



EAST TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

ENG 331, 01E, 01W & An Introduction to Linguistics

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Haomei Meng-Briscoe

Office Location: DTH Room 215

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 11 am-12:30 pm

University Email Address: Haomei.Meng@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 hours on weekdays.

Feedback for the assignment in one week.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This introductory course provides a comprehensive introduction to the scientific study of language, designed specifically for students across different disciplines. Our focus is on the description and analysis of language structure and real-life use. This course covers the core concepts of linguistics, and major branches of linguistics to help non-linguistic major students get familiar with linguistic theories, assumptions, terminology, and methodology of modern descriptive linguistics. The following branches will be discussed in detail: Phonetics/phonology (sound and sound patterns), morphology (word formation), syntax (sentence structure), semantics (meaning), and pragmatics (meaning in context).

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook(s) Required:

Students can find the book chapters on D2L – Content – Textbook chapters each week.

Computer and technologies

- This class will be delivered both in-person and online, using Desire2Learn Brightspace. To get started with the course, go to <https://leoportal.tamuc.edu/uPortal/f/welcome/normal/render.uP> You will need your CWID and password to log into the course. All students are required to have regular access to a computer with an internet connection.
- A word processing program: Students have free access to Office 365.
- If you experience problems in accessing the course site or have other technological difficulties, please contact the CITE Help Desk at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have the skills to

- **See the "Code" of Language:** Identify and explain the building blocks of any language, from the physical sounds we make to the complex meanings we share.
- **Analyze Sound Patterns:** Detect specific sounds and patterns that change the meaning of words in different languages (e.g., why "pat" and "bat" are different to our ears).
- **Deconstruct Word Building:** Break down English words to see the hidden "recipes" (processes) we use to create new vocabulary.
- **Map Sentence Architecture:** Go beyond basic grammar to visualize how sentences are actually built and organized.
- **Decode Meaning:** Explain the mechanics of how the English language conveys literal ideas and abstract concepts.
- **Understand Language Variation:** Dialect, code switching, dialectology, isoglosses, etc.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements,

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

Instructional Methods

This course is conducted both online and in person. Class attendance is required since we have in-class group work which accounts for your participation score. In this course, all assignments will be completed through D2L. You should check the course website frequently for assignments, announcements, and discussions. I strongly recommend dedicating set days/times to completing your work and working in advance so that you are always a day or two ahead. Please note **that assignment due dates are crucial. No delayed assignments will be accepted. If an emergency does happen, and you anticipate that more days are needed, please send me an email for extension prior to the due date.** Moreover, for online discussions, I expect that students will exhibit courtesy toward others when responding to others' questions. Courtesy means NOT engaging in online rudeness or refusing to focus on group or class discussion. Courtesy means engaging in such behaviors as listening carefully to others, accepting that various points of view can be valid, maintaining a focus on the discussion at hand, and treating others as you wish to be treated.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

D2L	Student email expectations	Classroom expectations
Check/Logon: Every day	Check ideally, every day	Since we have in-Class Activities for most class periods, attendance makes up an important portion of the participation score.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Textbook chapters *Read course announcements *Submit online quiz and discussion, mid-term creative project. 	Kindly fill in the “Subject” line. Address me as “Mrs. Briscoe.”	Come in on time and leave when class is officially over
Check the feedback from the instructor and your scores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A brief greeting and a reminder of who you are *Explain your problem and offer your proposal or available times. *A closing 	When writing, be quiet. Phones, pads, and computers

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Online quizzes	5%
Oral Quizzes	40%
Online Discussions	20%
Mid-term Creative Project	15%
Final Oral Exam	15%
In-class participation.	5%
TOTAL	100%

Assignment Submissions

- Our work week runs from Monday to Sunday. I release each learning module on Monday on D2L.
- ❖ Online quiz and mid-term creative project must be submitted to D2L **Sunday, 8 pm**. The mid-term creative project should be submitted to the designated submission folders through “Assignments” under “Activities” on D2L.
- ❖ Oral quiz **registration** opens at the start of the week, with assessments conducted **on Friday**.

- ❖ Final oral exam registration opens on **May 2nd**, with assessments conducted on **May 5th and 6th**.
- If you have trouble uploading the assignment to the course site, please e-mail your paper to me at Haomei.meng@etamu.edu.

COURSE ASSIGNMENT

Online Quizzes (5 points): Students will take 5 quizzes to demonstrate their knowledge and learning about the course topics.

Oral Quizzes (40 points) --- Students will participate in four brief oral assessments designed to evaluate their ability to synthesize course material in real-time.

Online Discussions (20 points) --- Online discussions provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and ability to apply the course content. Reading the required texts, supplemented with the personal findings, will help the quality of the contribution that they are able to make. There will be 10 online discussion assignments.

Midterm Creative Project (15 points) --- In this review/reflection assignment, students will produce a meme, a cartoon, a short story, or a poster, along with a one-page explanation that explains the linguistic knowledge they have learned from the class. Three requirements for the one-page explanation.

Final Oral Exam (20 points) --- The final exam is to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge of the topics covered in this course and synthesize their understanding of relevant issues.

Assessments

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

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<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all coursework in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I am committed to supporting your success in this course and encourage open communication. For most inquiries, please contact me via **Haomei.Meng@etamu.edu**; I generally respond within **24** hours, excluding weekends. For more complex questions or to discuss your progress, please visit me during my scheduled office hours, 11 am - 12:30 pm **Tuesdays and Thursdays in DTH Room 215, or apply for a Zoom meeting**. To ensure a timely response, please include the course name and a brief description of your topic in the subject line of all emails.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

Departmental-Specific Procedures

Student Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the

Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 \(“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”\)](#).

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

In order to measure the level of compliance with the accreditation, throughout the semester I may collect some of the ungraded texts you produce solely for an assessment of program effectiveness that in no way affects students’ course grades or GPAs.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Weeks	Topics	Readings	Assignments
Week 1	Course Introduction & Overview of Linguistics	Chapter 1: Introduction to language	<i>Online Quiz 1</i> Online discussion 1
Week 2	Overview of linguistics continued Phonetics	Chapter 2 - Phonetics	<i>Online Quiz 2</i> Online discussion2
Week 3	Phonetics continued Phonology	Chapter 2 - Phonology	Oral Quiz 1 Online discussion 3
Week 4	Phonology continued Morphology	Chapter 2 - Morphology	In-class group work Online discussion 4
Week 5	Syntax 1	Chapter 2 -Syntax	<i>Online Quiz 3</i> Chapter Assignment 2
Week 6	Syntax 2	Chapter 2 - Beyond the Sentence	Oral Quiz 2 Online discussion 5
Week 7	Semantics	Chapter 3	<i>Online Quiz 4</i> Online discussion 6
Week 8	Mid-term review	-	Mid-term creative project (proposal and in-class presentation)
Week 9	Spring Break	-	-
Week 10	Speech acts	Chapter 3	Oral Quiz 3 Online discussion 7

Week 11	Face and politeness	Chapter 3	<i>Online Quiz 5</i> Online discussion 8
Week 12	Language variation	Chapter 4	In-class group work Online discussion 9
Week 13	Language and social groups 1	Chapter 5	Oral Quiz 4 Online discussion 10
Week 14	Language and social groups 2	Chapter 5	In-class group work
Week 15	Final review	-	Final oral exam registration opens on May 2
Week 16	Exam Week	-	Final oral exam is conducted on May 5th and 6th, 2026