COURSE DESCRIPTION
This seminar provides an introduction to the major works that have influenced, molded and constitute the field of linguistic anthropology. Our goal here is to understand the interdependent relationship between language and culture and how various theorist and analyst have looked at this relationship from philosophical and ethnographic perspectives.

COURSE TEXTS
All required readings will be posted to Blackboard in an electronic form, they come from various articles and book chapters.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
- In-Class Presentation/Lead Discussion (30%)
- Seminar Paper (60%)
- Attendance and Participation (10%)

COURSE POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION
- Graduate seminars depend entirely on the active participation of their members. My job here is to facilitate, direct, and encourage your growth as a scholar. Your job is to read, think, and talk to each other.
- Different norms govern discussion in graduate and undergraduate settings. We set the bar a bit lower in undergraduate settings, where the goal is to get everyone to read the text, have a feeling about it, and generate a coherent interpretation. Here at the graduate level, I will expect more of you. Our goal is to prepare you to participate in the professional discussion of anthropology. Scholarship is a hierarchical field: the best work demonstrates a respectful awareness of all the scholarship that has come before, as well as daring confidence in its own originality. All of this is to say that you may experience something new in this class: I may correct something you say. Not all answers are equally good ones, and I may intervene to improve the quality of our discussion. I understand this may be an uncomfortable experience, but being a scholar requires gracefully fielding challenges to your thought and discovering where it needs to be strengthened. Don’t take it personally. I am just doing my job. Please do contact me after class if you feel like you need to process your experience in seminar.
- The SDSU Academic Senate defines plagiarism as “the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the University as one’s own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source.” Please do your own work and use MLA-style parenthetical documentation to credit the ideas of others appropriately. If you need assistance with an assignment or have questions about how to use source material appropriately, please contact me. Committing plagiarism will harm your grade in this class and endanger your status at SDSU.
- The most reliable way to contact me is by e-mail. If I receive your email Monday through Friday, I will generally be able to answer it within twenty-four hours. I generally do not check my email on the weekends. If you need help with more complicated questions and concerns—for example, developing a paper topic or reviewing a draft—these are better handled in person. For these kinds of
questions, please come see me during office hours or contact me to make an appointment outside of office hours.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

**Attendance and participation** (10%): I will evaluate the quality and frequency of your participation in seminar, as well as your attendance. Missing more than two seminar meetings will impact your grade. There are no excused absences. You do not need to contact me to explain or ask permission for absences.

**In-Class Presentations** (30% each): Every student will give two presentation. You are expected to give background information on the authors, such was where they studied and whom they studied with and how this influenced their work. You are also expected to be able to summarized the basic argument of the author. You also need to be able to draw out connections between the readings of each week and consider how the readings might connect to previous texts we have read throughout the semester. You are also responsible for coming up with 3 – 5 discussion questions that will help the discussion and conservation going.

**Seminar paper** (60%): Your major assignment in this course is a 12 – 15-page seminar paper that presents an original critical treatment of aspect of linguistic anthropology not covered extensively in this class. This will give you an opportunity to dive more deeply into a topic or consider how a topic might relate to a specific language or community. I encourage you to choose a topic that will be useful for or at least relate to the Master’s research that you are already doing as part of your degree here. I also encourage you to consult with me at least once as you develop your paper topic.

**A WORD ABOUT GRADES**

In assigning grades, I will consider both your conduct in seminar discussions and presentations as well as your written work. I give out three varieties of grades in graduate settings:

- **A** Exceeds expectations for MA-level scholarship; excellent work
- **A-** Meets expectations for MA-level scholarship; satisfactory work
- **B+ or B** Does not meet expectations for MA-level scholarship

If you have a question about your final grade, I will be happy to offer you a breakdown of its computation. I do not negotiate grades. I reserve the right to exercise my professional judgment in evaluating your class performance.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Week 1 (Aug. 24th)**

**Introduction:** General introduction to the readings and to each other. Go over syllabi and course requirements. Schedule presentations.

**Week 2 (Aug. 31st)**

**Linguistic Turns:** These reading detail broad social scientific theoretical shifts that draw our attention toward language and semiotics.


**LABOR DAY (Sept. 7th) **

**NO CLASS**
Week 3 (Sept. 14th)  CLASS CANCELLED

Week 4 (Sept. 21st)  Early Continental Notions of Language: Current semiotics and theories of how language and communication works to Saussure, and Bakhtin makes an argument for the variety of way in which we use language.


Week 5 (Sept. 28th)  Linguistics Crosses the Pond: Study of language is affected by Enlightenment notions of rationality and science and this affects the way language is view in general. These readings consider this idea and how it relates to the early American linguists.


Week 6 (Oct. 5th)  Linguistic Relativity: Sapir and Whorf are among the most important American linguists and anthropologists whose work is still impact linguistic anthropology?


Week 7 (Oct. 12th)  Speech Acts: The first two readings come out of the field of philosophy and they ask how can we accomplish things with our words/language.


Week 8 (Oct. 19th)  Ethnomethodology: These readings illustrate the way sociologists in the 1950s and 1960s thought about how language connects to and creates culture and societal institutions particularly in the quotidian and at the interpersonal level.


Week 9 (Oct. 26th)  Verbal Art and Speech Play: These articles look at how people use language creatively to make cultural meaning and how to analyze this performative use of language.

Week 10 (Nov. 2nd) Performance & Narrative: Performance refers to the way we use language skillfully, artfully, or creatively to reinforce cultural values individual identity. In particular some of these reading focus on how people perform narratives.


Week 11 (Nov. 9th) Habitual Patterning: Bourdieu is known for examining how power is maintained through culture and institutions, and these reading examine the role language plays in this asking how language is a part of our habitual patterning of behavior that creates and sustains culture.


Week 12 (Nov. 16th) Language in Context: The meaning of utterances are heavily dependent on context and the same time language itself can create context in an ongoing fashion.


Week 13 (Nov. 23rd) Language Ideology: These reading look at folk views of language use and what aspects of our language use we are aware of and which ones we are less cognizant of.


Week 14 (Nov. 30th) Language & Identity: How is language linked to identity to language and what happens when someone is able to speak multiple languages.

Reading: Paul Kroskity, “An Evolving Ethnicity Among the Arizona Tewa” pp. 177-212; Don Kulick, “No” pp. 139-151; Kathryn Woolard, “Sentences in the Language Prison” pp. 268-78; Norma
Mendoza-Denton “‘That’s the Whole Thing [tin]’: Discourse Markers and Teenage Speech” pp. 265-291.

Week 15 (Nov. 7th)

**Language & Power:** Language is inherently tied to the exercise of power whether by dominant or groups trying to resist regimes of power. How does language get imbued with this power and are the various sources of power?


December 17th

**Seminar Papers Due by NOON Thursday, Dec. 17th**