Topics and schedule subject to revision.		

## 9. Course Resources

### Textbook and Workbook Details

Carnie, A. 2012. *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Wiley-Blackwell.  
 Carnie, A. 2013. *The Syntax Workbook: A Companion to Carnie's Syntax*. Wiley-Blackwell.

### Additional Readings

Chomsky, N. 1986. *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origin & Use*. Praeger.  
 Chomsky, N. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. MIT Press.  
 Cook, V. & Newson, M. 1996. *Chomsky's Universal Grammar: an Introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford.  
 Ouhalla, J. 1994. *Introducing Transformational Grammar*. Cambridge University Press.  
 Radford, A. 1988. *Transformational Grammar: A First Course*. Cambridge University Press.  
 Pinker, S. 1994. *The Language Instinct*. Penguin.  
 Sells, P. 1985. *Lectures on Contemporary Syntactic Theories*. Stanford: CSLI.

### Websites

*The syntax of natural language: An online introduction using the Trees program.*  
[http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~beatrice/synta\\_textbook](http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~beatrice/synta_textbook).

## 10. 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.

## 11. 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>

## 12. 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>

## 13. 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**

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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**

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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**

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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.