

Linguistics 450: Introduction to Phonetics – Syllabus & Calendar

Texts

- **Required:** *A Course in Phonetics, 6th ed.*, by Peter Ladefoged and Keith Johnson
- **Optional:** *Introductory Phonology* by Bruce Hayes

Please note that there are significant differences between editions of the Ladefoged & Johnson text, so use editions other than the sixth edition at your own risk. We will only use a couple chapters from the Hayes book, and scans of them are posted on the class webpage. However, this is the text for LING 451: Phonology 1, so you might want to buy your Hayes book now. Copies of both books are on 2-hour reserve at Odegaard Undergraduate Library.

Course Requirements

This course will introduce you to the linguistic study of speech sounds. It is critically important that you keep abreast of the required readings and assignments and do not miss class. Please do the assigned readings before coming to class. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting lecture notes from a classmate.

Learning Goals

After completing this course, you should:

- be familiar with the anatomy of the vocal tract and the terminology used to describe speech articulations
- have a good working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and be able to use it to transcribe speech
- have some experience hearing and producing the sounds of the world's languages
- understand basic acoustic theory as it relates to speech sounds
- be able to use software to analyze speech sounds
- grasp the ways in which speech sounds can vary, and be able to assess patterns in variation to perform basic phonological analysis.

Evaluated Work

Homeworks, quizzes, and the final exam will all be taken online, using educational software called Moodle. You will need to create a separate account on the Moodle website, as the Moodle system is not linked up to your UW Net ID. *Please use your UW Net ID as your Moodle username, and your real first and last names in your Moodle account, so that I can effectively track grades.* These activities can be done from any computer with a reliable internet connection, as long as (1) it has Apple QuickTime software, and (2) you have permission to install a new font on it (see details in the Technology section on the course webpage).

Homeworks are typically short (5-15 questions, though a few are longer) and do not have a time limit: once you start, you can save your progress and return later to finish them (but be sure to click "submit answers" when you are satisfied with your work).

Quizzes are similar to homeworks, but each counts more toward your final grade. Quizzes are also timed, so once you begin work on a quiz, you will have a fixed amount of time to finish it (typically 15 minutes). Quizzes allow only one attempt and cannot be retaken.

Homeworks, transcriptions, and quizzes all must be completed **by the beginning of class on the due dates** to receive credit. Your recorded grade will be the one you received on your **first attempt**. Assignments may be reopened later for students to use for review.

The final exam is split into two 1-hour sections that are just like quizzes (only longer). Both parts of the final must be completed during the final exam period, as indicated on the Calendar. They can be taken in any order, and you do not have to take them both on the same day.

Transcription exercises are a way to train your ears to distinguish subtle variations in speech sounds and help you master the symbols of the IPA. We will practice in class using worksheets that will count toward your final grade. As long as you make honest attempts and correct your work, you will get full credit. If you are absent on a day we do transcription, you may get the worksheet from the webpage and fill it out on your own. Turn it in within two class days, and you will receive the answer key, from which you must correct your own work.

There are also transcription exercises on Moodle, which you are encouraged to use for your own practice. (They are not graded.) They will require you to type phonetic symbols into the computer, so you will need to use an online character picker to do these exercises. The Moodle system will only give partial credit if your answer doesn't match the key exactly, but many variations are acceptable. You should compare your answers to the key to make sure you're not missing important distinctions. The exercises can be repeated, and each repetition has a new randomization of questions, so you may practice more than the initial set.

Labs are designed to give you practical experience with the tools and methodologies of practicing phoneticians. This includes evaluating the quality of reference materials, analyzing speech sounds using software tools, and interpreting, explaining, and presenting your results (including creating appropriate graphs). You are encouraged to work together on the lab exercises and talk to each other about your findings, but the lab write-ups must be done individually (submitted through the Catalyst Dropbox). There will be 2-3 labs; more information will be available later in the course.

Projects involve research into the phonetic and phonological properties of a language that you are not familiar with. Each student will work on one language project, involving skills such as transcribing words, assembling phoneme charts, and comparing features to other languages, all gathered together in one final report. Further details on the project will be available later in the course.

Grading

Grades for Moodle-based assignments are available within Moodle. Labs and projects will be turned in via the Catalyst Drop Box, and grades will appear in the Catalyst GradeBook. Moodle scores will be entered into the GradeBook by category (e.g., one score for all homeworks will appear in the GradeBook, but you can see your scores on individual assignments in Moodle). The final course grade is weighted as follows:

- 5% – Class participation and preparation (including daily readings)
- 10% – Transcription exercises (2-3/week, in class and/or on Moodle)
- 20% – Homework assignments (~daily, on Moodle)
- 12% – Quizzes (3-4 total, on Moodle)
- 15% – Labs (2-3 total)
- 18% – Project (2-3 parts, including written portion)
- 20% – Final exam (2 parts, on Moodle)

It is your responsibility to keep track of your score in the course. If you want to discuss your grade in person, please make an appointment. Because email can be unsecure, I will only discuss specific scores over email in reply to a question that includes specific scores (leaving the decision to trust your email up to you when you ask the question).

Calendar

Class #	Class Topics	Reading (do before class)	Homework (due before class)
1	Course intro, review	L&J ch 1	Review course webpage
2	IPA		font support
3	Acoustics	L&J ch 8	anatomy
4	Source-filter	L&J ch 8	IPA Eng consonants
5	Spectrograms	L&J ch 8	IPA Eng vowels
6	Spectrograms	L&J ch 8	acoustics
7	Vowels	L&J ch 9	Quiz 1
8	Measuring Vowels, Lab 1		spectrograms
9	Place	L&J ch 7	IPA all vowels articulation
10	Manner	L&J ch 7	vowel analysis
11	Airstream	L&J ch 6	
12	Phonation, VOT, Lab 2	L&J ch 6	Lab 1: Vowels
13	Syllables, Suprasegmentals	L&J ch 10, 5	IPA implosives, ejectives, clicks
14	Suprasegmentals	L&J ch 10, 5	obstruent dynamics; Quiz 2; Project transcriptions due
15	ToBI, Lab 3; Transcription	L&J ch 5, 2	word stress; Lab 2: VOT
16	English consonants	L&J ch 3	IPA all vowel phonation
17	English vowels	L&J ch 4	intonation, tone
18	Phonology	Hayes ch 2	IPA all consonants articulation
19	Features	Hayes ch 4	Eng word transcription
20	Phonology review		phonemics; Quiz 3
21	Review		Project final report due
22	Final exam		natural classes; features