



UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

LING 242

Introduction to Meaning: The Language of Lying



- **What is lying?**
- **Which utterances can be considered a lie?**
- **How do liars exploit linguistic meanings?**

Lying is universal. Lying is everywhere - in the private sphere, political sphere and on the internet. It's a common human behavior and a property of human speech on par with our other cognitive abilities. But it also involves sociocultural aspects. In this course, we're interested in how lying is understood and how the practices of lying are acted out in different communities. What is lying, exactly? Is it just a kind of human behavior? Is it a matter of truth and falsity? A particular type of verbal act? Lying is an appealing topic for linguistic study, and in this course, we will answer all of these questions from the perspectives of linguistics and the philosophy of language. We'll look at jokes, fiction, irony, sarcasm, bullshitting, metaphor, overstatements and understatements, etc., and determine whether each can be considered a lie.

This course is a non-technical introduction to the theory of meaning. Come join us if you are interested in the study of speech and behavior, philosophy of language, or the scientific study of language!

Spring 2019 | MWF 9:30 - 10:20AM | Location: MGH 238

5 credits | VLPA | No prerequisite

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