A. Textbooks.


B. Course Description and Objectives

This course will examine the main issues in second language acquisition within a generative framework, including the initial state, the role of the first language, the role of input, variability in second language grammars, ultimate attainment, interfaces and third language acquisition. It will touch on the major theoretical debates regarding the explanation for differences between L2 interlanguages and the target language.

The course will be taught in English. It is advisable but not essential that students should have taken or be taking a course on generative syntax.

The course is taught once a week (3 hours).

C. Methodology

The class will be based on class discussions. Students should be prepared to answer questions about the different readings (see Owl for questions on each chapter).

The first part of the class will be dedicated to the chapters in the textbooks (one hour). The second part to the presentation and discussion of the article assigned (one hour). Finally,
we will go over background and preparation for the following week’s readings and to looking at how to develop tests.

The articles have all been chosen because they address current approaches to second language acquisition such as the Interface Hypothesis. They are also subsequent to the book we are reading.

D. Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course you will be able to:

- Understand the relation between linguistic theories and second language acquisition theories.
- Understand the relation between theory and data.
- Understand the main questions in second language acquisition and the debates that arise around them.
- Examine articles in the literature with a critical mind.
- Be able to conduct second language acquisition research, including the development of hypotheses and tests.
- Understand different types of data and analyses.

E. Required Work

- Participation: Students are expected to read not only the relevant chapters in the textbook but also the articles that are assigned. Only by doing this will they be able to participate in the discussions.

- Assignments: Each chapter in the book will be accompanied by a series of questions that the students will take turns answering.

- Oral presentation: Depending on the number of students, individuals or pairs of students will present the different articles to be covered. Presentations should take about half an hour, and should involve the students by including critical questions. The involvement of students in the class is an important part of the presentation.

- Annotated bibliography: You will choose a particular topic in L2 acquisition. On this topic you will create a bibliography with at least 10 articles, with a short description of each (in your own words).

- Final paper: You will have chosen the final project the second week of class. You should link your topic to the annotated bibliography. The final paper will be a proposal for a research program on a particular area of second language acquisition on any language you wish. You will develop a full test. You may write in English, Spanish or French.
**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s **verbatim** or **paraphrased** text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after borrowed material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against the possible charge of plagiarism. The University of Western Ontario uses a plagiarism-checking site called Turnitin.com.

**G. Grading**

| Participation | 20% |
| Presentation of article | 20% |
| Annotated bibliography | 10% |
| Final Paper | 50% |
| Proposal | 10% |
| Oral presentation | 10% |
| Final paper | 30% |

**Course outline**

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<th>January</th>
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| 05 | Introduction to course  
Organization of papers on acquisition. |
| 12 | First language acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis  
Principles of Universal Grammar in L2 acquisition.  
Overview of different approaches, predictions and methodologies: gender  
White Chapter 2 |
| 19 | The Initial State.  
White Chapter 3  
| 26 | Parameters and functional categories  
White Chapter 4 to page 119  

**February**

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| 2    | Parameters and functional categories  
White Chapter 4 to end  
| 9    | The transition problem.  
White Chapter 5  
*Hand in annotated bibliography* |
| 16   | Morphological variability  
White Chapter 6  
| 23   | *Reading week* |

**March**

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| 2    | The Bottleneck Hypothesis  
Slabakova Chapter 13 |
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**April**

| 6 | Oral presentations on your final paper Hand in final paper |