# Term Information

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| **Effective Term** | Autumn 2022 |
| *Previous Value* | *Autumn 2019* |

# Course Change Information

**What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)**

We are proposing that the course be added to the new GE in the category: Foundations: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

**What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?**

While a constructed language is not a traditional work of art, it is nonetheless a creative work of artistic and literary self-expression. This course teaches

students how and why constructed languages are made, and enables them to create their own languages and to critique the work of others.

**What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?**

**(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?**

NA. The course is currently a linguistics major elective, and will remain so.

**Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request?** No

**Is this a request to withdraw the course?** No

# General Information

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| **Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area** | Linguistics |
| **Fiscal Unit/Academic Org** | Linguistics - D0566 |
| **College/Academic Group** | Arts and Sciences |
| **Level/Career** | Undergraduate |
| **Course Number/Catalog** | 3502 |
| **Course Title** | Klingon, Elvish, Dothraki: The Linguistics of Constructed Languages |
| **Transcript Abbreviation** | Conlangs |
| **Course Description** | Constructed languages like Klingon, Elvish, and Dothraki may seem like the province of ComiCon goers, but they have a long and varied intellectual history. Constructed languages require a deep understanding of both the mechanics of language and how languages relate to the cultures that they come from. This course examines the linguistic complexity of constructed languages. |
| **Semester Credit Hours/Units** | Fixed: 3 |

# Offering Information

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| **Length Of Course** | 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week |
| **Flexibly Scheduled Course** | Never |
| **Does any section of this course have a distance education component?** | No |
| **Grading Basis** | Letter Grade |
| **Repeatable** | No |
| **Course Components** | Lecture |
| **Grade Roster Component** | Lecture |
| **Credit Available by Exam** | No |
| **Admission Condition Course** | No |
| **Off Campus** | Never |
| **Campus of Offering** | Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster |

*Previous Value*                                    *Columbus*

# Prerequisites and Exclusions

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**
**Exclusions**
**Electronically Enforced**                         No

# Cross-Listings

**Cross-Listings**

# Subject/CIP Code

**Subject/CIP Code**                                16.0102
**Subsidy Level**                                   Baccalaureate Course
**Intended Rank**                                   Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

# Requirement/Elective Designation

   Literary, Visual and Performing Arts
The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

*Previous Value*

*The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units*

# Course Details

**Course goals or learning**          • Students will recognize the characteristics of natural human language.
**objectives/outcomes**
                                      • Students will understand how languages can be constructed.

**Content Topic List**                • Students will analyze the linguistic complexity of constructed languages.

                                      • Students will be able to reflect on the history and motivation behind the creation of constructed languages.
**Sought Concurrence**                No

# Attachments                         • 3502_Revised_GE.pdf: syllabus

                                        *(Syllabus. Owner: McGory,Julia Tevis)*

                                      • draft GE form.pdf: GE Rationale (completed form)

                                        *(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: McGory,Julia Tevis)*

# Comments                            • Please provide comments and concerns to Julia McGory, mcgory.12osu.edu *(by McGory,Julia Tevis on 09/02/2021 03:32 PM)*

# Workflow Information

| Status | User(s) | Date/Time | Step |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted | McGory,Julia Tevis | 09/02/2021 03:32 PM | Submitted for Approval |
| Approved | McGory,Julia Tevis | 09/02/2021 03:33 PM | Unit Approval |
| Approved | Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal | 10/04/2021 05:51 PM | College Approval |
| Pending Approval | Cody,Emily Kathryn<br>Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler<br>Hanlin,Deborah Kay<br>Hilty,Michael<br>Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal<br>Steele,Rachel Lea | 10/04/2021 05:51 PM | ASCCAO Approval |

# Linguistics 3502
## The Linguistics of Constructed Languages

## Spring XXXX

**Time:** TR 9:35-10:55            **Place:** University Hall 82

### Dr. Julia Papke

email. papke.5@osu.edu      ph. 614-247-5322
Oxley Hall, Room 112
Office Hours: TR 11-12, and by appointment

**Course description:**

Constructed languages like Klingon, Elvish, and Dothraki may seem like the province of ComiCon goers, but they have a long and varied intellectual history. Like other forms of artistic self-expression, constructed languages serve a variety of aesthetic, social and political aims. Constructed languages can fill out the aesthetics of an invented world--- the Elvish languages of J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings are designed to sound beautiful and ethereal, while the Black Speech spoken by his villains is designed to be rough and harsh. Some languages are meant to make philosophical statements, or even political arguments: Suzette Haden Elgin's Láadan evokes her feminist politics with its carefully written dictionary definitions for words like radíidin "non-holiday, a time allegedly a holiday but actually so much a burden because of work and preparations that it's a dreaded occasion; especially when there are too many guests and none of them help." A few languages, like Sonja Lang's Toki Pona, are stand-alone artistic creations, designed to push the boundaries of what a language can be. With just over a hundred words, Toki Pona invites its students to consider how minimal a language can be, and what kinds of meanings are worth expressing in the first place.

This course focuses on how and why languages are invented, and gives you the tools to create your own language and to critique the work of others. Constructing a language requires a deep understanding of both the mechanics of language and how languages relate to the cultures that they come from. This course examines constructed languages with several objectives in mind: a) to learn the linguistic terms and concepts used in design and documentation of constructed languages b) to understand how constructed languages use linguistic features to achieve a particular aesthetic or cultural impact, c) to study the history and motivation behind the creation of important and culturally influential constructed languages, and d) to critique and reflect on the design elements of your own and others' constructed languages.

**Textbooks:**

*The Language Construction Kit*, Mark Rosenfelder
*Advanced Language Construction*, Mark Rosenfelder
*The Conlanger's Lexipedia*, Mark Rosenfelder
*\*A Dictionary of Made-up Languages*, Stephen D. Rogers

*A Dictionary of Made-up Languages* is available online through the university library and does *not* need to be purchased for the course.

**Course Requirements (and percentage towards final grade):**

1. Weekly Homework.......................................................................55%
2. Course Project.............................................................................30%
    1. Conlang Relay: 10%
    2. Final submission: 20%
3. Workshops..................................................................................15%

| Foundations: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts | |
|---|---|
| Goals | Expected Learning Outcomes |
| Goal 1: Successful students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate major forms of human thought, cultures, and expression; and demonstrate capacities for aesthetic and culturally informed understanding. | Successful students are able to … <br><br> 1.1 Analyze and interpret existing constructed languages which have important social, cultural or literary value. |
| | 1.2 Describe and explain constructed languages, how culture relates intrinsically to language and to language design, and learn how to describe your own developing language. |
| | 1.3 Evaluate how artistic ideas, including language, influence and shape human beliefs and the interactions between language and human perception. |
| | 1.4 Evaluate social and ethical implications in language creation, including the creation of auxlangs, languages designed to influence human thought, and the place of conlangs in real-world communities. |

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| Goal 2: Successful students will experience the arts and reflect on that experience critically and creatively. | 2.1 Engage in active participation with conlanging: the creation and documentation of a new language, starting from sounds and working up to the ability to compose and translate texts. |
| | 2.2 Critically reflect on and share conlanging experiences with other students by engaging in peer feedback sessions and translating peer languages. |

**Grading Policies:**

### THE COURSE PROJECT:
Nearly everything you do in this course is part of the project: a linguistic description of a constructed language of your creation. By the end of the term you will have:

1. A lexicon of words in your language
2. A grammar of your language including phonetic, phonological, syntactic and morphological information
3. Several example texts written in your language

We will spend the term working on assignments that will build into this linguistic description.

### HOMEWORK:
There will be 11 homework assignments, which are all parts of the project. It will begin with an idea for the language, and then you will start building the sound system, the lexicon, the grammar, and finally begin constructing sentences and then whole narratives in your language. **It is very important not to fall behind on the homework, as nearly all of it builds on what's been done before.**

Homework assignments will be handed out at the end of each week and due at the beginning of the following week except when there is a translation relay ongoing.

You may work on homework assignments with your classmates, but the work you turn in must be your own.

### WORKSHOPS:
Each week, there will be peer workshops (pair or groupwork done in class). These will give you the opportunity to work on specific aspects of your language, to get peer feedback, and to ask questions about the project as we go. Later in the course, you will do short assignments with existing conlangs that we are studying. At the end of every workshop, you

will turn in the work you did. Because these are meant to be practical exercises, they will be graded only on completion and no feedback will be given.

### THE TRANSLATION RELAY:

A long-standing tradition in the conlanging community is the Conlang Relay, also called Conlingual Telephone. You will start with a text in a conlang, which you will translate into English and then into your conlang to pass onto the next participant, and so on.

For the relay, you will be divided up into groups of four. Each participant will have three days to produce the materials for the next leg of the relay (most of these materials will have been developed in the translation exercises) on the following schedule:

Wk 13, R (4/2): Original text goes to student A
Wk 13, Sun (4/5): Translation A goes to me, I forward to student B
Wk 14, W (4/8): Translation B goes to me, I forward to student C
Wk 14, Sat (4/11): Translation C goes to me, I forward to student D
Wk 15, T (4/14): Translation D due to me
Wk 15, R (4/16): Relay debrief

### READINGS:

Readings will either be from one of the three required texts or from excerpts available for download on Carmen. Readings should be done before the class they're listed next to in the course schedule.

### LATE WORK:

I will accept late homeworks no later than one week late for a 10% point deduction. On the third late assignment, this will increase to a 20% point deduction. If there is a reason that your lateness should be excused, please talk to me about it personally. Late work for the translation relay will be subject to a stiffer penalty.

### EXTRA CREDIT:

I may offer extra credit during the course at my discretion. If so, such assignments will be made available to the entire class. I will not assign extra credit to a single student under any circumstances.

## Classroom Etiquette:

I expect that you are all aware of basic classroom etiquette. Specific requirements for this class:
- I do not allow laptops or tablets to be used during lecture. If you have reasons that you need to be able to use these devices, please talk to me about it.
- Remember that we may be discussing sensitive topics from time to time- you will be expected to be respectful of other classmates.
- Please refrain from packing until you are dismissed; the noise is disruptive.

**Academic misconduct:**

Students are encouraged to discuss the course material, homework, and papers with one another. The primary purpose of the homework is for discussion and to assure knowledge of course material. However, all work that you turn in must be yours alone. Practically, this means that you're welcome to discuss the assignment with a partner, but when you sit down to write the assignment up, you must do it on your own.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/.

**Disability Services:**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options.  To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services.  After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.
**SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

**Course schedule:**
Carmen readings marked with (*), LCK= *The Language Construction Kit,* ALC= *Advanced Language Construction,* CL=*The Conlanger's Lexipedia,* and DMUL=*A Dictionary of Made-up Languages.*

| Week | Date | | Topics | Readings | Assignments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | 1/7 | (T) | Introduction to Conlangs | *syllabus* | |
| | 1/9 | (R) | Introduction to Linguistics/workshop | *Language Files, Ch. 1 | |
| Week 2 | 1/14 | (T) | Phonetics, The sounds of human language | LCK Ch. "Sounds", *Language Files Ch. 2.4 | *HW1 due* |
| | 1/16 | (R) | Phonological structure / workshop | LCK Ch. "Sounds" | |
| Week 3 | 1/21 | (T) | The Lexicon | LCK Ch. "Word Building" | *HW2 due* |
| | 1/23 | (R) | Semantics: word meanings/workshop | LCK Ch. "Semantics" | |
| Week 4 | 1/28 | (T) | Simple Sentences | LCK Ch. "Grammar" | *HW3 due* |
| | 1/29 | (R) | Complex sentences/workshop | LCK Ch. "Grammar" | |
| Week 5 | 2/4 | (T) | Verbs and time | LCK Ch. "Grammar" | *HW4 due* |
| | 2/6 | (R) | Morphology: nouns/workshop | ALC Ch. "Studies in Morphosyntax" | |
| Week 6 | 2/11 | (T) | Word formation in human languages | ALC Ch. "Studies in Morphosyntax" | *HW5 due* |
| | 2/13 | (R) | Pragmatics: politeness/workshop | LCK Ch. "Pragmatics" | |
| Week 7 | 2/18 | (T) | Pragmatics: deixis | LCK Ch. "Pragmatics" | *HW6 due* |

|  | 2/20 (R) | Language contact/workshop | ALC Ch. "Pidgins and Creoles" |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week 8 | 2/25 (T) | Language change | ALC Ch. "Life Cycles" | *HW7 due* |
|  | 2/27 (R) | Language modality/workshop | ALCK Ch. "Sign language" |  |
| Week 9 | 3/3 (T) | Writing systems: typology | LCK Ch. "Writing Systems" | *HW8 due* |
|  | 3/5 (R) | Writing systems: design/workshop | ALC Ch. "Logographic Writing" |  |
| Week 10 | **SPRING BREAK** |  |  |  |
| Week 11 | 3/17 (T) | Topic Review | --- | *HW9 due* |
|  | 3/19 (R) | Esperanto/Volapük/ workshop | DMUL entries "Esperanto", "Volapuk" |  |
| Week 12 | 3/24 (T) | Láadan | DMUL entry "Láadan" | *HW10 due* |
|  | 3/26 (R) | Loglan/workshop | DMUL entry "Loglan" |  |
| Week 13 | 3/31 (T) | Quenya and Sindarin | DMUL entries "Quenya, Sindarin" | *HW11 due* |
|  | 4/2 (R) | Heptapod B/workshop | *"The Story of Your Life" (short story) |  |
| Week 14 | 4/7 (T) | Klingon | DMUL entry "Klingon" | ***RELAY*** |
|  | 4/9 (R) | Dothraki/workshop | DMUL entry "Dothraki" | ***RELAY*** |
| Week 15 | 4/14 (T) | Ithkuil/Teonaht/Toki Pona/workshop | DMUL entries "Ithkuil", "Teonaht" | ***RELAY*** |
|  | 4/16 (R) | Relay debrief |  | ***RELAY*** |
| **Final project writeup due April 28th, 5:00pm (via online submission)** |  |  |  |  |

GE Rationale: Foundations: Literary, Visual, or Performing Arts (3 credits)

Requesting a GE category for a course implies that the course fulfills all expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of that GE category. To help the reviewing panel evaluate the appropriateness of your course for the Foundations: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts, please answer the following questions for each ELO.

A. Foundations
**Please explain in 50-500 words why or how this course is introductory or foundational in the study of Literary, Visual, or Performing Arts.**

While a constructed language is not a traditional work of art, it is nonetheless a creative work of artistic and literary self-expression. Constructed languages can fill out the aesthetics of an invented world--- the Elvish languages of J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings are designed to sound beautiful and ethereal, while the Black Speech spoken by his villains is designed to be rough and harsh. Some languages are meant to make philosophical statements, or even political arguments: Suzette Haden Elgin's Láadan evokes her feminist politics with its carefully written dictionary definitions for words like *radíidin* "non-holiday, a time allegedly a holiday but actually so much a burden because of work and preparations that it's a dreaded occasion; especially when there are too many guests and none of them help." A few languages, like Sonja Lang's Toki Pona, are stand-alone artistic creations, designed to push the boundaries of what a language can be. With just over a hundred words, Toki Pona invites its students to consider how minimal a language can be, and what kinds of meanings are worth expressing in the first place. This course teaches students how and why constructed languages are made, and enables them to create their own languages and to critique the work of others.

In order to do so, we discuss how created languages reflect the differing purposes and perspectives of their creators and how each aspect of a language can fit together to accomplish this. We cover the basic linguistic theories necessary to read and write intelligible descriptions of a language. We highlight a variety of real and invented language features, and explain how influential language constructors of the past used these in their own creations. To gain hands-on experience, students in the course carry out a term-long project of proposing, creating and using their own language and reflecting on the languages created by their classmates.

**Goal 1:** Successful students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate major forms of human thought, cultures, and expression; and demonstrate capacities for aesthetic and culturally informed understanding.

**Expected Learning Outcome 1.1:** Successful students are able to analyze and interpret significant works of design or visual, spatial, literary or performing arts. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Weeks 11-15 focus on individual constructed languages which we feel are significant works within the tradition of language construction. Workshop activities in weeks 11, 12 and 14 ask students to engage with these languages by reading or translating texts and reflect on the experience. For instance, the Esperanto workshop assignment asks students to read an original letter, written in Esperanto by its creator, Ludwik Zamenhof, which asks non-speakers to consider learning his new language in the hope that it will lead to world peace. We ask students to consider how Zamenhof's writing, and the design of his language, made the letter so compelling and easy to understand for thousands of its recipients. Students are also required to read the language-focused novella "Story of your life" by Ted Chiang (the basis for the film Arrival).

**Expected Learning Outcome 1.2:** Successful students are able to describe and explain how cultures identify, evaluate, shape, and value works of literature, visual and performing art, and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Lectures from weeks 1-9 give students the interpretive tools and linguistic terminology necessary to understand language creators' descriptions of constructed languages and to express their own creative ideas. Students practice using these terms and concepts in the early stages of writing their own language description (Hw 2-6). In Homework 2, for instance, students explain what sounds their language will contain, with reference to the International Phonetic Alphabet and the anatomy of the human vocal tract. Such a description makes it clear how the language will sound when spoken. As discussed below, students also consider the intended aesthetics of their sound choices, and how these are culturally dependent on the language(s) they already speak.

**Expected Learning Outcome 1.3:** Successful students are able to evaluate how artistic ideas influence and shape human beliefs and the interactions between the arts and human perceptions and behavior. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Material throughout the course links language structure to the cultural perception of language. For instance, we discuss the design of language sound systems which are seen as "harsh" or "melodious" in an English-speaking cultural context as part of our unit on phonetics in week 2, and return to it in our discussions of Elvish and Dothraki (week 13 and 14) to explain how the distinctive sounds of these languages reflect their creators' artistic intentions. Students discuss their own artistic intentions as part of their language proposal (Hw 1) and reflect on how these goals inform their final created language in their final submission.

**Expected Learning Outcome 1.4:** Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in literature, visual and performing arts, and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

We discuss several conlangs which were explicitly created to motivate social change. These include Esperanto and its multicultural/pacifist agenda (week 11), Láadan and feminism (week 12), and Toki Pona, created as a therapeutic tool (week 15). We also discuss the less-intentional but considerable social impact of conlangs within fan culture, for instance via the huge subculture of Klingon singers, actors and performers (week 14). Workshops in these weeks ask students to engage with these languages (by reading or translating texts) and reflect on the experience.

**Goal 2:** Successful students will experience the arts and reflect on that experience critically and creatively.

**Expected Learning Outcome 2.1:** Successful students are able to engage in informed observation and/or active participation within the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Students carry out a term-long project of language creation. Beginning by setting their own artistic goals (Hw 1), they describe the different parts of their language using linguistic terminology (Hw 2-5), then translate sentences and longer texts to and from their language (Hw 7-11). The final product is a documented constructed language typical of the languages created by hobbyist language constructors in the wider community. The experience of creating such a language should also equip successful students for more complex and longer-term language construction projects if they choose to continue.

**Expected Learning Outcome 2.2:** Successful students are able to critically reflect on and share their own experience of observing or engaging in the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate specific activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Students interact with languages created by classmates in Homeworks 4, 8 and 11, and are given the opportunity to discuss and react to the design choices made by other students, as well as receiving feedback on their own choices. Workshops throughout term (one per week) also ask students to evaluate constructed languages in a group setting.

At the end of the course, students use their language to participate in a "Conlang relay", in which they read a text written in a classmate's language, translate it into their own language and pass it on to the next participant (a popular activity in the online language construction community). They discuss their experience and insights about how their language designs helped to evoke different kinds of meanings in an in-class debriefing (week 15). The final submission requires each student to discuss what they learned during the language creation process and how their final language reflects their expressive goals.