## **Course Outline for LING 425 (Historical Linguistics)**

Content: This course will provide you with an introduction to HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS -- the study of how languages change over time, of the changes that have occurred throughout the history of individual languages or language families, and of the historical "genetic" relations among languages with shared ancestry. In the first half of the course, we will examine sound change, borrowing and analogy, the three major types of change that underlie the comparative method of reconstructing proto-languages. In the second half, we will examine the comparative method itself and survey a number of other issues in historical linguistics, including the genetic classification of languages into historical families; models of linguistic change; language-internal reconstruction; semantic, lexical and syntactic change; explanations for linguistic change; proposals for distant genetic relationships; and the study of linguistic prehistory, with a particular focus on the Indo-European language family. In addition to a standard introductory textbook, we will read articles that focus on major contemporary issues in the field: the regularity of change, the transmission of change, and the establishment of remote genetic relations among languages.

Instructional method and technology policy: This class involves traditional teaching methods, including lectures (without PowerPoint) and class discussion, as well as document projections. The course will not involve any online content or materials: submission of written work and all non-classroom communication between students and the instructor will be exclusively by email (not myCourses). Emails will be sent to the addresses on the official class list; it is the student's responsibility to make sure that they are received. Regular attendance in class and good note-taking are therefore encouraged, as is doing assigned readings before the class in which they will be discussed. Laptops and voice recorders are permitted in the classroom, but photography is not. Use of laptops and other electronic devices must be appropriate to and respectful of the classroom environment: recreational use of the internet during class is inappropriate and distracting for other students. Cell phones should be turned off and put away during class. If you do not think you can function well in this environment, you are strongly encouraged to choose a different course.

<u>Time/Place</u>: Monday/Wednesday, 11:35 a.m.-12:55 p.m., in ENGTR 2110 (room subject to change depending on class size and other factors).

<u>Instructor</u>: Prof. Charles Boberg. E-mail: charles.boberg@mcgill.ca. Office: 1085 Dr. Penfield, #223.

<u>Access to the instructor</u>: Please e-mail me if you have questions or concerns about the course or about other advising matters. If desired, an in-person meeting can be scheduled by e-mail. If you have brief comments or questions, you are encouraged to talk to me after class.

<u>Prerequisites</u>: LING 330 (Phonetics) and LING 320 (Sociolinguistics 1), or permission of instructor. A-185.h(v) 0.2 (e.2 0m /TT2 18t) -247.9 (320) -247.9 (()-0.5 (S) -0.2 -0.(S) -0.2. 1 Tf [(i) 0.2 (ns) -0.2 -0.1]

phonetics and basic phonology (phonetic transcription, contrasting vs. complementary sound differences, phonetic features, natural classes of sounds, phonological rule writing, etc.) and builds on the basic principles of linguistic variation and change taught in LING 320. Students without this background may experience difficulty. Consult the instructor if you have any concerns about your level of preparation.

**Evaluation**: Homework exercises (1 @ 5% + 2 @ 10%) 25%

Midterm exam 25% Final exam (cumulative) 50%

**Required textbook**: Lyle Campbell. 2013. *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Available free, as an eBook, through McGill Library. See course reserves at:

https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/courseReserves/course/id/21303023

Unfortunately this edition is now out of print. If you prefer a physical book, you can look for a used copy, or purchase the new 4<sup>th</sup>

absence is not sufficiently justified, no accommodation will be offered, but students who were absent for an exam review may ask to see their exams briefly after a subsequent class.

**Policy on grades:** the grades assigned to assignments, papers and exams in this class are **not negotiable**. Students are encouraged to point out mathematical errors in grade calculation and are also w

**Tentative schedule** of lectures, readings, assignments and exams: