

**Northern Illinois University**  
**ILAS 261 - Language, Mind and Thought**

**Fall 2006 - MW 2:00-3:15 DU 280**

|               |   |                         |
|---------------|---|-------------------------|
| Instructors:  | Giovanni Bennardo   | Betty Birner            |
|               | Dept. of Anthropology   | Dept. of English        |
| E-mail:       | bennardo@niu.edu  | bbirner@niu.edu         |
| Office:       | Stevens 200/c   | Reavis 226              |
| Office phone: | 753-8574  | 753-6607                |
| Office hours: | M-W 1:00-2:00 or by appt  | MW 3:30-4:30 or by appt |
| Class format: | Lecture/discussion  |                         |
| Text:         | Friedenberg-Silverman, <i>Cognitive Science: An Introduction to the Study of Mind</i><br>and readings on electronic reserve |                         |
| Evaluation:   | Three exams, 100 pts. each<br>Attendance, 50 pts.<br>Unannounced quizzes, 50 pts.   |                         |

**Course Description:**

This course introduces theories of cognition from the perspective of multiple disciplines, including linguistics, computer science, psychology, and anthropology. We will discuss the structure and processes of the human brain, and we will focus on language as a central issue in the study of human cognition. Finally, we will consider human cognition from the point of view of computer science and artificial intelligence, and ask to what extent human intelligence can be successfully modeled on a machine. Through the multidisciplinary character of the course, you will acquire an appreciation for the advantages of the different approaches and how they complement each other in our study of the mind.

**Class Policies:**

Assigned readings must be completed prior to the class meeting for which they are scheduled. You will be given occasional unannounced quizzes on the reading. No make-up quizzes will be given for any reason whatsoever. Exams must be taken on the day scheduled; a late exam will be administered only in the case of a documented medical emergency, and then only with the prior consent of the instructor. If you meet the university's criterion for rescheduling a final exam (three finals on the same day) and can provide documentation, please contact the instructors during the first week of class.

NIU abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding provision of reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Moreover, your academic success is of importance to us. If you have a disability that may have a negative impact on your performance in this course and you may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact us early in the semester so that we can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR), the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. CAAR is located on the 4th floor of the University Health Services building (753-1303). We look forward to talking with you to learn how we may be helpful in enhancing your academic success in this course.

## Course Schedule:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic</u>                          | <u>Reading</u>              |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Aug. 28     | Introduction                          | Chapter 1                   |
| 30          | Philosophy                            | Chapter 2                   |
| Sept. 4     | <b>Labor Day – No Class</b>           |                             |
| 6           | Philosophy                            |                             |
| 11          | Psychology                            | Chapter 3                   |
| 13          | Psychology                            |                             |
| 18          | Cognition                             | Chapter 4                   |
| 20          | Cognition                             |                             |
| 25          | Cognition                             | Chapter 5                   |
| 27          | Cognition                             |                             |
| Oct. 2      | <b>EXAM</b>                           |                             |
| 4           | The Nature of Language                | Chapter 9                   |
| 9           | Language Acquisition                  | Pinker                      |
| 11          | Syntax                                |                             |
| 16          | Neurology of Language                 |                             |
| 18          | Semantics                             | Aitchison                   |
| 23          | Pragmatics                            |                             |
| 25          | Linguistic Relativity                 | Gumperz/Levinson (intro)    |
| 30          | Linguistic Relativity/Cultural Models | Bennardo                    |
| Nov. 1      | Cultural Models                       | Holland & Quinn (chapter 1) |
| 6           | <b>EXAM</b>                           |                             |
| 8           | Neuroscience                          | Chapter 6                   |
| 13          | Neuroscience                          |                             |
| 15          | Neuroscience                          | Chapter 7                   |
| 20          | Evolution                             | Chapter 8                   |
| 22          | <b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</b>  |                             |
| 27          | Artificial Intelligence               | Chapter 10                  |
| 29          | Artificial Intelligence               | Chapter 11                  |
| Dec. 4      | Artificial Intelligence               | Chapter 12                  |
| 6           | Conclusion                            | Chapter 13                  |

**Final Exam: Monday, Dec. 11, 2:00-3:50 p.m.**