Phonology III, Fall 2016

Syllabus

1 Course information

Course #:	16:615:522
Time & place:	Tues & Thurs 9:50am–11:10am, 18 Seminary Pl Rm 108
Website:	On Sakai
Instructor:	Adam Jardine (Rm 303)
E-mail:	adam.jardine@rutgers.edu
Office hours:	Tues & Thurs 11:15am–12:15pm and by appointment

2 Overview and goals

This is (primarily) a seminar course focused on the theme of **representation in phonological theory**. We will survey literature arguing for a particular representational scheme, whether that be features, autosegments, syllable structure, etc. The goal is to understand the role plays in phonological theory and analysis. Why do we choose one representational theory over another? What consequences (if any) do these choices have for our theory of phonological grammar? On the range of phonological phenomena our theory predicts to exist? What do these representations *mean*?

In order to compare and evaluate representational theories, we will use **model theory**. Model theory is a branch of mathematical logic that deals with structures and statements about those structures. It is of interest to us as phonological theoreticians because it provides a method for explicitly defining representations and constraints that is directly connected to notions of expressivity, computational complexity, and learnability. We will spend the first few weeks learning the basics of model theory, and then spend the rest of the semester applying it to works in the literature on phonological representation.

The goal of the course is to convey that explicit definitions of representations are crucial for interpretation of grammars, and thus for a restrictive, predictive theory of phonology. By using model theory, we will see that representation, grammars, and expressivity are inextricably intertwined in ways that have not been traditionally argued for in phonological theory. It is my hope that we will touch on ideas that are applicable outside of the specific material covered in the course, from phonological theory at large to linguistic theories and linguistic representations in general.

3   Textbook

There is no textbook for this course. Reading material for the course will comprise journal articles and book/dissertation chapters, which will be posted on the course website.

4   Coursework

Graded work for this course will consist of in-class presentations of papers/chapters from the literature on phonological representation, as well as a final paper (broken into three parts). Early on in the class there will be a few small homework assignments, but rather than turned in for a grade these will be used as preparation for in-class discussion.

4.1   Attendance and participation

As a graduate seminar, participation in class is a crucial part of the course. You will be expected to come to class prepared to actively discuss any homework or assigned reading. If you absolutely have to miss a class, **please contact me beforehand**.

4.2   Paper presentations

Following the introduction to model theory in the first couple of weeks, we decide on a rotating presentation schedule covering the literature on phonological representation. Each student will be in charge of leading at least two class sessions, each focusing on a paper, book chapter, or part thereof. The goal of these presentations is not to simply summarize the material, but to critically evaluate it. For each paper, I want us to ask:

- What representational primitives are the authors arguing for? Is an explicit definition given? What is a model-theoretic definition of their representation?
- What theory/ies of representation are the authors arguing *against*? Do the old theories make *bad* predictions? Do they 'complicate' grammars? Or something else?
- What do the authors claim is different about their representational theory? Does it make different predictions?

As per the previous section, **everyone is expected to participate** in these discussions, not just the student leading the class. Please come prepared, having read the relevant material critically with the above questions in mind.

4.3   Final paper

The bulk of your grade will come from a final research project. I will give you broad leeway on the topic, as long as it deals with some aspect of phonological representation that we have

touched on in the course. The final research project will be broken down into the following four parts.

4.3.1   Proposal I

Please submit a brief document to me outlining **three ideas** you are interested in working on. For each idea, write a short paragraph explaining what the topic is, why you are interested in it, and what you think might result from pursuing it. Please submit **a hard copy** of your first proposal by **October 20**.

4.3.2   Proposal II

Please submit a document of 250–500 words explaining the topic you have chosen for your final paper. Please submit **a hard copy** of your first proposal by **November 15**.

4.3.3   Presentation

The last few weeks of the course will be reserved for presentations of your final papers. These will be **20-minute presentations** followed by a 10-minute question and answer period. This is standard for conference talks, and so will also serve as practice for presenting your work.

4.3.4   Final draft

Please turn in **a hard copy** of your final paper by **December 20th**.

5   Policies

5.1   Grading

Participation:	20%
Paper presentations:	30%
Proposal I:	5%
Proposal II:	5%
Final presentation:	10%
Final paper:	30%

5.2   Academic integrity

This class will be conducted in accordance with University policy on academic integrity. Please refer to http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/.