

Instructor: Arsalan Kahnemuyipour

Lecture: TH 2-5 pm ; SS 2119

Office Hours: TH 1-2 pm or by appointment (online or in-person) at other times

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Evaluation:	Weight	Date
Participation	10%	Weekly
Weekly Problem Sets/Commentary	20%	Weekly
Leading discussion of articles	25%	TBD
Term Project:		
Topic proposal	5%	Oct. 9
Paper Draft	10%	Nov. 6
Presentation	10%	Nov. 27
Final paper	20%	Dec. 8

Course Description: This course is a survey of some core topics in syntactic theory at an intermediate to advanced level. We start the course with a two-week intensive review of Carnie's Syntax textbook (third/fourth edition), just to make sure we are all on the same page. Then, we will switch to the core of the course, where articles on various topics are assigned as readings and discussed in class. The goal of the course is to familiarize you with the modern thinking about some of the core issues in syntax. The hope is that you can apply this knowledge to your work even if your focus is not syntactic theory.

Readings: Starting in the third week, two readings will be uploaded on Quercus every week. We place more emphasis on one of the two papers, in bold. The second reading is also discussed but less time is spent on it. Both papers are presented by students. We spend around 60-80 minutes on one paper and 30-50 minutes on the other. (Note: Two chapters of Kayne, Leu and Zanuttini (2014) count as one reading, to be elaborated below and in class.)

Leading discussion of articles: As of the third week of classes, the discussion of the readings of the week will be led by students. Each student will be responsible for leading the discussion of 2-3 readings throughout the semester, including at least one longer presentation. The number of assigned articles depends on the number of students in class. The assignment of readings to students will be sorted out in the first two weeks.

Weekly Problem Sets/Commentary: In the first two weeks when we are reviewing Carnie, you will be assigned weekly problem sets, which are due the following week. Starting in the third week, every student should submit a commentary on one of the two readings of the week. (Note: Your commentary can be on either of the two readings). The commentary should be 250-350 words and should provide a very brief one-paragraph summary of the main contribution of the article followed by one or more comments/questions about various claims/proposals in the reading. The commentary should be thoughtful and engaging and can involve discussion of problematic

argumentation in the paper, data that the analysis fails to account for, extension of proposals in the paper to other areas/problems, etc. The Problem Sets or Commentaries should be typed up and should be submitted via Quercus before 2 pm on class day. If a student is leading the discussion of an article in a given week, they do not have to submit a commentary that week.

Term Paper: Each student should work on a term project related to the course. The project can be an original piece of work, analyzing a syntactic phenomenon in one or more languages, or a critical overview of a syntactic phenomenon/question of interest. The project has different components. The first component is the topic proposal (approx. 1 page, double-spaced) due by October 9. I will return the topic proposal to you before Reading Week. The first draft of your paper/handout (8-12 pages, double-spaced) is due by November 6. This first draft can be rough, but should, for the very least, provide a clear description of the problem under investigation and a review of some literature on the topic. You will receive feedback on the first draft and will then work toward your presentation in the final week of classes (conference-style, 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for questions). You will receive feedback on your presentation and will use that to write up your final paper (proceeding-style, default: CLA, approx. 12 pages). The final paper is due on December 8.

Course Schedule (approximate): Note: Main article of the week in bold

Week	Date	Topic	Item Due (Weekly commentary not marked)
1	Sept. 4	Introduction/Carnie Review I	PS1 out
2	Sept. 11	Carnie Review II	PS1 due – PS2 out
3	Sept. 18	Minimalist Design	PS2 due
	Articles:	Boskovic (2013) , Chomsky (2005)	
4	Sept. 25	Argument Structure	
	Articles:	Harley (2011) , McCloskey (1997) (pages 197-216)	
5	Oct. 2	Case	
	Articles:	Pesetsky and Torrego (2011) , Deal (2015) (first 17 pages)	
6	Oct. 9	Minimality	*Paper Proposal
	Articles:	Rizzi (2011) , Vikner (2006) (pages 392-412)	
7	Oct. 16	Movement	
	Articles:	Richards (2014) , Nunes (2011) (pages 143-167)	
8	Oct. 23	NP/DP Structure	
	Articles:	KLZ Chaps 22&25 , KLZ Chaps 1&21	
	Oct. 30	Fall Reading Week – No Class	
9	Nov. 6	Cartography	*Paper Draft
	Articles:	Shlonsky (2010) , Cinque (2005)	
10	Nov. 13	Syntax and Processing (Tentative)	
	Articles:	Franck (2018) , Franck, Mirdamadi and Kahnemuyipour (2020)	
11	Nov. 20	Syntax-Phonology Interface and Phases (Tentative)	
	Articles:	Selkirk (2011) , Kahnemuyipour and Megerdooomian (2011)	
12	Nov. 27	Presentations	
	Dec. 8	Final Paper Due	

References:

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- Deal, Amy Rose. 2015. "Ergativity." *Syntax–theory and analysis. An international handbook* 1: 654-708.
- Franck, Julie. 2018. "Syntactic encoding: Novel insights into the relationship between grammar and processing." In E. Fernandez and H. Cairns (Eds.) *The handbook of psycholinguistics*. 13-37. Wiley.
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- Harley, Heidi. 2011. "A Minimalist Approach to Argument Structure." In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, edited by Cedric Boeckx, 427-448. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kahnemuyipour, Arsalan and Karine Megerdumian. 2011. "Second Position Clitics in the vP Phase: The Case of the Armenian Auxiliary." *Linguistic Inquiry*, 42(1), 152-162.
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- Pesetsky, David and Esther Torrego. 2011. "Case." In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, edited by Cedric Boeckx, 52-72. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, Norvin. 2014. "A-bar movement." In *The Routledge Handbook of Syntax*, edited by Andrew Carnie, Yosuke Sato and Daniel Siddiqi, 167-191. Oxon/New York: Routledge.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 2011. "Minimality." In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, edited by Cedric Boeckx, 220-238. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Selkirk, Elizabeth. 2011. "The syntax-phonology interface." *The handbook of phonological theory*, 2, 435-483.
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