



School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

LING 406, Special Topic: An Introduction to Minimalist Syntax Trimester 1, 2009

1. Course Coordinator:

Elizabeth Pearce

VZ 303

Ext. 5616

Office hour: see VZ 303 door notice

Email: elizabeth.pearce@vuw.ac.nz

2. Staff: as above

3. Class times and rooms:

Seminars: **Mon 10:00-11:50.** The location for the first meeting is VZ 303, with locations of subsequent meetings to be determined.

4. Announcements:

Notices relating to the course will be posted on the Honours Notice Board outside VZ 307 on Floor 3 of the Von Zedlitz building.

5. LALS main office: VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Rachel Scholes, Postgraduate administration Tel: 463 5600, Fax: 463 5604

Rachel.Scholes@vuw.ac.nz

School webpage: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/>

7. Course content:

Part of the content of this course will be based on the Textbook (see **§12** below). Other accompanying content of this course will be set out in the schedule of seminar topics which will be developed progressively from an initial outline as emphases and directions are identified.

8. Learning objectives:

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- (i) Read and understand current literature on selected topics in the Minimalist framework.
- (ii) Marshal evidence from language data in order to construct hypotheses in the terms of a syntactic model.
- (iii) Know where and how to access material relevant for research in syntax.
- (iv) Set out the findings of an investigation into a topic in syntax in the format that is appropriate to a research paper in syntax.

9. Course delivery

See under §3, §7 and §17.

10. Expected workload:

In order to make satisfactory progress in this course you should expect to devote to it, on average, 21 hours a week throughout the trimester, to make up a total of 300 hours. This includes the 24 hours of attendance at classes and 48 hours of class preparation time. The remaining workload hours are applied to background reading and preparation for assignments, proportional to their assessment weighting. Some students will find they need to do more than this, and students aiming for high grades will almost certainly need to do more.

11. Group work: N/A

12. Readings:

The set textbook for this course is:

Hornstein, Norbert, Jairo Nunes and Kleanthes K Grohmann. 2005.
Understanding Minimalism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lists of references will be distributed in class. These will include lists of general works on current syntactic theory and lists of readings appropriate to the topics covered in the course.

13. Materials and equipment: N/A

14. Assessment requirements:

Assessment will be based on three pieces of work:

	<u>Due date</u>	<u>Contribution to final grade</u>
i) Review (10 pages)	30 March	20%
ii) Report (12 pages)	4 May	30%
iii) Research Essay (30 pages)*	5 June	50%

*Page count is the maximum length for typed, 1.5 spaced A4 pages including diagrams, tables and references.

All Assignments are due by **4pm** on the date specified.

Two copies of each of the set pieces of work should be handed in to the LALS Office (VZ 210) or directly to the course Coordinator. Please keep back-up copies of your submitted work.

Reasonable accommodation is made with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities (see General University Policies under §20 below).

The Review and the Report are based on published papers and they review and discuss particular issues in an aspect of syntactic theory.

The marking criteria for the set pieces of work are those of the Assessment Criteria of the Linguistics Programme (distributed separately) in accordance with the objectives associated with the different pieces of set work.

Both the Review and the Report have the aim of providing students with initial experience in demonstrating mastery of the skills for meeting objectives (i), (ii) and (iii) in §8.

The Research Essay is a research paper on a topic in syntax. The Research Essay tests the ability of the students to meet the Objectives (i) - (iv) in §8. In essence, the student should be able to demonstrate that he/she has (a) knowledge of the basic principles of and some recent developments in the theoretical framework and (b) the ability to apply the model to the analysis and description of language particular phenomena. The individual student will determine the topics of their papers in consultation with the course lecturer. The length of the papers may vary in accordance with the topics selected, but the maximum length is as stated above.

Submitting assignments and tasks

General guidelines

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due

Hard copy submissions

- Type on the two sides of A4 paper
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves unless necessary
- Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves

15. Penalties:

In line with the Linguistics Programme policy, assignments handed in after the due date will receive a considerably reduced grade unless accompanied by a medical certificate or other evidence of exceptional circumstances. If you require an extension for good reasons, ask the course coordinator ahead of the date for handing in the set piece of work.

Work which is handed after the time and date on which it is due will be subject to a scale of penalties involving a reduction in the grade it is given. The scale is as follows:

	<u>Penalty</u>
one day late	1 grade
three days late	2 grades
one week late	3 grades

'1 grade' is the difference between C+ and C, between A- and B+. etc.

You are strongly advised to begin work early on your assignments to be sure of getting access to the appropriate books and articles, to avoid last-minute rush, and to ensure that your work is not needlessly penalised. If your work is handed in late, it may also be returned to you late.

Plagiarism is not acceptable in assessed work, and will be penalized. The penalty will depend on the severity of the plagiarism (see §19 below).

If you encounter any problems in your work for this assignment, discuss these with the course coordinator well before the due date for the assignment.

16. Responsibilities for practicum arrangements (practicum courses only): N/A

17. Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

Requirements for this course are that you must attend all the classes as timetabled and that you must make a satisfactory attempt at the three set pieces of in-term work listed under §14. above. "Satisfactory" means that where pieces of work set have not reached a C standard, they must nevertheless reflect the fact that the assignment has been taken seriously and that a reasonable amount of effort has been devoted to the topic. No assessment work submitted after 12 June 2009 will be graded.

18. Communication of additional information:

Additional information or information on changes will be conveyed to students in class and/or via email to all class members.

19. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

20. General University Requirements

General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

21. Trimester dates:

March	Mon 2	FIRST TRIMESTER BEGINS
April	Fri 10 Good Friday	MIDTRIMESTER BREAK BEGINS
	MonTue 1314	Easter Monday and Tuesday, University holidays
	Mon 27	FIRST TRIMESTER RESUMES
June	Fri 5	FIRST TRIMESTER ENDS. Lectures cease
	Mon 8	Midyear study period begins
	Fri 12	Midyear examinations begin
July	Wed 1	Midyear examinations end
	Thur 2	MIDYEAR BREAK BEGINS