

## Phonological Theory (Phonology A)

Spring 2016

MW 4:00 pm – 5:35 pm @ The Cave

---

### Brian W. Smith (Visiting Asst Professor)

**Office hours** Tu 2–3, Th 10–11

**Office** Stevenson 256

**Email** [brwismit@ucsc.edu](mailto:brwismit@ucsc.edu)

**Private cell** — — — (please don't share widely)

Text me if you're going to be late to a meeting or have an urgent question.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Phonological Theory is the first quarter course in phonology. The focus is on theory development: the process by which formal phonological models are evaluated and revised in order to meet empirical or conceptual goals. Our emphasis will be Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993/2004), the major competitor to rule-based frameworks in the tradition of Chomsky and Halle (1968). We will survey the motivations for adopting OT, and become familiar with its formal architecture, its typological predictions, and some of the results it has achieved. We'll finish off the course with discussion of some current issues in phonology, touching on computational learning, Harmonic Serialism, and Harmonic Grammar.

### TEXTBOOK AND HANDOUTS

There is a textbook: *Doing Optimality Theory* by John J. McCarthy

It's available to purchase at the Bay Tree bookstore or online (about \$50 new on Amazon). I have a single loaner copy, which you are welcome to keep in the Cave and share amongst yourselves. In my opinion, the book is worth owning.

I will supply you with copies of the other readings on the syllabus. There is an eCommons account where you can access all readings, class handouts, assignments, extra readings, etc.

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Six problem sets – to be done thoroughly and handed in on time. You are free to work together
2. Weekly readings – which you should have read carefully and thought about before class. Engaged discussion will be considered in your grade. I'll keep reading to 15-45 pp/wk.
3. Regular participation in class discussion of problem sets and readings
4. A short course paper (8–20 pages), due 12/9, e-mailed to Brian (as a pdf file). If this due date creates a problem, please let me know, and we can make other arrangements. **Paper goal:** take a rule-based analysis and reanalyze data in Optimality Theory.

Traditional wisdom: **Budget at least 8 hours/week** for reading and homework, for each graduate course you take. Talk to me if you're spending more time. (10+ hrs/week is too much for the homework and readings in Phono A)

## ATTENDANCE AND ETIQUETTE

You're expected to attend every class, show up on time, and stay until class is over. **Please** stop me if we're going over. If you need to miss class (sick, emergency, overslept, whatever), please try to let me know ahead of time, and try to miss as little class as possible. No laptops or cellphones (except to check the time, but do consider buying a watch).

Phonology is probably the most exciting thing in the world, but I ask that you avoid interrupting each other and calling out answers too quickly. The reason: the classroom is not balanced with respect to phonological experience, race, age, gender, etc., and all of these influence a student's willingness to immediately call out an answer. Raised hands and pauses before answering help even the playing field, and encourage everyone to speak and participate. I'll also make an effort to call on everyone equally, but you'll need to keep me honest.

## E-MAIL ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF...

Here are some reasons to e-mail. E-mail me if you...

1. have a preferred name and/or gender pronoun
2. are lost in class, or don't understand what's being asked of you
3. missed a deadline or need an extension
4. need to miss class

5. are uncomfortable in class (for whatever reason)<sup>1</sup>
6. can't make office hours and want to meet in person
7. are interested in a class topic and want additional readings
8. want to discuss a research topic
9. are very worried about academic careers or facing existential dread
10. want to discuss teaching or pedagogy

Do not hesitate under these circumstances. It's especially important if you miss a deadline: it's easy to fall seriously behind if you falter. E-mail can be slow, so if you want immediate results, come to office hours.

---

<sup>1</sup> If I did something to make you uncomfortable and you don't want to talk to me about it, you should feel free to discuss it with someone else, such as the department chair (Sandy).

Wk	Date	Topics	Readings for week. Goal: 15-45 pp/week <optional readings: discussed in class>
1	9/26	Big picture: what's Phonology?	Doing OT 1 P&S reading + questions (due 10/3)
	9/28	The structure of OT: GEN, CON, EVAL	
2	10/3	Doing OT: ranking, candidates, factorial typology	Doing OT 2.1–2.8 (esp. 2.1, 2.2, 2.5)
	10/5	Syllables and syllable typology	
3	10/10	Conspiracies and the conceptual crisis	Kisseberth 1970 reread Doing OT 1.1–1.2 <Pater 1999, Zuraw & Lu 2007>
	10/12	Practice with analysis (focus on rules)	
4	10/17	Correspondence theory	McCarthy & Prince 1995: 1–10 van der Hulst 2012: sections 1–4 Doing OT 3 <McCarthy & Prince 1993: 1–24; 63–64> <Gordon 2002, Walker 2006>
	10/19	Stress typology and feet Practice with analysis (focus on OT)	
5	10/24	Morphophonology and TETU	McCarthy & Prince 1995: 10–25 Kager 1996 (14 pp) de Lacy 2006 (282–299 pp) for HW <Smith 2016>
	10/26	Prosodic morphology, allomorph selection, exceptionality	
6	10/31	Constraint families and schema	Doing OT 4 Beckman 1998 (excerpt) <Steriade 2008, Doing OT 5>
	11/2	Positional faithfulness, harmonic alignment Using Software to calculate typology (bring laptop on 11/2)	
7	11/6	Opacity and OT	Bakovic 2011 (25 pp) Bermudez-Otero 2016: sections 1–2
	11/9	Lexical phonology	
8	11/14	Revising EVAL and GEN:	McCarthy 2011: 1–11; 30–31 Pater 2009 (25 pp)
	11/16	Harmonic Grammar and Harmonic Serialism	
9	11/21	Learnability and variation	Albright & Hayes (27 pp) <Hayes & Wilson 2006>
	11/23		
10	11/28	Variation cont'd	
	11/30	Paper presentations on 11/30	