Topics in Phonology

Prof. Mary Niepokuj
Office: 309C Heavilon
e-mail: niepokuj@purdue.edu
Office hours: Monday 11:30-12:30, Wednesday 9:30-10:20 and by appointment
Blackboard: Spring-2016-ENGL-62700-004-XLST

Course requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework assignments</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading class discussion</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will be about four homework assignments. In addition, each person will be expected to lead the discussion of one article later in the semester; you may do this either alone or in pairs. Abstracts for the term paper will be due the 10th week of the semester and are primarily a chance for you to get feedback from me early in the process of writing the term paper. Term papers will be due the Wednesday of finals week.

Required readings: The readings are mainly drawn from the following sources:

- McCarthy, John and Alan Prince. Faithfulness and Identity in Prosodic Morphology. Available at the Rutgers Optimality Archive, #216.


The books will all be available on reserve at HSSE Library under the course number “ENGL 627.” To access online journals such as *Phonology*, go to the Purdue library homepage (http://www.lib.purdue.edu/), click on the link for online journals, search for the journal title, and then follow links as necessary until you access the desired article.

**Note:** In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course: Blackboard web page or my email address (niepokuj@purdue.edu). On days when the weather is particularly snowy or cold, check your email in the morning before coming to class – if I need to cancel class I’ll send out an email message in the morning.

**Tentative syllabus, subject to modification:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>McCarthy chapter 1 (for Friday)</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Kager chapter 1, 2 (up to 2.2.3); McCarthy chapter 2 (skip 2.6, 2.9-end)</td>
<td>Optimality Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Kager 2.2.3-end of chapter; McCarthy chapter 4, 4.1-4.4, 4.6-4.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Kager 78-88; Hayes 1-61</td>
<td>Stress and Meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Hayes 62-105; Kager 142-177</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>no readings assigned; catch-up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Hayes and Steriade article (Hayes, Kirchner, and Steriade 2004); Jun article</td>
<td>Phonetics-Phonology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Pycha article; Myers article; McCarthy chapter 3</td>
<td>Interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>McCarthy and Prince article; Kager 194-256</td>
<td>Autosegmental Morphology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>abstracts due; catch-up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Blevins article; Kiparsky article</td>
<td>Evolutionary Phonology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Iverson and Salmons article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 13  Selkirk; Arvaniti and Ladd  Prosodic
Week 14  Truckenbrodt and Féry; Elordieta  Phonology
Week 15  catch-up and summary

**Term paper:** The paper should be between 12 and 20 pages long, and should involve developing an analysis of some linguistic material within some contemporary phonological framework. It can be an original analysis, or it can involve critically discussing some issue in contemporary phonology. I will give you a more detailed description of what I’m looking for later in the semester. The paper will be due the Wednesday of finals week. On Wednesday, March 23, you’ll turn in a brief (1-3 pages) abstract describing the research you’re planning to do for the term paper.

Students are permitted (in fact, encouraged) to work together on the homework assignments, but each person must turn in their own final version of the assignment. Plagiarism is a matter that I take very seriously; be sure that you are aware of Purdue’s policies concerning this matter. Any plagiarism in the term paper will result in a failing grade in the course.

**Some goals of the class:**

1. To help you develop the ability to use linguistic data to support a theoretical argument. Phono I was primarily focused on learning to identify patterns in linguistic data, and to relate those patterns to theoretical approaches. In Phono II I’d like you to learn more about using data to support theoretical claims.
2. To help you develop the ability to evaluate different theoretical positions. On several occasions we’ll read articles that approach similar phonological behaviors from different theoretical stances. How do you decide which approach you prefer? Are there places where the differences are just superficial? Are there places where the differences are really substantive? Could different approaches be synthesized?
3. To expose you to some interesting areas in contemporary phonological research. There are a lot of possible areas that I could cover; selfishly, I’ve chosen the areas I find the most interesting and fun.
4. To give you experience in reading contemporary phonological literature. Let’s face it, some linguists couldn’t write their way out of a wet paper bag. Unfortunately, you can’t ignore someone’s theoretical claims just because their prose style sucks. I’ve tried to choose articles that are relatively accessible and decently written, but the authors do differ quite a bit stylistically. The more practice you have reading these kinds of articles, the easier it will become.
5. To teach you how to write a paper in linguistics. Although the term paper will be in phonology, the general process of writing a paper is applicable to other areas in linguistics.

**Some questions to think about while reading McCarthy chapter 1:**

1. What issues in the predominant approaches to phonology immediately prior to OT were its developers responding to? Which of the issues mentioned strike you as most significant?
2. Think about the approaches to phonology that we looked at in Phono I. Which of these were primarily focused on rules? Which were focused on representations?
(3) On p. 15, McCarthy quotes two objections Chomsky raised to OT (these are questions 7 and 8 on the page). Are these valid objections? (Obviously not). What response would a proponent of OT make to these objections?

(4) Exercise 17 on p. 25 asks you to apply the principles of OT to joining an internet dating site. Develop your own OT-style ranking of the features physical attractiveness, intelligence, sense of humor, good hygiene, and wealth. What problems arise in determining your ranking? Based on their behaviors, can you think of people you know who seem to have different rankings?

The Three Laws of Robotics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE ORDERING</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS  
2. (2) OBEY ORDERS  
3. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF | [SEE ASIMOV'S STORIES] |
| 1. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS  
2. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF  
3. (2) OBEY ORDERS | EXPLORE MARS!  
HAHA, NO. IT'S COLD AND I'D DIE. |
| 1. (2) OBEY ORDERS  
2. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS  
3. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF | KILLBOT HELLSCAPE |
| 1. (2) OBEY ORDERS  
2. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF  
3. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS | TERRIFYING STANDOFF |
| 1. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF  
2. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS  
3. (2) OBEY ORDERS | KILLBOT HELLSCAPE |
| 1. (3) PROTECT YOURSELF  
2. (2) OBEY ORDERS  
3. (1) DON'T HARM HUMANS | KILLBOT HELLSCAPE |