

**Linguistics 3:  
The Structure and Culture of American Sign Language  
GE Course Information Sheet**

**Foundation Area(s) and Subgroup(s):**

Foundations of the Arts and Humanities

Literary & Cultural Analysis

Philosophical & Linguistic Analysis

For the culture portion of this course, students will engage in critical thinking about the situation of the Deaf in the United States and their status as a minority subculture within the majority hearing culture. In addition to time spent analyzing the cultural situation of the Deaf in America, students will engage in linguistic study of American Sign Language, developing an understanding of its language-specific properties in light of what we know about other signed languages and about spoken languages.

**Course Instructors:** Natasha Abner; TBD

**Course Scheduling and Projected Enrollment:** Summer Session 2011-2013; 15-30 students.

**GE Course Units:** 5 units. (Summer Session)

Student Contact Per Week:

Lecture: 5 hours

Field Trips/Experiential Learning: 1 hour

Discussion: 1 hour

Out-of-Class Time Per Week:

General Review & Preparation: 3 hours

Reading: 6 hours

Written Assignments: 3 hours

Research Projects: 2 hours

Total Time Per Week: 21 hours

**General Education Principles:**

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|-----------------------|--|
| General Knowledge:    | Students will explore the general question of how minority group status affects an individual's position in society, participation in the arts and portrayal in media. Students will also develop an understanding of the methodological issues used in contemporary theoretical and empirical linguistic investigation. |
| Integrative Learning: | Students will approach the study of American Sign Language from both a cultural and linguistic perspective and will be encouraged to look for ways in which these two domains of language use influence each other within the Deaf community.  |
| Ethical Implications: | Students will gain an understanding of the legal, medical and educational issues facing the Deaf community and will evaluate policy decisions in each of these areas from a variety of perspectives.   |

Cultural Diversity:	Students will familiarize themselves with the culture and language of the Deaf community here in the United States as well as the cultural sub-groups that exist within this community.
Critical Thinking:	Students will prepare assessments and reflections on a number of cultural and linguistic topics using a variety of media.
Rhetorical Effectiveness:	Course requirements will include students' participation in classroom discussions and debates as well as the preparation of written reflections on a weekly basis and two longer written assignments.
Problem-Solving:	Students will ask empirical and theoretical questions about the linguistic properties of ASL and will be responsible for identifying the linguistic domain necessary for answering those questions.
Library & Information Literacy:	Course requirements will include two research assignments which must make use of information and media gathered outside the classroom.

## Linguistics 3: The Structure and Culture of American Sign Language

**Instructor:** Natasha Abner

**Email:** nabner@ucla.edu

**Office Hours:** TBD

**Class Information:** TBD

**Course Description:** This course is intended to provide you with an understanding of American Sign Language (ASL) from both a linguistic and cultural vantage point. This course will provide students with an understanding of the phonetic, phonological, morphological and syntactic properties of ASL and how these properties of ASL compare with those found in other languages, both signed and spoken. Students will also investigate the regional and social variation found within the larger ASL speech community. The linguistic investigation of ASL will be done in tandem with a cultural exploration of the Deaf community in the United States. We will discuss the sociolinguistic practices of the Deaf community, the history of this minority community in the United States and the policy issues that affect the Deaf in the United States. The course will also tackle issues of identity and representation of the Deaf in media.

**Course Objectives:**

- Students will develop an understanding of the role of duality of patterning in sign languages and will be able to identify the phonetic subcomponents of the sign and the phonological processes affecting these phonetic units.
- Students will identify the derivational and inflectional morphological processes used in ASL.
- Students will explore the basic syntactic properties of ASL, including the presence of non-manual markings and the tendency toward discourse-configurationality.
- Students will investigate what is meant by *Deaf Culture* and the issues of identity and representation affecting members of this culture.
- Students will understand the distinction between the pathological versus cultural perspective on deafness.
- Students will explore topics that impact the Deaf community (e.g., cochlear implants, education, early language intervention, assistive technologies).

**Textbooks:** Valli, C., C. Lucas & K. Mulrooney. *Linguistics of American Sign Language: An Introduction*, 4th Edition. Available at ASUCLA bookstore; used edition without DVD acceptable.

**Course Reader:** Available at ASUCLA bookstore, contents listed below.

**Grading:** Course grades will be strictly determined by the rubric below.

Lecture Attendance & Participation: 15%

Section Attendance & Participation: 15%

Homework: 40%

Written Assignments: 30%

**Homeworks:** To ensure that students engage fully with the material throughout the course, four short homework assignments will be assigned. Homework assignments will include short answer questions asking students to reflect on readings and discussions for the week as well as problems addressing the linguistic analysis of ASL.

**Written Assignments:** Two longer written assignments will be required on each of the main themes of this course: culture and linguistic structure. Students will be required to turn in proposals for instructor approval during Week 3, with drafts or outlines accepted (optionally) during Week 5 for additional instructor feedback. Students must include their intended resources in their proposals for the written paper and choices must be approved by the instructor.

*Culture Written Assignment:* Using one of the three options below, students are to complete a detailed written reflection as to how the material/experience they chose illustrates topics and issues in Deaf culture that have been discussed in the course.

Option 1: Read a narrative account of an individual's or group's experience with Deafness in the United States (e.g., *Deaf Like Me*, *Deaf President Now!*, *The Sign for Drowning*).

Option 2: Watch two films which prominently feature Deaf characters in the United States (e.g., *Children of a Lesser God*, *Universal Signs*, *The Miracle Worker*).

Option 3: Attend one of the Deaf events hosted in the Los Angeles area (e.g., theater production at Deaf West, coffee night at Starbucks).

*Linguistic Structure Written Assignment:* Students are to select a single domain of linguistic structure (e.g., phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax) and are to compare the structural properties of that domain in ASL with those of another well-studied sign language (e.g., French Sign Language, Sign Language of the Netherlands).

## Schedule of Topics & Readings

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### Week One

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#### Culture Topics:

#### History of Deafness in America

#### The Status of the Deaf Community as a Culture

##### Readings:

Jankowski, K. A. 1997. "A History of the Deaf Community in American." In *Deaf Empowerment: Emergence, Struggle, and Rhetoric*. pp19-36. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Lane, H., R. Hoffmeister and B. Bahan. 1997. "Deaf Culture." In *A Journal into the DEAF-WORLD*. pp124-173. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Schein, J.D. 1989. "A Theory of Deaf Community Development." in *At Home Among Strangers*. pp197-220. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

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#### Linguistic Topics:

#### Introduction to Linguistics

#### Signed Languages: Languages or Not

#### The Sign Language Continuum

##### Readings:

Daniels, H.A. 2008. "Nine Ideas about Language". In *Language: Introductory Readings*, V. Clark, P. Eschholz, A. Rosa and B.L. Simon, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, New York.

*Linguistics of ASL*, "Defining Language" pp1-16; Files 1.1-4, pp213-229.

Baker-Shenk, C. and D. Cokely. 1980. "English in the Deaf Community". In *American Sign language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture*. pp63-78. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

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**Week Two**

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**Culture Topic: Perspectives on Deaf Culture: Identity & Representation***Readings:*

Madsen, W.J. 1971. "You Have to be Deaf to Understand" (poem translated from ASL).

Broeckner, E.L. 2001. "Who Speaks for the Deaf Community? Not Who You Might Think!" In *Deaf World: A Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook*, L. Bragg (ed). pp.43-47. New York University Press, New York.

Kannapell, B. 1994. "Deaf Identity: An American Perspective". In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*, C. Erting, R. Johnson, D. Smith, B. Snider (eds.). pp44-48. Gallaudet University Press, Washington D.C.

Harris, J. 1995. "Identity and Power Relations." In *Cultural Meaning of Deafness: Language, Identity, and Power Relations*. pp110-118. Ipswich Book Co., Ipswich.

Schein, J.D. 1989. "Medical, Legal, and Interpreting Services." In *At Home Among Strangers*. pp181-196. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

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**Linguistic Topics: Parts of a Sign (Phonetics)  
The Structure of Signs (Phonology)***Readings:*

*Linguistics of ASL*. Part Two pp17-48; "Signs Have Parts" pp230-241; Files 3.1-4.3 pp258-279; "American Sign Language: The Phonological Base" pp280-319.

**Homework #1 Due**

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**Week Three**

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**Culture Topics:**                      **Cultural vs. Pathological Perspectives on Deafness**  
**Cochlear Implants**  
**Film, *Sound and Fury* (2000)**

*Readings:*

Lane, H., R. Hoffmeister, and B. Bahan. 1996. "Disabling the DEAF-WORLD". In *Journal Into The DEAF-WORLD*. pp213–227. Dawn Sign Press, San Diego, CA.

Tucker, B.P. 1998. "Deaf Culture, Cochlear Implants, and Elective Disability." The Hastings Center Report.

Munoz-Baell, I. and M. Ruiz. 2000. "Empowering the deaf. Let the deaf be deaf." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 54(1): 40–44.

Visit and explore: <http://www.cochlearwar.com/>

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**Linguistic Topic:**                      **Types of Signs (Morphology)**

*Readings:*

*Linguistics of ASL*. Part Three pp49–83, 110–112; Files 5.1–4 pp320–335; "The Confluence of Space and Language in Signed Languages" pp336–364.

**Homework #2 Due**  
**Written Assignment Proposals Due**

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**Week Four**

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**Culture Topics:                      Art, Folklore and Literature of the Deaf  
Deaf in Sports and Media***Readings:*

Klima, E. and U. Bellugi. 1979. "The Heightened Use of Language." In *The Signs of Language*. pp317-374. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Coleman, L. and K. Jankowski. 1994. "Empowering Deaf People Through Folklore and Storytelling." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp55-60. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Silver, A. 1994. "How Does Hollywood See Us, and How Do We See Hollywood?" In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp731-735. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

"Hollywood Through Deaf Eyes: A Panel Discussion." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp736-745. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

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**Linguistic Topic:                      Structure of Signed Utterances (Syntax, Semantics)***Readings:*

*Linguistics of ASL*. Part Three pp76-109, 113-140; "Syntax: Sentences and Their Structure" & "Syntax: The Analysis of Sentence Structure" pp378-411.

Baker-Shenk, C. and D. Cokely. 1980. "Sentence Types". In *American Sign Language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture*. pp121-174. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

**Homework #3 Due**

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**Week Five**

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**Culture Topic: Education of the Deaf***Readings:*

Supalla, S. 1994. "Equality in Educational Opportunities: The Deaf Version." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp584–592. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Schein, J.D. 1989. "Education and Rehabilitation." In *At Home Among Strangers*. pp135–159. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Lane, H., R. Hoffmeister and B. Bahan. 1996. "Educational Placement and the Deaf Child", "Language and Literacy", "Bilingual and Bicultural Education for Deaf Children". In *Journey into the DEAF- WORLD*. pp228–314. DawnSignPress, San Diego, CA.

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**Linguistic Topics: Structure of Signed Utterances, Cont.  
Development of Signed Languages  
ASL Linguistic Fieldwork Session***Readings:*

Emmorey, K. 2002. "Sign Language Acquisition" and "The Critical Period Hypothesis and the Effects of Late Language Acquisition". In *Language, Cognition, and the Brain: Insights from Sign Language Research*. pp169–226. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London.

**Homework #4 Due  
Written Assignment Outlines/Drafts Due**



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**Week Six**

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**Culture Topics:**                      **American Sign Language in the Deaf community**  
**Social Interaction in Deaf Culture**  
**Cultures Within a Culture**

*Readings:*

Aramburo, A. 1994. "Sociolinguistic Aspects of the Black Deaf Community." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp474–482. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Kane, T. 1994. "Deaf Gay Men's Culture." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp483–485. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

*Linguistics of ASL*. "Sociolinguistic Aspects of the Black Deaf Community" pp473–485.

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**Linguistic Topic:**                      **Variation in American Sign Language**

*Readings:*

Baker-Shenk, C. and D. Cokely. 1980. "Variation in ASL Signs." In *American Sign Language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture*. pp83-99. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

*Linguistics of ASL*. Part Five pp161–183; Files 10.1–3 pp440–450; "Variation: Basic Concepts" pp486–515.

**Homework #5 Due**

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**Written Assignments Due Monday After Session Ends!**

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**Contents of the Course Reader:**

- Aramburo, A. 1994. "Sociolinguistic Aspects of the Black Deaf Community." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp474–482. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Baker-Shenk, C. and D. Cokely. 1980. "English in the Deaf Community", "Variation in ASL Signs", "Sentence Types." In *American Sign language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture*. pp63-78, 83–99, 121–174. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Broeckner, E.L. 2001. "Who Speaks for the Deaf Community? Not Who You Might Think!" In *Deaf World: A Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook*, L. Bragg (ed). pp.43–47. New York University Press, New York.
- Coleman, L. and K. Jankowski. 1994. "Empowering Deaf People Through Folklore and Storytelling." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp55-60. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Daniels, H.A. 2008. "Nine Ideas about Language". In *Language: Introductory Readings*, V. Clark, P. Eschholz, A. Rosa and B.L. Simon, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, New York.
- Emmorey, K. 2002. "Sign Language Acquisition" and "The Critical Period Hypothesis and the Effects of Late Language Acquisition". In *Language, Cognition, and the Brain: Insights from Sign Language Research*. pp169–226. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London.
- Harris, J. 1995. "Identity and Power Relations." In *Cultural Meaning of Deafness: Language, Identity, and Power Relations*. pp110-118. Ipswich Book Co., Ipswich.
- Jankowski, K. A. 1997. "A History of the Deaf Community in American." In *Deaf Empowerment: Emergence, Struggle, and Rhetoric*. pp19-36. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Kane, T. 1994. "Deaf Gay Men's Culture." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp483–485. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Kannapell, B. 1994. "Deaf Identity: An American Perspective". In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*, C. Erting, R. Johnson, D. Smith, B. Snider (eds.). pp44-48. Gallaudet University Press, Washington D.C.
- Klima, E. and U. Bellugi. 1979. "The Heightened Use of Language." In *The Signs of Language*. pp317–374. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Lane, H., R. Hoffmeister and B. Bahan. 1997. "Deaf Culture", "Disabling the DEAF-WORLD", "Educational Placement and the Deaf Child", "Language and Literacy", "Bilingual and Bicultural Education for Deaf Children." In *A Journal into the DEAF-WORLD*. pp124–173, 213–314. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Madsen, W.J. 1971. "You Have to be Deaf to Understand" (poem translated from ASL).
- Munoz-Baell, I. and M. Ruiz. 2000. "Empowering the deaf. Let the deaf be deaf." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 54(1): 40–44.
- Schein, J.D. 1989. "A Theory of Deaf Community Development", "Medical, Legal, and Interpreting Services", "Education and Rehabilitation." In *At Home Among Strangers*. pp135–159, 181–220. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Silver, A. 1994. "How Does Hollywood See Us, and How Do We See Hollywood?" In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp731–735. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Supalla, S. 1994. "Equality in Educational Opportunities: The Deaf Version." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp584–592. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.

Tucker, B.P. 1998. "Deaf Culture, Cochlear Implants, and Elective Disability." The Hastings Center Report.

"Hollywood Through Deaf Eyes: A Panel Discussion." In *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*. pp736–745. Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.



## Course Revision Proposal

### Linguistics 3 American Sign Language: Structure and Culture

#### Requested revisions that apply:

Renumbering	Title	Format	Requisites	Units	Grading	Description
Multiple Listing:	Add New	Change Number	Delete			
Concurrent Listing:	Add New	Change Number	Delete			

#### CURRENT

#### PROPOSED

<a href="#">Course Number</a>	Linguistics 3	Linguistics 3
<a href="#">Title</a>	American Sign Language: Structure and Culture	American Sign Language: Structure and Culture
<a href="#">Short Title</a>	ASL STRUCT&CULTURE	ASL STRUCT&CULTURE
<a href="#">Units</a>	Fixed: 4	Fixed: 5
<a href="#">Grading Basis</a>	Letter grade or Passed/Not Passed	Letter grade or Passed/Not Passed
<a href="#">Instructional Format</a>	Primary Format Lecture	Primary Format Lecture - 4 hours per week
	Secondary Format Discussion	Secondary Format Discussion - 1 hours per week
<a href="#">TIE Code</a>	LECN - Lecture (No Supplementary Activity) [T]	LECN - Lecture (No Supplementary Activity) [T]
<a href="#">GE</a>	No	Yes
<a href="#">Requisites</a>	None	None

<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>Lecture, four hours; discussion, one hour. Knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) not required. Introduction to principles of linguistics through study of structure of American Sign Language and culture of deaf Americans. Phonology, morphology, syntax of ASL, historical change, signed language universals, education, identity, and ASL literature. P/NP or letter grading.</p>	<p><b>Lecture, four hours; discussion, one hour. Knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) not required. Introduction to principles of linguistics through study of structure of American Sign Language and culture of deaf Americans. Phonology, morphology, syntax of ASL, historical change, signed language universals, education, identity, and ASL literature. P/NP or letter grading.</b></p>
<p><b>Justification</b></p>		<p><b>Course has been reformulated to be offered as a GE course, under Foundations of the Arts and Humanities (Literary &amp; Cultural Analysis and Philosophical &amp; Linguistic Analysis GEs). GE proposal has been sent under separate cover to GE Governance Cmt Chair, Scott Chandler.</b></p>
<p><b>Syllabus</b></p>		<p>File <a href="#">Lx3 Syllabus Abner.pdf</a> was previously uploaded. You may view the file by clicking on the file name.</p>
<p><b>Supplemental Information</b></p>		
<p><b>Effective Date</b></p>	<p><b>Winter 2001</b></p>	<p><b>Summer 1 2011</b></p>
<p><b>Department</b></p>	<p><b>Linguistics</b></p>	<p><b>Linguistics</b></p>
<p><b>Contact</b></p>		<p>Name <b>MELANIE LEVIN</b></p>

[Routing Help](#)

E-mail  
**melanie@humnet.  
ucla.edu**

## ROUTING STATUS

**Role:** Registrar's Office

**Status:** Processing Completed

**Role:** Registrar's Publications Office - Hennig, Leann Jean (lhennig@registrar.ucla.edu) - 56704

**Status:** Added to SRS on 11/4/2010 8:59:06 PM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Edited course description into official version.

**Role:** Registrar's Scheduling Office - Thomson, Douglas N (dthomson@registrar.ucla.edu) - 51441

**Status:** Added to SRS on 10/31/2010 6:09:53 PM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** No Comments

**Role:** FEC School Coordinator - Soh, Michael Young (msoh@college.ucla.edu) - 45040

**Status:** Returned for Additional Info on 10/26/2010 4:46:47 PM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Routing to Registrar's Office

**Role:** FEC Chair or Designee - McClendon, Muriel C (mcclendo@history.ucla.edu) - 53918

**Status:** Approved on 10/26/2010 11:35:19 AM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** No Comments

**Role:** L&S FEC Coordinator - Soh, Michael Young (msoh@college.ucla.edu) - 45040

**Status:** Returned for Additional Info on 10/26/2010 10:25:27 AM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Routing to Vice Chair Muriel McClendon for FEC approval

**Role:** Department/School Coordinator - Levin, Melanie A (melanie@humnet.ucla.edu) - 55060

**Status:** Approved on 10/25/2010 11:27:31 AM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Updated check box, noting requested revision of units. (Note GE proposal sent under separate cover.)

**Role:** L&S FEC Coordinator - Soh, Michael Young (msoh@college.ucla.edu) - 45040

**Status:** Returned for Additional Info on 10/25/2010 10:45:20 AM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Per email, routing back to Melanie

**Role:** Department Chair or Designee - Levin, Melanie A (melanie@humnet.ucla.edu) - 55060

**Status:** Approved on 10/20/2010 6:10:03 PM

**Changes:** TIE Code

**Comments:** Approved on behalf of Linguistics Chair, Anoop Mahajan.

**Role:** Initiator/Submitter - Levin, Melanie A (melanie@humnet.ucla.edu) - 55060

**Status:** Submitted on 10/20/2010 6:08:21 PM

**Comments:** Initiated a Course Revision Proposal

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Comments or questions? Contact the Registrar's Office at  
[cims@registrar.ucla.edu](mailto:cims@registrar.ucla.edu) or (310) 206-7045