LING 5310
Syntax
Spring 1999

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Auditorium Building 116
(Graduate Studies in English)
Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 or by appointment
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In this course, we will examine the outlines of the principles and parameters theory of minimalist (morpho)syntax. We begin the examination with basic assumptions underlying current theory and then, in the bulk of the course, proceed to examine various parts of the theory. As data, we will mostly refer to English; however, one should not be lead to the incorrect belief that the theory is in some (bizarre) sense based on English, or even Anglocentric. Note, too, that the examination will ultimately be a cursory one; a more complete understanding—if that is possible at all—would require a great deal of work above and beyond a single course in syntax.

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Preparation for the class	60%
Bibliography	10%
Literature-review paper	30%

The **literature-review paper** reports recent syntactic research on a particular linguistic structure (e.g., from some particular language) or perhaps on a particular theoretical phenomenon (e.g., rightward movement). I do not expect you to present original syntactic research. On the other hand, it would be most to your advantage to examine some structure/phenomenon that is relevant to other of your work. For example, a person might be independently involved in research that implicates the underlying positions of modal auxiliaries crosslinguistically, or on the interpretive scope of negation; this person would surely profit in that area by doing her syntax review paper on either of these two topics. The paper should be long enough to cover the material in detail; I should think 15 to 20 pages would suffice, though that might vary for particular topics. As usual, all work should be in linguistics-adapted APA style (see, e.g., the style sheet for *Language* at *http://semlab2.sbs.sunysb.edu/Language/language.html*). Grading will be based mostly on content (around 75%), though form will also be evaluated (around 25%).

The **bibliography** is a list of articles relevant to your literature-review paper. You should begin thinking early about the topic of your literature-review paper and then working with e.g. *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts* to come up with a working bibliography. It is this working bibliography that will be evaluated for a grade. (The intent here is, of course, to "encourage" you to start work on your literature-review paper early, not at the end of the semester.)

I expect you to **prepare** for individual classes thoroughly. A good number of classes will be spent on straightforward lecture/explication, which will cover *some* of the material in Radford's text. (You should **not** expect me merely to "teach you the chapters in Radford.") Other days will be devoted to exercises involving linguistic data in relation to theory; you will be working in small groups or alone. Your independent preparation for the course will be assessed by your performance on these days. (Note that there are no examinations, nor is there a final examination.)

Required textbook:

Radford, A. (1997). *Syntactic theory and the structure of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

At the end of the course, we will also be reading one or more review articles on the Minimalist Program, though the extent of these readings will depend on the amount of time we have available at that point. Note, too, that there are a few other textbooks that are commonly used in syntax courses like this one (and that I considered for this course). For areas of interest to you, you may consult these other texts as well.

Culicover, P. (1997). *Principles and parameters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Haegeman, L. (1994. *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. Second edition. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Day-by-Day Plan
The plan below is rough and leaves extra time for us to examine certain matters in more detail.

Class	Date	Topic	Reading	
1	J19	Preliminaries	Radford 1	
2	J21	Preliminaries	Radford 1	
3	J26	Syntactically-relevant categories	Radford 2	
4	J28	Syntactically-relevant categories	Radford 2	
5	F2	Problems in categories		
6	F4	Phrasal architecture	Radford 3	
7	F9	Phrasal architecture	Radford 3	
8	F11	Problems in architecture		
9	F16	Empty elements	Radford 4	
10	F18	Empty elements	Radford 4	
11	F23	Problems in empty elements		
12	F25	Checking theory	Radford 5	
		Turn in bibliographies by the end of February		
13	M2	Checking theory	Radford 5	
14	M4	Problems in Checking theory		
15	M9	Head movement	Radford 6	
16	M11	Head movement		<-spring break
17	M23	Operators and variables	Radford 7	
18	M25	Operators and variables	Radford 7	
19	M30	Problems in operators and variables		
20	A1	Arguments and movement	Radford 8	
21	A6	Arguments and movement	Radford 8	
22	A8	Problems in arguments and movement		
23	A13	The structure of VP	Radford 9	
24	A15	The structure of VP	Radford 9	
25	A20	Problems in the structure of VP		
26	A22	Agr projections	Radford 10	
27	A27	Agr projections	Radford 10	
28	A29	Problems in Agr projections		
29	M4	Catch up		
30	M6	Catch up		
		Turn in literature-review papers on the last day of scheduled classes		

Statement on Disabilities

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Second 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation under the terms of these acts, please discuss your needs with me during office hours or present a written request to me after class before the fourth class day. If you have not registered with ODA, I encourage you to do so.

Essential abilities for this course include reading, writing, computer use, and library utilization.