This course is an introduction to the study of how languages change and to the principles developed by linguists to account for these changes. We will investigate the various domains in which change occurs (phonological, morphological, lexical, etc.), and the social and linguistic motivations for change. The course will address the methods linguists use to determine the earlier profile – the sounds, vocabulary, and grammar – of a language or its parent language, before identified changes occurred. Finally, we will explore how linguistic clues may be used to make hypotheses about the cultures of speakers in the past.

Prerequisites: Introduction to linguistics; Phonetics

Text:
Crowley, Terry and Claire Bowern. 2010. *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [NB: The book is due to arrive in the Co-op in the second class week; I will make chapters available as pdfs on Blackboard until the book arrives.]

Other readings will also be assigned throughout the semester. You can access these, as well as other class materials, announcements, etc. through Blackboard.

**Requirements and guidelines:**
Requirements consist of weekly homework exercises (50%; lowest grade will be dropped), a mid-term exam (20%), and a final exam (30%).

Class will involve discussion, lectures, and problem solving. A homework exercise will be assigned each week; these are due on the Friday of a given week, at the beginning of class. We will discuss the HW in class on the Friday, so please note that no late homeworks can be accepted. Your graded HW will be returned the following week.

Practice problems will be assigned frequently in class (usually on Monday, to be gone over in class on Wednesday). These will not be collected or graded, but you are strongly encouraged to do them on your own before we discuss them in class.

Please check Blackboard regularly for announcements.

**Class policies:**
Scholastic (dis)honesty
You may discuss homework assignments with other students in general terms, but please develop the solutions to them independently (i.e. you can give each other tips and pointers as you work through them, but do NOT work together in the final stages). If you do work with others in the early stages, be sure to note the name(s) of your discussion partner(s) at the top of the page. Exams should, of course, be strictly your own work. For details and further guidelines, check the university website on scholastic dishonesty: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sis/scholdis.php.
ATTENDANCE AND HOMEWORK SUBMISSION
Attendance is mandatory, and will be verified by sign-in sheet. **You are allowed up to four ‘free’ absences (no questions asked); after this, each absence drops your final grade for the course by 2 points.** Emergencies and extended illnesses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Use your absences wisely.

Late homeworks cannot be accepted (barring very exceptional circumstances). However, the lowest homework grade will be dropped so you’ll have some more flexibility.

SPECIAL NEEDS
If you have special needs of any kind, please let me know before the second class meeting so that we can attempt to meet these throughout the semester. The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic adjustments for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS
If any class deadlines fall on religious holidays that you observe, please let me know at least two weeks in advance so that I can accommodate your needs. You should both tell me in person and send me an email.

CLASS SCHEDULE

**Week 1. Introduction**

*Wed Jan 20*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 1 ‘Introduction’

*Fri Jan 22*

**Week 2. Sound change**

*Mon Jan 25*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 2 ‘Types of sound changes’, ch. 3 ‘Expressing sound change’

*Wed Jan 27*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 4 ‘Phonetic and phonemic change’; Practice problems

*Fri Jan 29*  
**Homework 1 due**

**Week 3. Accounting for similarities across languages: cognates and loanwords**

*Mon Feb 1*

*Wed Feb 3*
Comrie, Bernard. 2000. ‘Language contact, lexical borrowing, and semantic fields.’ In Languages in Contact, Gilbers, Nerbonne, and Schaecken (eds), Amsterdam-Atlanta GA: Rodopi, 73-86.

*Fri Feb 5*  
**Homework 2 due**

**Week 4. Analogy and morphological change**

*Mon Feb 8*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 10 ‘Morphological change’

*Wed Feb 10*

*Fri Feb 12*  
**Homework 3 due**

**Week 5. Comparative reconstruction**

*Mon Feb 15*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 5 ‘The comparative method (1): Procedures’

*Wed Feb 17*
Practice problems

*Fri Feb 19*  
**Homework 4 due**

**Week 6. Comparative reconstruction cont.**

*Mon Feb 22*
Crowley & Bowern ch. 9 ‘The comparative method (2): History and challenges’

*Wed Feb 23*
Practice problems

*Fri Feb 25*  
**Homework 5 due**
Week 7. Relationships among languages
Mon March 1  Crowley & Bowern ch. 6 ‘Determining relatedness’
Wed March 3  Crowley & Bowern ch. 8 ‘Statistical and computational methods’; Practice problems
Fri March 5  Homework 6 due

Week 8. Writing and written records
Wed March 10 Exam review: bring questions to class
Fri March 12  In-class midterm exam

March 15-19 Spring break

Week 9. Internal reconstruction
Mon March 22 Crowley & Bowern ch. 7 ‘Internal reconstruction’
Wed March 24 Practice problems
Fri March 26 [no homework due]

Week 10. Lexical and semantic change
Mon March 29 Crowley & Bowern ch. 11 ‘Semantic and lexical change’
Wed March 31 Homework 7 due
Fri April 2

Week 11. Syntactic change and grammaticalization
Mon April 5  Crowley & Bowern ch. 12 ‘Syntactic change’
Wed April 7  Practice problems
Fri April 9  Homework 8 due

Week 12. Why languages change
Mon April 12 Crowley & Bowern ch. 13 ‘Observing language change’
Wed April 14 Crowley & Bowern ch. 9 ‘The comparative method (2): History and challenges’ Sections 9.4 - 9.5
Fri April 16 Homework 9 due

Week 13. Language contact
Mon April 19 Crowley & Bowern ch. 14 ‘Language contact’ through 14.1
Wed April 21 Crowley & Bowern ch. 14 ‘Language contact’ through 14.5
Fri April 23 Homework 10 due

Week 14. Language and prehistory
Mon April 26 Crowley & Bowern ch. 15 ‘Cultural reconstruction’
Wed April 28
Fri April 30 Homework 11 due

Week 15. Distant genetic relationship
Mon May 3  Trask, R.L. 1996. ‘Very remote relations’, in Historical Linguistics, London: Arnold Press. (See also Crowley & Bowern 6.4.)
Wed May 5
Fri May 7 Exam review: bring questions to class

Final exam: Saturday, May 15, 2-5pm [confirm date/time]