

ENGL 3511

This course introduces the scientific study of language as a means for understanding the cognitive, behavioral, and social aspects of language use and learning. We will explore how the human mind processes and constructs language, how human language is potentially different (or similar to) other types of animal communication, how language development and learning occur, the social meanings encoded in the ways in which we speak, sign, write, and communicate, and the sociopolitical aspects of language in broader society. Each unit of the course introduces the principles and methods of analysis for different subfields of Linguistics. In this course students will explore language use at all levels, including phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse. While exploring these subfields, students are given opportunities to critically examine assumptions and preconceptions about various languages and people who speak those languages. Students will not only develop skills for looking at language at each of these different levels, but they will also develop a theoretical understanding of how the various levels and branches of linguistic analysis relate to one another and how they may be applied to real-world contexts.