

# Draft

## Language Online: Communication in the Digital Era (LOL)

### Linguistics 133

Summer 2023, Session 1

Mon / Wed 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, Zoom

**Instructor:** Kelsey Sasaki (she / her)

**Email:** kmsasaki@ucsc.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 9:30-11 am PST or by appointment

**Zoom link:** TBA

**TA:** Vishal Arvindam ()

**Email:** vsunilar@ucsc.edu

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Zoom link:** TBA

**Course Information:** The internet has been shaped by a series of choices that can shape everything from our digital appearance to our digital communication. Despite claims to the contrary, the internet has not destroyed language; rather, language is thriving in new and vibrant ways online. This course uses the tools of linguistics to explore how the internet (with acronyms, emojis, and memes) has affected language use and how properties of language continue to shape online communication technologies. Topics covered include: whether emojis are language, what makes a spicy meme, how communities form online, and how online linguistic behaviors aid in the spread of misinformation.

General Education Code(s): PE-T.

### Course Goals

- 1) Learn a brief history of the internet and internet language
- 2) Understand what choices have shaped the internet as we know it today and how those choices affect communication
- 3) Learn how Internet communities use language in various forms

- 4) Examine the properties of emojis and memes, and how they relate to linguistic theory
- 5) Explore ways in which the internet impacts minoritized and marginalized communities and languages
- 6) Critically engage with interdisciplinary research on internet communication

## Materials

There is no textbook for the course, but there will be a number of readings, all of which will be available on Canvas. A class Discord will also be available.

## Course requirements

All course assignments will be submitted on Canvas.

### 1. **Reading responses (24% of final grade; 3% each):**

We will be reading a number of academic and non-academic texts in this course, and it's likely you will find at least some of them challenging. Reading responses will help you actively engage with the material and think critically about the contents of the readings. A reading response consists of a very short summary of main points in the reading (no more than a paragraph), along with three questions or comments you have about it, submitted on Canvas. The total length of the response should be about 200-300 words. Responses are due for all required readings **one hour before class on the day that the readings are discussed**. Please consult the rubric for each response for guidance on what we are expecting.

### 2. **In-class participation reflections (16% of final grade; 1.6% each):**

Attendance and participation in class are necessary to getting the most out of this course. It is also important that you come to class having done the readings and are prepared to ask any questions (including clarifications) that will help us engage more deeply with the material. Every day in lecture, I will ask you to submit a short activity, related to that day's meeting, to be submitted by the end of lecture. You are also encouraged to participate in the class Discord, though this is not part of your grade.

### 3. **Homeworks (60% of the final grade; 20% each):**

There will be three small projects over the course, each consisting of a creative component and an analytical written component. Projects will build off the in-class reflections.

**Readings:** Readings will be assigned each week. You are expected to read the assigned papers before the corresponding class.

**Grading Scale:**

A+	96.67 % and above	B	83.34 to 86.66 %	C-	70.00 to 73.33 %
A	93.34 to 96.66 %	B-	80.00 to 83.33 %	D	60.00 to 69.99 %
A-	90.00 to 93.33 %	C+	76.67 to 79.99 %	F	below 60.00 %
B+	86.67 % to 89.99 %	C	73.34 to 76.66 %		

**Collaboration**

You are highly encouraged to discuss readings and homeworks with your classmates. However, all of your reading responses, in-class reflections, and homeworks are expected to be **entirely your own, original work**. If you did discuss the homework with your peers, please list the people you discussed it with.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, they may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of their college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript.

**Violations include copying someone else's work or allowing someone else to copy your work.**

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Integrity page](#) at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

## **DRC Remote Accommodations**

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu).

If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please contact me privately by email, within the first week of the session, to submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course.

## **Getting Help**

We want to make sure that everyone in the course has access to the resources they need to make it a success. Here are some ways to access them:

1. **Office Hours:** The instructor and TA have designated office hours when any student can drop by. You are strongly encouraged to make use of this opportunity. Some positive uses of office hours include (but are by no means limited to):
  - Introducing yourself to the instructor/TA (or just saying hello after that!)
  - Asking a question about the course material (or another topic in linguistics)
  - Working through homework quietly and asking questions as needed

If you are not able to attend a regularly-scheduled office hour, you can always make an appointment by email.

2. **Email:** You are also more than welcome to ask questions of the instructor or TA over email, and we will respond within 24 hours between Monday and Friday.

- Note: We cannot guarantee a rapid response to an email sent outside of normal business hours (weekdays 9-5).
3. **Lecture:** You are always welcome—and in fact, encouraged—to ask questions during lecture and section! If you'd prefer to ask your question out loud, please use the 'raise hand' function in Zoom. If you'd prefer to write your question, please put it into the Zoom chat.

## Title IX

The Title IX Office is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

If you want to make a report or request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using their online reporting link. You can also contact the office by emailing [titleix@ucsc.edu](mailto:titleix@ucsc.edu) or by calling 831-459-2462.

## Distribution of Lecture Notes and Materials

Please note that students may be disciplined for selling, preparing, or distributing course lecture notes, including notes created independently by students. The unauthorized sale of lecture notes, handouts, readers or other course materials is a violation of campus policies as well as state law. Violation by distribution to the public may also constitute copyright infringement subject to legal action.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Readings labeled with a \* and bolded are required reading. Other readings are recommended, but optional.

Week - Module	Date	Reading(s)	Assignments due
<b>1 - The Internet as a series of choices</b>	M 6/26	None	None
	W 6/28	<b>*McCulloch (2019), Ch. 3</b> McSweeney (2018), Ch. 1	RR #1

<b>2 - Emojis (are undemocratic)</b>	M 7/3	* <b><u>Gawne &amp; McCulloch (2019)</u></b> * <b><u>Sutton &amp; Lawson (2017)</u></b> Kaiser & Grosz (2021)	RR #2
	W 7/5	* <b><u>The problem with emoji skin tones no one talks about</u></b> * <b><u>Robertson, et al. (2021)</u></b>	RR #3
<b>3 - Memes</b>	M 7/10	* <b>Shifman (2014), Ch. 3-6</b>	RR #4
	W 7/12	* <b>Nguyen et al., in press</b>	RR #5
	Th 7/13	None	HW #1
<b>4 -Sociolinguistics online</b>	M 7/17	* <b><u>Robertson, et al., 2020</u></b>	RR #6
	W 7/19	* <b>Holliday &amp; Tano (2021)</b> Abreu (2015)	RR #7
	<b>Th 7/20</b>	None	HW #2
<b>5 - The role of technology in shaping and mediating speech</b>	M 7/24	* <b>Gibson 2019</b> * <b><u>Muller-Vahl, et al., 2021</u></b>	RR #8
	W 7/26	* <b><u>Massenari, 2015</u></b>	None
	<b>Th 7/27</b>	None	HW #3