**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT**
**COURSE CHANGE REQUEST for GenEd Distribution**

* * * This change is not effective for registration or publication until this request has been reviewed by the Provost. * * *

**Change Effective for Term:** Fall 2010  
**School/College:** College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)  
**Department:** Linguistics (LIN)

**Subject:** LIN  
**Course Number:** 346  
**Check here for NO CHANGE:** □

- ☐ INACTIVATE Course  
- ☐ INACTIVATE Crosslisting(s)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Only where a change is requested, please complete the Requested Change column below; leave other lines blank. Add separate page(s) if space provided is not sufficient for your response.

### AS CURRENTLY OFFERED

1. **Title:** Linguistic Analysis
2. **Credit Hours:** (3)
3. **Repeat Status:** *(see CURRENT Course Description below)*
4. **Crosslisting(s):**
5. **GE Distribution:** S

### REQUESTED CHANGE

to:
- Total ____ -or- Variable ____ to ____
- Max of ____ credits -or- ________

- to:
  - FYE First Year Experience
  - CAP Capstone
  - H Humanities
  - S Social Science
  - GB Global Studies
  - E Fine Arts
  - HW Health & Wellness
  - FQ Finance & Quantitative
  - N Nat Science and/or
  - NL Nat Sci Lab
  - T Technology

### 6. CURRENT Course Description:

*Problem-solving in phonology, morphology, and syntax. Practical and theoretical issues in linguistic analysis, using a wide variety of languages as illustrations.*

### 7. NEW Course Description (as it should appear in the Catalog):

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**UM-FLINT RECEIVED**

**OCT 23 2009**

**College of Arts & Sciences**

**Dean’s Office**

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**REQUESTED BY:**  

**Department Chair**  

**Date:** 10/23/09

**Department Chair of Crosslist(s) or Prerequisite(s)**  

**Date:** 10/23/09

**Dean**  

**Date:** 10/26/09

**Dean of Crosslist(s) or Prerequisite(s)**  

**Date:**

**GECAC**  

**Date:**

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**REVIEWED BY:**  

**Catalog Editor**  

**Date:**

**Provost**  

**Date:**

**Catalog Coordinator (Registrar’s Office)**  

**Date:**
REQUEST FOR GENERAL EDUCATION DISTRIBUTION DESIGNATION

Directions: Please indicate which learning outcomes will be addressed in this course (place the corresponding number and outcome where indicated). A minimum of five learning outcomes must be addressed for a course to be eligible for general education distribution designation. Please provide a brief narrative as to how the course objectives/key concepts address each learning outcome selected, and indicate what tools for assessment will be used.

| Course Title: Linguistic Analysis                                                                 |
| Department: English | Course Prefix: LIN | Course Number: 346 |
| No. 2 | Learning Outcome: Demonstrate facility with research methods                                      |
| Narrative: The course will expose students to various research methods in linguistics, teach them what types of research questions are best answered with what method, and teach how to go about conducting these different types of research. Students learn to collect original data and select and use appropriate sources for their research. |
| Assessment tools: Research papers and reports |
| No. 3 | Learning Outcome: Demonstrate the ability to think critically                                       |
| Narrative: The course will require students to distinguish between facts and opinion about human language. Students will analyze linguistic data from a variety of languages with respect to sounds, words, sentences and/or language use. They will also compare different viewpoints about human language. |
| Assessment tools: Data analysis workshops, research papers and reports, discussion (in class and online) |
| No. 6 | Learning Outcome: Participate in dialogue that involves respectful and careful listening            |
| Narrative: The course encourages students to express their opinions about language in an articulate and thoughtful way, while respecting others. Students analyze and discuss linguistic data together and negotiate among themselves in group work. |
| Assessment tools: Workshops, discussion (in class and online), group work |
| No. 9 | Learning Outcome: Demonstrate knowledge of economics, finance, and quantitative literacy; health and well-being; and science and technology |
| Narrative: In this course students use mathematical tools to analyze data from a variety of languages with the purpose of determining the abstract mental systems underlying these data. For example, they establish dependency relationships between linguistic features (such as third person and gender), and correspondences (one-to-many mappings) between abstract sound concepts (i.e. phonemes) and possible pronunciations of these concepts (i.e. allophones). |
| Assessment tools: Data analysis, research papers and reports |
| No. 10 | Learning Outcome: Use multiple perspectives and methodologies to analyze real or hypothetical problems |
| Narrative: This course raises student awareness about the interaction between linguistic theory and practice. Students will apply knowledge about the structure of language and/or language use to real problems from a variety of dialects and languages. |
| Assessment tools: Research papers and reports |
Outcome 9: detailed explanation and illustration of how it is achieved.

In LIN 346 (Linguistic analysis) students use mathematical tools to analyze data from a variety of languages with the purpose of determining the abstract mental systems underlying these data. In illustration 1 below, I show how they, for example, establish correspondences (one-to-many mappings) between abstract sound concepts (i.e. **phonemes**) and possible pronunciations of these concepts (i.e. **allophones**). In illustration 2, I show how they establish hierarchies between linguistic features (in linguistic theory, such hierarchies are called **feature geometries**).

**Illustration 1:**

**Data** – students are introduced to Dutch obstruents (a class of sounds with significant obstruction in the vocal tract) and to the ways in which these obstruents behave in clusters in the middle of words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>position</th>
<th>[−voice]</th>
<th>[+voice]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>word-internal</td>
<td>tp [batpak] “swim suit”</td>
<td>db [vudbal] “football”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/bad/ + /pak/</td>
<td>/vut/ + /bal/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/reʃ/ + /tas/</td>
<td>/ɔn/ + /mis/ + /βar/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background** – students have the following theoretical background to answer questions about this data set:

In linguistic theory, sounds are analyzed as bundles of abstract and distinct **features**. Examples of formal features are “obstruent” (the abstraction of the presence or absence of obstruction in the vocal tract) and “voice” (the abstraction of the presence or absence of vibration of the vocal cords).

**Task** – students now establish correspondences (in the mathematical sense of the word) between the **abstract concept** of an obstruent (or, obstruent **phoneme**) and the possible **pronunciations** (or, **allophones**) of this concept in Dutch. They write a formal rule to represent these correspondences as well as explaining the rule in prose.³

*Formal rule:* / + obstruent / → [ α voice ] / ___ [α voice] [+ obstruent]

*Rule in prose:* Obstruents are pronounced with the same voicing quality as that of a following obstruent.

³ Note that the variable “α” in the rule below stands for a value (+ or −) that may vary. The result of the rule is a one-to-many mapping (i.e. a correspondence) between the mental concept of obstruent sounds and their various pronunciations.
Illustration 2:

Data – without having their attention called to the grammatical category of Person, students are presented with data from a variety of languages that support the generalization that human language treats the grammatical property of 3rd person differently from that of 1st and 2nd person. The data show, for example, that 1st and 2nd person are often similar in form and inflection but dissimilar from that of 3rd person (think of English 1st and 2nd person I make and you make versus 3rd person he makes). It also shows that 3rd person is much more likely to be subject to subdivisions such as Gender (think of English 3rd person male he, female she and inanimate it versus the genderless 1st and 2nd person forms I and you).

Background – students learn how dependencies among linguistic features are represented by means of tree diagrams:

```
[X]
[Y]  [Z]
```

Task – students first question whether the data provide evidence for dependencies between Person features. Next, they are the given 5 possible features [person], [participant] (for “participant in conversation”), [1] (for “1st person”), [2], and [3]. They formally represent the dependencies between these features as well as stating the dependencies in prose.

**Formal representation:** [person]

```
[participant]
[1]  [2]  [3]
```

Description: 1st and 2nd person form a class (“participant in conversation”) that excludes 3rd person; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person together form the class of “person”.

Request for General Education Distribution Designation