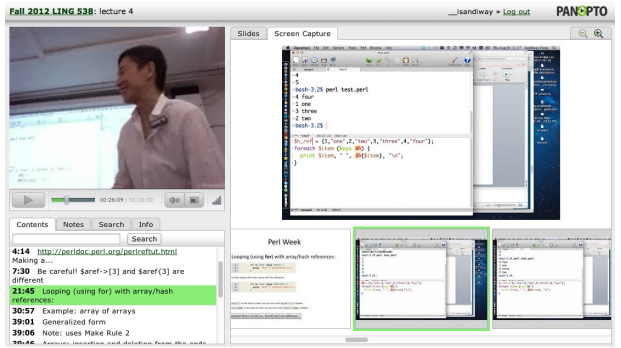
LING 581 Syllabus

Spring 2026

Prof. Sandiway Fong

Course

- **Webpage for lecture slides:**
  - http://sandiway.arizona.edu/#courses
  - available from just before class time
    - (afterwards, look again for corrections/updates)
  - in .pptx (good for animations) and .pdf formats



***not** guaranteed not to crash!*

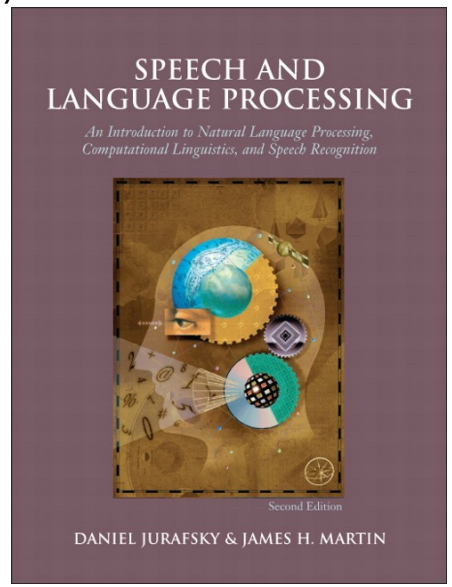
- **Meeting information**
  - Time: Monday-Wednesday 11am-12:15am.
  - Location: Psychology Rm 305

Accessibility and Accommodations

- At the University of Arizona, we strive to make learning experiences as accessible as possible.
- If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please contact the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268, https://drc.arizona.edu/) to establish reasonable accommodations.

Course Objectives

- **Follow-on course to LING/C SC/PSYC 538 *Computational Linguistics*:**
  - pre-requisite: 538
  - continue with some selected material from the 538 textbook (J&M): use the v3 PDF draft
    - *a lot of material was not covered in 438/538*
- **And gain more extensive experience**
  - with new stuff **not in textbook**
  - dealing with natural language software packages
  - Installation, input data formatting
  - operation
  - project exercises
  - useful "real-world" computational experience
  - abilities gained will be of value to employers



Learning Outcomes

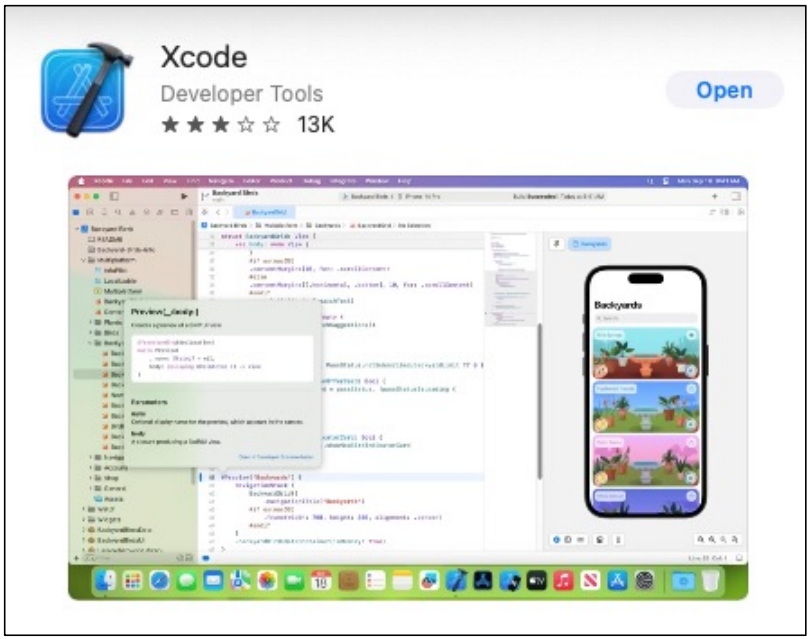
- **Learning outcomes: by the end of the semester, you will have learnt:**
  - to install and deal with natural language software packages (relates to Linguistics HLT program outcome #3)
  - to properly (re)format input data (relates to Linguistics HLT program outcome #1)
  - to complete projects, providing useful "real-world" computational experience (relates to Linguistics HLT program outcome #1)
- These and other abilities gained will be of value to employers

Computational Requirements

- **Use your own laptop/desktop**
  - just in case your need adminstrator rights on your machine to get things working right…
- **Platforms**
  - native Windows 10/11 *maybe* possible but unsupported,
  - should install **Windows Subsystem for Linux: WSL2**
    - (*return to this topic in a couple of slides*)
  - MacOS
    - (*see next slide*)

Computational Requirements

- **Platforms**
  - **Much research software assume Linux**
  - macOS
    - Not quite Linux, some porting issues, especially with C programs.
    - Macports or Homebrew packages (bit like app-get)
    - make sure you have Xcode from the Mac App Store (free) installed
    - then make sure the command line tools component is installed



Computational Requirements

- **Platforms**
  - Windows 10/11 *is* possible, but you really should run some variant of Linux…
  - PowerShell can be made to work, but is incompatible with Bash shell scripts
  - Install WSL2 under Windows 10/11
  - Why?
    - gives you a Bash shell (*with quoting consistent with the lecture slides*)
    - (simultaneously) use Linux under Windows 10 (not dual-booting)
    - can access your Windows C: drive via directory /mnt/c

Grading

- Satisfactory completion of **all** homework tasks will result in a grade A.

- Tasks typically should be completed before the corresponding class next week.
  - email me your work (sandiway@arizona.edu).
  - also be prepared to present your work (if called upon) in class.
- Office hours (by appointment – Douglass 311):
  - quick question? Hang around after the lecture.
  - longer question? Email me first. We can also meet on Zoom.

Syllabus

- Homeworks
  - you may discuss questions with other students
  - you can use ChatGPT
  - however, you must write it up yourself (*in your own words, your own code etc.*)
  - cite (web) references, ChatGPT and your classmates (*in the case of discussion)*
  - Student Code of Academic Integrity: *plagiarism* etc.
    - http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity
- Revisions to the syllabus
  - “the information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.”

Administrivia

Final Examination or Project

- No examinations, e.g. mid-term or final, are scheduled for this course.

Classroom Behavior Policy

- Students are expected to ask questions in class and to make use of their laptops during class in order to better follow the material and demonstrations, e.g. programming.

Threatening Behavior Policy

- The UA Threatening Behavior by Students Policy prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to oneself.
- See http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students.

UA Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy

- The University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination; see http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy.

Administrivia

- Lecture Schedule may be subject to change
  - in case of travel
  - any cancellation dates will be announced in due course