

## LBST 2213, LANGUAGE—WHERE CAN IT TAKE US? Fall 2016

<i>Day and Time</i>	<i>Sections, Location, GTA</i>	<i>Sections, Location, GTA</i>
Tue & Thu		
11:00-12:15am	All sections, Fretwell 100	
Fridays		
9:30-10:20am	Q20, Fretwell 114, Kevin Chauncey	Q16, Fretwell 120, Jibril Al-Sadat
11:00-11:50am	Q18, <b>Friday</b> 132, Kevin Chauncey	Q22, <b>Friday</b> 128, Jibril Al-Sadat
12:30-1:20pm	Q17, Fretwell 107, Kevin Chauncey	Q21, Fretwell 118, Jibril Al-Sadat
2:00-2:50pm	Q19, Fretwell 120, Kevin Chauncey	Q23, Fretwell 124, Jibril Al-Sadat

Course Website: <https://moodle2.uncc.edu>

### INSTRUCTORS

		<i>Email</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Office Hours</i>
Instructors	Dr. Dan Boisvert	<a href="mailto:danboisvert@uncc.edu">danboisvert@uncc.edu</a>	704.687.5414	Winningham 112A	T, R 3:30-4:45pm
	Dr. Ralf Thiede	<a href="mailto:rthiede@uncc.edu">rthiede@uncc.edu</a>	704.687.0611	Fretwell 265-B	T 12:30-1:45, R 2:00-3:15
Graduate Assistants	Jibril Al-Sadat	<a href="mailto:jalsadat@uncc.edu">jalsadat@uncc.edu</a>		Winningham 115	To be updated on course website
	Kevin Chauncey	<a href="mailto:kchaunce@uncc.edu">kchaunce@uncc.edu</a>		Fretwell 265-D	
Undergraduate Facilitators	Rozie Khashmanian	<a href="mailto:rkhashma@uncc.edu">rkhashma@uncc.edu</a>		Fretwell 265-D	
	Cody Maddox	<a href="mailto:cmaddox5@uncc.edu">cmaddox5@uncc.edu</a>		Winningham 115	

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Our course is guided by two convictions:

- language is fascinating, so learning how it works is usually enjoyable;
- language is powerful, so learning how it works is empowering.

Language is fascinating and powerful. How so?

Human beings are linguistic; we speak, write, and understand. That we are linguistic is a fascinating thing about *being human*. We are the creatures who talk, think, and tell stories; assert, exclaim, and declare independence; coalesce, cooperate, and stand united; excite, embolden, and inspire generations. We are also the creatures who use language to embellish, exaggerate, and tell lies; suggest, insinuate, and destroy reputations; dissociate, divide, and conquer “others”; degrade, debase, and commit unspeakable atrocity. All because we have a capacity for language.

Our capacity for language, some argue, is what *makes* us uniquely human. This conclusion might be an exaggeration. Perhaps no capacity makes human beings completely unique, or if there is, there is more than one such capacity, such as our capacity for reasoning or for morality. But even reasoning and morality (as we’ll see) are intimately connected to our capacity for language. So we will study language from the perspectives of a variety of disciplines, including linguistics, philosophy, cognitive science, neuroscience, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. We’ll ask what language is, how it evolved, how we use it, and to what effect. Our more specific questions include the following:

- What is language? Other animals have communication systems, but do they have language?
- How did our capacity for language evolve? What does that tell us about our evolutionary history?
- What is the relation between language and thought? Can language even arise in the absence of thought? Do we think metaphorically, narratively, conceptually? Why do we have such a powerful response to stories?
- What do we use languages to do? How do we use languages to interact socially, develop social and political institutions, and create relations of power, sometimes in the most violent ways imaginable? How can we use language to make our lives morally better?

**MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES**

- Become acutely sensitivity to how you (and all of us) use language—sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously; sometimes for good, sometimes for ill—to coordinate our mental and social lives
- Become a fundamentally sound, successful, engaged college student.

You will demonstrate how well you are achieving these objectives through a series of homework assignments, class discussion, reflection, quizzes, exams, and a course paper.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

There is no required text. However, there are a number of online resources you will need to access regularly.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE DETERMINATION**

<p>Readiness Quizzes (10%)</p>	<p>There will be a series of online readiness quizzes, one for each learning module. Their average counts 10% toward your final grade, and the lowest of these grades is dropped. They are due by the start of each class that begins a new module. (See Course Calendar.) The purpose of these quizzes is to help you prepare for our in-depth class discussion and activities. They will ask you basic questions about the readings and resources that you should be able to learn on your own before we dig in. In other words, the guiding question behind these quizzes is, “What are the basic concepts and issues discussed in the preparatory readings and resources that a college student should be able to learn on his or her own?”</p>
<p>Exams (60%)</p>	<p>There will also be a series of in-class exams. Their average counts 60% toward your final grade. No exam grades are dropped. You must be present to take the exam; you can neither make-up the exam after the fact nor, except in unusual circumstances and only with prior permission, take the exam beforehand. The purpose of these exams is to give you the opportunity to demonstrate how well you’ve mastered the material. They will ask you to apply what you’ve learned, compare theories, differentiate subtle differences, and similar higher-level types of questions to help gauge your level of understanding.</p>

Course Paper (30%)	There will be one two-part course paper that counts 30% toward your final grade. The purpose of this paper is to help you think more deeply about the connections among language, reflective inquiry, commitment to success, and cultural awareness. More details about this project are available in a separate handout, which can be found on the course web site.
Attendance (multiplier)	<p>You can earn 100% of your final grade if you regularly participate in your Friday team discussion sections.</p> <p>You can earn 90% of your final grade if you participate in all but three of your Friday team discussion sections.</p> <p>You can earn 80% of your final grade if you participate in all but four of your Friday team discussions.</p> <p>You can earn 70% of your final grade if you participate in all but five of your Friday team discussions.</p> <p>Etc.</p>

Overall course grades, are then assigned as follows:

A = 90% or above; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=Below 60%

**FRIDAY BREAKOUT SECTIONS**

Your Friday breakout sections, led Jibril and Kevin, will work as a team to reflect on upcoming material or to synthesize what you learned that week. Like most class sessions, your Friday breakout sections are most helpful and fun when everyone comes prepared and contributes positively to create energy, excitement, and a lively atmosphere.

**COURSE BLOG AND CAMPUS RESOURCE PRESENTATIONS**

There will be a class blog, moderated by Rozie and Cody, so that you can continue our conversations outside the classroom. Use the blog to share any news, video, music, images, etc. that you think is relevant to our course, to post any follow-up questions or comments, or anything else you'd like to share. The only rule is to be respectful. Rozie and Cody will also lead occasional presentations on a variety of helpful campus resources.

**LATE POLICY**

Turning in work on time, especially in a large class such as ours, is vital for maintaining a smooth learning process for everyone. Consequently, all work is due by the stated due date and time.

**DIVERSITY**

UNC Charlotte, including our classes, strives to create an academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not

limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and socio-economic status.

In other words, we will be respectful in this course of other human beings.

UNC Charlotte also authorizes that students be allowed a minimum of two excused absences per academic year for religious observances as required by the faith of a student. If you will be requesting an excused absence, you must send your graduate assistant a written request prior to census date for the current semester. (See the Academic Calendar for Census Date.) Any work that will be missed can receive full credit by turning in the work prior to the date of the excused absence.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

We have a zero-tolerance policy with regard to academic dishonesty. Clear evidence of academic dishonesty will result minimally in an automatic failing grade for the course, regardless of your other grades, and we will refer the matter to The Office of the Dean of Students.

Please do not ruin your chances for learning something important and interesting, nor your chances for admission to law school, medical school, graduate school, nor your chances for employment with an organization of which you would very much like to be a part because you were in some way academically dishonest.

We all know what are obvious cases of academic dishonesty, but there are less obvious cases that you still must avoid. So we expect to you know and to adhere to the letter and spirit of The Code of Student Academic Integrity < <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>>.

### **TOPICS AND READING LIST**

We will maintain a complete list of topics and reading assignments on the course web site, which will no doubt be updated continually as we make our way through the semester.

We're looking forward to getting to know all of you over the next several months and to a great class!

## Course Calendar and Outline

This is the tentative outline and calendar of important dates. It is subject to change. All updates will, of course, be posted on Moodle.

Last Updated: **Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Module	Day	Activities
Course Introduction	T, Aug 23	Lecture
	R, Aug 25	Lecture
Module 1—Language and Languages	F, Aug 26	Module Prep Question
	T, Aug 30	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	R, Sep 1	Lecture
	F, Sep 2	Summary Question
	T, Sep 6	Lecture
	<b>R, Sep 8</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>
Module 2—Language and Thought	F, Sep 9	Module Prep Question
	T, Sep 13	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	R, Sep 15	Lecture
	F, Sep 16	Summary Question
	T, Sep 20	Lecture
	R, Sep 22	Lecture
Module 3—The Narrating Brain	F, Sep 23	Module Prep Question
	T, Sep 27	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	R, Sept 29	Lecture
	F, Sept 30	Summary Question
	T, Oct 4	Lecture
	<b>R, Oct 6</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>
Module 4—Doing Things with Words	F, Oct 7	Module Prep Question
	R, Oct 13	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	F, Oct 14	Summary Question
	T, Oct 18	Lecture <b>Course Paper, Penultimate Version Due Online</b>
	R, Oct 20	Lecture

Module 5—The Language of Cooperation	F, Oct 21	Module Prep Question
	T, Oct 25	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	R, Oct 27	Lecture
	F, Oct 28	Summary Question
	T, Nov 1	Lecture
	R, Nov 3	Exam 3
Module 6—The Language of Violence	F, Nov 4	Module Prep Question/General Feedback on Course Papers
	T, Nov 8	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	R, Nov 10	Lecture
	F, Nov 11	Summary Question
	T, Nov 15	Lecture
	R, Nov 17	Lecture Course Paper, Final Version Due Online
Module 7—Clarity from Managed Confusion	F, Nov 19	Module Prep Question
	T, Nov 22	Module Readiness Quiz Due 10 min before class Lecture
	T, Nov 29	Lecture
	R, Dec 1	Lecture
	F, Dec 2	Summary Question
Course Review	T, Dec 6	Lecture
	T, Dec 13	Final Exam