LING 2980: Language and Computers               Summer 5W2, 2018
Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs, 10-11:50am, Wooten 121
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Office hours: by appointment (email me!)

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Office hours: TBD

Course Description and goals:
The widening use of computers has had a profound influence on the ways that people communicate, search, and store information. For the majority of people and situations, language is the natural vehicle for such information. Text and to a lesser extent speech are crucial encoding formats for the information revolution. This course covers the theory and practice of human language technology, using natural language systems as a context in which to exercise and develop a range of basic skills in formal and computational analysis. Topics include text encoding, search technology, tools for writing support, machine translation, forensic linguistics, dialog systems, computer aided language learning, and the social context of language technology.

Our goals include the following:
- Understand the fundamentals of how computers are used to represent, process, and organize textual and spoken information
- Learn how these fundamentals are used to build practical applications
- Learn techniques for testing and evaluating natural language systems, to better understand what their strengths and weaknesses are
- Develop an understanding of some of the ethical issues around natural language processing and artificial intelligence

Textbook:
2. A small number of additional readings will be made available electronically via Canvas

Course credit requirements and grading
1. 45% - Exercises: 12 assigned, lowest 3 grades dropped, 5 points/exercise
2. 25% - Weekly journal: 5 points/week (see journal assignment sheet)
3. 20% - Ethics project & presentation
4. 10% - Reading, peer grading & participation

Structure and rhythm of the class:
This class requires your full engagement and participation. There will be a daily reading assignment and a daily exercise. You should expect to spend about 2 hours outside of class each day on the assignments.

Each class meeting will be split into two halves, with a short (~5 minute) break in between. In the first half, we will do peer grading and discussion of the previous day's exercise and will continue to develop the themes of the previous day. In the second half, we will embark on new material (related to the reading assigned the day before), and we will leave some time for you to get a start on the new day's exercise.
Readings:
Most readings will be from the textbook. You should expect to read every day, but rarely more than 10-12 pages/day. All "Under the Hood" sections are optional – it's unlikely we'll have time to cover these in class.

Exercises:
There will be 12 exercises assigned throughout the semester – for the summer course, this means almost every day. Each exercise should take around one hour to complete. You need to submit the exercise on Canvas and bring a print-out to class. Each exercise is worth 5 points. (At the end of the semester, the lowest three exercise grades will be dropped.)

Peer grading:
We will begin each class going over the exercise assigned the previous day – you will grade each other’s work. We'll collect each day's assignments and verify the scores. See the peer grading rubric for more information.

Late assignments:
With our summer session schedule, this class will move so quickly that it just won't work to submit assignments late.

Class communications
All course communications will happen via the Canvas site. You are responsible for checking announcements every day!

Attendance & Participation
Attendance is REQUIRED, but I’ll give you two free absences, no need to explain, just let me know in advance. If a situation develops such that you will need to miss more class than this, please discuss this with me in person, or email me if in-person isn’t possible.

Class behavior (University policy)
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

Academic Integrity
Please make sure that all the work you submit in this course is your own!!! It is your responsibility to know the definitions and consequences of plagiarism, cheating etc. as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, available in the Undergraduate Catalog and online at http://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=244#Student_Standards_of_Academic_Integrity

Disability Accommodation Statement
“The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request
accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.”

Students with any special needs or disabilities (including learning disabilities) should inform me of their needs as soon as possible so that proper accommodations can be made.

**SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, & ASSAULT**

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.