

**LING 310**  
**Phonology**

**Syllabus**

**Fall 2009**  
**W 1:10–4:00pm, Shapiro (SAB) 137**

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### Course Description

From the course catalog: *Phonology is the study of sound patterns within and across languages. This course builds upon prior knowledge of phonetic description and requires familiarity with the International Phonetic Alphabet. In this course, we will develop, question, and improve upon formal descriptions for the internal structure of sounds and for the rules governing their systematic behavior. Specific topics to be covered include distinctive feature theory, phonemes, allophones, linear rules, rule ordering, opacity, morphology, autosegmental phonology, and current trends in phonological theory. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: participation in discussions, weekly homework, a midterm exam, and a final exam. Prerequisites: Linguistics 100 or Linguistics 210. No enrollment limit (expected: 10)*

The course website is located at: <http://wso.williams.edu/~nsanders/LING310/>

The prerequisite can be satisfied by displaying knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Specifically, you should know all of the symbols for the phonemes and major allophones of English and be familiar with the symbols for non-English sounds (especially the more common sounds like front round vowels, trills, retroflexes, uvulars, etc.). You should also have a basic understanding of the geography of the vocal tract.

### Readings

There is no textbook for this course, though occasional readings will be distributed. All information needed to learn the material will be made available in lecture.

### Grading

Your grade for the course is calculated as a weighted combination of your class participation (15%), homework average (55%), midterm exam score (15%), and final exam score (15%).

### Homework

Homework is generally assigned on a Wednesday and due the following Wednesday, so you should usually have a full week to work on it. Homework is available from the course website, so missing lecture is not an excuse for skipping homework. Homework is due at the beginning of class since solutions are often discussed in lecture. For this reason, late homework cannot be accepted. To compensate for this strict policy, your lowest homework grade is dropped when computing your final grade.

You are encouraged to work together in groups, but in accordance with the Williams College Honor Code, you must write up your own solutions, in your own words, listing the names of all students you consulted with. Suspected violations will be pursued to the full extent of College policy!

Your homework should be either neatly written or typed in a reasonable font with reasonable spacing and margins for writing comments (e.g., 10–12pt font, double-spaced prose, 1–1.5” margins, using only one side of the page). Please, do not submit spiral-bound paper with ragged edges! Staple (rather than paper clip or fold) multiple pages together. Be sure to put your name on every page in case they get separated.

## Exams

There are two exams: a midterm and a final. Both exams are essay-style take-home exams that are somewhat more difficult and comprehensive than a typical homework assignment. Unlike with regular homework, you are not allowed to work on these exams with anyone else! Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be pursued to the full extent of College policy!

## Tentative Schedule

Sept. 10	R		introductory meeting, IPA competency test
16	W		phonemes, allophones, distinctive features, HW#1 assigned
23	W		distinctive features (cont'd)
30	W		phonological rules
Oct. 7	W	HW#1 due	autosegmental phonology, HW#2 assigned
14	W	HW#2 due	prosodic phonology, HW#3 assigned
21	W	HW#3 due	morphophonology, HW#4 assigned
28	W	HW#4 due	morphophonology (cont'd), HW#5 assigned
Nov. 4	W	HW#5 due	morphophonology (cont'd), midterm exam assigned
11	W	<b>MIDTERM DUE</b>	rule systems and interaction, HW#6 assigned
18	W	HW#6 due	conspiracies and constraints, HW#7 assigned
			— <i>Thanksgiving break, no class</i> —
Dec. 2	W	HW#7 due	Optimality Theory, HW#8 assigned
9	W	HW#8 due	Optimality Theory (cont'd), final exam assigned
19	Sa	<b>FINAL EXAM DUE by 5pm</b>	