



**November 2021**

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**Welcome Back!**

We hope you are doing well as we venture into the 2021-2022 academic year! We welcome our new students and continue working with our incredible returning ones. Further, we have several faculty acknowledgments and celebrations to bring to your attention as we join together on campus for the AY 2021-22!

**Northwestern Department of Linguistics' 55th Anniversary:**

Due to unprecedented chaos, it went unacknowledged that the 2020-2021 academic year was the Northwestern Linguistic Department's 55th Anniversary! Please take a moment to appreciate this great accomplishment, due in part to five and a half decades of incredible faculty and talented students.

Welcome from the Department Chair Jennifer Cole:



As the newly appointed Linguistics Department Chair, I offer a warm welcome to everyone in our Linguistics community at Northwestern! We each experienced unique challenges over the past 18 months of life under Covid, but this year holds a shared promise for us all as we return to our work and school activities in person. I look forward to taking in the beauty of our campus surroundings, reconnecting in person with friends and colleagues, and just generally feeling energized by the presence of the faculty, students and staff who make this University the amazing institution that it is!

This is a year with many transitions in the Linguistics Department, and visitors to our house on Sheridan Road may notice some changes. For starters, it is my privilege and honor to assume the role of Department Chair following the excellent leadership of our former Chair, **Dr. Matt Goldrick**, who now embarks on the just rewards of a year-long research leave. I am delighted to welcome **Dr. Erin Leddon**, formerly a staff member of the English Language Program, in her new roles as Associate Professor of Instruction and Director of Undergraduate Studies in Linguistics and Cognitive Science. Dr. Leddon will be working to enrich our undergraduate program through teaching, advising, and community-building activities. We are also very excited to welcome **Dr. Rob Voigt** to the Evanston campus, after spending his first year on the faculty teaching and advising remotely from his former home in California. Finally, we welcome **Dr. Annette D'Onofrio** back to campus in Winter Quarter, and celebrate the addition of the new member of her family!

A special welcome to our **new graduate students**, Ziyun Chew, Cassie Davenport, Devin Johnson, Grace LeFevre and Adrian Ray Avalani, who bring an exciting range of interests and experiences to the department. And since we will be together in person, I look forward to the hallway and classroom conversations with these students and our returning graduate students! Our stellar undergraduate majors and minors in Linguistics are equally important to the Linguistics community at Northwestern, and we are excited to be part of their journey in Linguistics in the coming year, as well.

One of the most rewarding things about being part of this department is getting a front-row seat to the innovative research of the students, postdocs and faculty. It's particularly pleasing when that research is recognized by the broader scientific community, as happened this summer when three graduate students, **Jaime Benheim**, **Nicole Mirea**, and **Wes Orth**, were awarded Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants from the National Science Foundation. Congratulations to these students, and many others in our department with research achievements you can learn about from their individual and lab or group webpages.

I invite all members of the Northwestern Linguistics community to connect with us in our classes, Linguistic Colloquium events, Phonatics meetings, and in meetings of our labs and research groups. And stay tuned for an exciting announcement to come later this year, about the opening of our newly constructed **Multimodal Interaction Lab** in Swift 309, designed to support audio and video recording along with physiological monitoring for multi-modal investigations of naturalistic, interactive language use!

## **Linguistics Colloquium Series:**

Join us for this academic year's [Colloquium Series](#)! We have some incredible speakers coming, and would love to see you there.

<i>October 8th, 2021 from 3:30pm-5:30pm:</i>	<i>Rachel Theodore (via Zoom)</i>
<i>November 12th, 2021 from 3:30pm-5:30pm:</i>	<i>Ming Xiang (via Zoom)</i>
<i>January 28th, 2022 from 3:30pm-6:00pm:</i>	<i>Jessi Grieser</i>
<i>April 29th, 2022 from 3:30pm-6:00pm:</i>	<i>Bob Frank</i>
<i>May 6th, 2022 from 3:30pm-6:00pm:</i>	<i>Tessa Bent</i>
<i>May 13th, 2022 from 3:30pm-6:00pm:</i>	<i>Eric Acton</i>

## **New Role Acknowledgement:**

Hi everybody! My name is Erin Leddon, and I would like to introduce myself on behalf of my new role in the Department of Linguistics!

I received my PhD in Linguistics from Northwestern in 2006. I've been fortunate to have stayed at Northwestern ever since! I've had a variety of roles here, including postdoc in the Psychology Department with Sandy Waxman at the Infant & Child Development Center. For the past 10 years, I served as Associate Director of English Language Programs, where I taught English language classes and oversaw programs for international graduate students. I also regularly taught 200-level courses in Linguistics. Outside of work, I am a big Chicago White Sox fan and am looking forward to seeing how they fare this year in the postseason! I'm a lifelong Chicagoan and now live in Evanston with my husband and 3 kids: Kate (age 14), Brian (11), and Claire (9).



I'm excited to now join the department as Associate Professor of Instruction. In this role, I will teach undergraduate linguistics courses, and serve as Director of Undergraduate Studies. I will also serve as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Cognitive Science Program. I'm looking forward to shifting my focus to undergraduate teaching and advising, and building community among our undergraduate students.

## **English Language Program (ELP):**

As Erin Leddon takes on her new role, we would like to bring your attention to the ELP, where she contributed her incredible skills for the past 10 years.

The English Language Program is a partnership between The Graduate School and Department of Linguistics that offers English classes, tutoring, and workshops to international students and faculty. English language testing and orientation programs are also offered. Please note all programs are virtual for the Fall 2021 quarter. Visit this website to learn more about the resources!

<https://www.elp.northwestern.edu/index.html>

## Meet Some Peeps:

Following are a few introductions from our incoming PhD students and some faculty who have recently taken on new roles!

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### Incoming Graduate Student Bios:

As we welcome a new class of Graduate Students to the Northwestern Department of Linguistics, we wanted to allow them a chance to introduce themselves! Continue reading to get a grasp of these new students' personalities, academic interests, and plans for their education. We are delighted to have them join our program!

#### Ziyun Chew



**Previous Studies:** Bachelor's in Linguistics from University of Texas at Austin with minors in Spanish and Mathematics; further studies in Mandarin at National Taiwan University

**Academic Interests:** Computational linguistics for social justice applications and sociophonetics

**Plans for Northwestern:**

I'm really excited to start my PhD at Northwestern and work under Dr. Rob Voigt doing computational linguistics research and applications, as well as take classes in sociolinguistics with Dr. Annette D'Onofrio. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone in the department and working together for the next five or so years!

#### Cassie Davenport

**Previous Studies:** Undergraduate Linguistics Major, History Minor from William & Mary

**Academic Interests:** My academic interests include linguistics, history, and Spanish. I am also involved in sustainability and LGBTQ+ activism. I plan to pursue a mix of sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and syntax.

**Plans for Northwestern:**

I am interested in the intersections of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, and I am excited to explore sentence processing (particularly with pronouns/reflexives) and sociolinguistic fieldwork. I hope to pursue projects that involve LGBTQ+ identities. Outside of linguistics, I am excited to engage in sustainability clubs/projects at Northwestern as this is another passion of mine that I was heavily involved with in my undergrad.



**Devin Johnson**



**Previous Studies:** Bachelors in Linguistics and Computer Science at University of Washington - Madison, Masters in Computational Linguistics at University of Washington - Seattle

**Academic Interests:** East Asian political communication, particularly the discourse surrounding relations between Taiwan and its neighbors

**Plans for Northwestern:**

As I enter Northwestern, I'm very excited to keep improving my Mandarin Chinese, perhaps improve my abilities in another language of the region, and explore related sociolinguistic questions. Besides these interests, since I was much younger I've been quite passionate about learning and teaching languages, so I am excited to take a few courses related to language education as well.

**Grace LeFevre**

**Previous Studies:** B.A. in Linguistics from The Ohio State University

**Academic Interests:** Computational linguistics, particularly its intersection with sociolinguistics and applications to social media

**Plans for Northwestern:**

Since I'm most interested in problems at the intersection of computational and sociolinguistics, I'm excited to take courses in both areas at Northwestern, as well as explore a few CS classes in topics like artificial intelligence and natural language processing. One research topic I'm currently interested in pursuing is how social movements are driven by social media (esp. Twitter), particularly in what factors can predict increased engagement with an emerging movement. In addition, after working extensively with ELL students during my undergrad years as a writing consultant, I'm also excited for the opportunity to contribute to the ELP programs and learn more about language education.



**Adrian Ray Avalani**



**Previous Studies:** BSEs in computer science and English from Caltech ('17), MA in Linguistics from UChicago ('21)

**Academic interests:** Computational sociolinguistics, queer linguistics and intersectionality

**Plans for Northwestern:**

At Northwestern I'm hoping to have the opportunity to investigate how various aspects of personal identity construction are represented in one's sociolinguistic markers. Currently I'm interested in how queer-identified men conceive of and linguistically represent their own masculinity in comparison to cishet men, and separately, would like to investigate linguistic markers of queer identity in Asian-American online communities vs. other online communities. I also have an ongoing interest in understanding cultural exoticization and appropriation in linguistic terms, specifically formalizing the utility of using appropriative language in a conversation, and how this can be generalized to one-to-many interactions, such as online bloggers or Youtubers who use appropriative language in communications with an audience of many.

## **New(ish) Faculty Introduction:**

### **Rob Voigt**

Hi everyone! My name's Rob and I'm a computational linguist who started in the department in March 2020, right as the pandemic began - causal relationship remains to be investigated. Research-wise, I'm most interested in using computational methods to understand the linguistic mechanisms of social problems, and hopefully to then develop real-world interventions and policy recommendations. I'm also very excited about computational approaches to multimodality, and we have an interaction lab coming online in Swift Hall this fall I'm glad to talk your ear off about. Outside of work my main thing is Josie (see pic). Then my second main thing is music, and we'll soon be getting going on a Linguistics Department Band that all are welcome to join! Keep an ear out for more info on that.



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## **Department of Linguistics Honors:**

We would like to acknowledge the recent accomplishments of our Linguistics students and faculty! See below for some incredible achievements. Note that the awards mentioned are not exhaustive of what our students/faculty have received this year.

### **Linguistics in the Media:**

Annette D'Onofrio's and Jaime Benheim's work is featured in *Chicago magazine*!



### **Demoz Prize Winner (Michael Senko):**

Congratulations to Michael Senko for winning the 2021 Abraham Demoz Prize! Senko was chosen as this year's winner due to his outstanding achievement in linguistics; independent, original research; and sustained engagement with faculty-directed research. He plans to work in education or education management before continuing his education at graduate school in linguistic anthropology.

<https://linguistics.northwestern.edu/documents/demoz-winner-2021.pdf>

**Provost Grant (Masaya Yoshida):**

Congratulations to Masaya Yoshida, who has been awarded a Provost Grant for Research in Humanities, Social Sciences and the Arts. He received the grant for “Grammatical Structure and Language Understanding,” a research project that explores whether the act of building the abstract and complex grammatical structure of sentences itself results in the speed and accuracy of language processing.



**Teaching Award (Masaya Yoshida):**

Even more congratulations to Masaya Yoshida, who is also the recipient of a 2019-2020 Distinguished Teaching Award from Weinberg College. This is an incredible feat that is only accentuated by his 2016-2017 Award for Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research.



**National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (Lisa Cox):**

Congratulations to Lisa Cox, who was awarded the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

*From Lisa:* Speech is highly variable - every time we hear a word, the acoustic signal is slightly different. Despite this, humans can still recognize that two instances of a word are the same word. My NSF grant supports work exploring how humans cope with variability in the speech signal and the kinds of mistakes we make.

**FY22 Data Science Fellowship (Devin Johnson):**

Congratulations to Devin Johnson for being awarded the FY22 Data Science Fellowship. The Data Science Fellowship is made possible by Northwestern University's investment in data science scholarship and is intended to provide students from a variety of fields with the education and experience to assume leadership roles in academia and industry in the realm of data science. Due to his research interests, strong background, and exceptional promise as a scholar, he is one of a very select group of students who have been offered this prestigious award.

*From Devin:* I am extremely grateful to have received this fellowship, and I plan to use these funds to facilitate the research in the first two years that will make up my qualifying paper.



**National Science Foundation Awards (Jaime Benheim, Nicole Mirea, Wesley Orth):**

Congratulations to these three award winners, who have received Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants from the National Science Foundation!

**Jaime Benheim**

*PI & Advisor: A. D'Onofrio*



**Project Title:** Doctoral Dissertation

**Research:** High school choice and the social meanings of a sound change in language.

**Description:** Jaime Benheim's grant will support research into Chicago-area adolescents' perception and production of an ongoing local sound change. It will fund undergraduate research assistants and computer software for remote data collection.

**Nicole Mirea**

*PI & Advisor: M. Goldrick*



**Project Title:** Doctoral Dissertation

**Research:** Role of Prior Knowledge in Consolidation of Novel Phonotactic Patterns for Speech Production.

**Description:** Nicole Mirea's grant will fund data collection and processing for her dissertation project. This project explores how adults' pre-existing knowledge about the order of sounds within words gets used during sleep-based consolidation to help them pronounce words of a new language, which may follow different sound sequencing rules.

**Wesley Orth**

*PI & Advisor: M. Yoshida*



**Project Title:** Doctoral Dissertation

**Research:** Active assignment of quantifier scope guides language processing

**Description:** Wesley Orth's grant will be used to create a dataset on the processing of polarity items in diverse contexts as measured through web-based and in-lab methodologies. Additionally the grant provides funding for an undergraduate research assistant who will assist in the creation of tools for rapid development of materials for web-based experiments.





**DSC Fellowship (Dan Turner):**

A big congratulations to Dan Turner who has been funded for the third year with DSC fellowship from Research Computing! Over the summer, he taught a workshop series on text analysis in R and Python, and this year he will be teaching about different ways to analyze time series. He has also been working on projects involving racial biases in policing and medicine, and building genealogical networks using emergency contact data.

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**Final Reminders:**

**New Website (including lab spaces):**

Please explore our new website featuring our incredible lab spaces and meeting rooms! Browse the various pages and take in all of the great resources attributed to our department, thanks to our wonderful donors.

<https://groups.linguistics.northwestern.edu/documentation/v3/#/>

**Faculty Research Questions:**

Browse the link below for some great information on what your Northwestern Linguistics faculty are currently studying.

<https://linguistics.northwestern.edu/research/faculty-research-questions.html>

**Thank You to Our Donors:**

Thank you so much to our incredible donors for making all of the work we do possible!

<b>Name</b>	<b>Class Year</b>	<b>School</b>
Adams, Catherine Isabel	2012	Weinberg
Arn, Leigh Virginia	2019	Weinberg
Bertram, Anne Elizabeth	1994	Weinberg
Buzard, David A.	1984	Weinberg
Byrne, Cassandra Maria	2012	Weinberg
Carreno, Alexa Marie	2013	Weinberg
Cibelli, Emily Suzanne		
Coccaro, Noah B.	1991	Weinberg
Coffey, Elizabeth R.	1997	Weinberg
Colby, Casey Elizabeth	2015	Weinberg
Cunningham, Andrea Maria	2016	Weinberg
Dimov, Svetlin Nedeltchev	2015	Weinberg
Frazer, Nathan Micah	2015	Weinberg
Gagliano, Cara Lorraine	2011	Weinberg
Gazdik, Mark A.	1991	Weinberg
Gingiss, Peter J.	1966	Weinberg
Givler-Savage, Mary	1981	Weinberg
Gupta, Chirag Sudhir	2012	McCormick
Gustafson, Erin Nicole	2014	Weinberg
Hamersmith, Jamie Michelle	2012	Weinberg
Hill, Karen L.		
Hill, Thomas E.		
Hiramatsu, Kazuko	1993	Weinberg
Jones, Conor Benjamin Colin	2019	Weinberg
Kahle, Kelly Vanessa	2012	Weinberg
Kim, Midam	2012	Weinberg
Konopka, Kenneth Leon	2011	Weinberg
Lee, Kyounghee	2016	Weinberg
Lin, Julliard	2010	Weinberg
Liu, Jiayi	2009	Music

## LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER 2021

Lu, Jiayi	2019	Weinberg
Lu, Xunru	2019	Weinberg
Matsubara, Juri	2002	Weinberg
McCarter, Catherine Cavanaugh	2016	Weinberg
McCarter, Dale		
McCarter, Elizabeth B.	1983	Weinberg
McDorman, Marshall R.	2021	McCormick
Miller, Amanda Rose	2015	Weinberg
Moe, Alex Scurio	2012	Weinberg
Mok, Kelsey Amy	2010	Weinberg
Murphy, Amanda Rosemary	2010	Weinberg
Mueller, Bethany Alisha	2016	Weinberg
Naughton, Sean Michael	2021	Weinberg
Perrachione, Arim Choi	2007	Weinberg
Perrachione, Tyler K.	2007	Weinberg
Raffensperger, Rebecca G.	2010	Weinberg
Rauff, James Vernon	1988	Weinberg
Rauff, Rebecca Ann	1985	Weinberg
Schinke-Llano, Linda A.	1981	Weinberg
Simonson, Loren Elizabeth	2021	Weinberg
Sheth, Shashank Kamlesh	2012	Weinberg
Song, Anne Young	2012	McCormick, Weinberg
Thomas, S. Faithe	1990	Weinberg
Torres, Jorge	2010	Kellogg
Turkington, David		Non-Alum
Turkington, Ruth		Non-Alum
Walker, Ashley H.	2004	Weinberg
Ward, Rebekah Joy	2013	Weinberg
Watras, Christine M.	2009	Weinberg
Watras, Matthew David	2009	McCormick
Yancy, Glenn Leonardo	2008	Weinberg
Yancy, Rebekah Joy	2013	Weinberg

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