

Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment and Strategic Analysis, Hofstra University

DATES: April 12-16, 2021 Fully online and synchronous

LING 220 **ONE-WEEK INTENSIVE FORENSIC LINGUISTICS COURSE**

FORENSIC LINGUISTICS IN COUNTER-TERRORISM, INTELLIGENCE, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE, THREAT ASSESSMENT, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Institute and the Linguistics Program at Hofstra University are proud to announce that James R. Fitzgerald, MS, retired FBI Supervisory Special Agent and program director of forensic linguistic services for the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) of the Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, will join Dr. Robert Leonard as co-instructor of this unique one-week long experience.

About the course

This one-week intensive course predates the formal Forensic Linguistics program at Hofstra and is modeled after the FBI Forensic Linguistics week-long "boot camp" course that then-Supervisory Special Agent Jim Fitzgerald conceived, organized, and taught (and recruited Leonard to also teach) at Quantico.

The course was run by the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU), Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, to teach agents of the FBI and other agencies such as the ATF, Secret Service, Capitol Police, etc. When Fitzgerald retired from the FBI, he and Leonard moved the week-long intensive course to Hofstra, where it became LING 220, now offered each spring.

Cases

Case studies and class participation exercises are largely from those worked by Fitzgerald or Leonard, which include the JonBenet Ramsey Case, UNABOM Case, National Football League Terrorism Threat Case, Philadelphia Bombing Case, Anthrax Case, Daniel Pearl Case, Barbie Doll Case, Washington, DC Sniper Case, UK School Bus Bombing Threat/Extortion Case, Coleman triple homicides, the Facebook Catfishing Executions, and the Hummert Murder Case.

Course content

A case-based approach to solving legal and law enforcement problems through linguistic analysis:

- **Demographic Linguistic Profiles:** Dialectology, sociolinguistics and linguistic variation analyses can indicate a writer's regional and local geographic origin, education level, occupational training, and other demographic features.
- **Authorship Analysis:** Text comparisons can indicate whether two sets of texts have common authorship. The role of authorship analysis in investigation and litigation is exemplified and discussed through several cases.
- **Threat Level Analysis:** State-of-the-art techniques, based on thousands of FBI cases, assess the probability of harm. How likely is the threat to be carried out? What are the overlaps between Threat Assessment and Forensic Linguistics? How can corpora such as the FBI's Communicated Threat Assessment Database (CTAD) best be used?

Through lecture, case study, and workshop formats, this course elucidates forensic linguistic responses to challenges of:

- Intelligence and Counterintelligence.
- Domestic and foreign terror campaigns.

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- Threats to government, officials, workplace, schools, and private individuals.
- Criminal Communications such as extortion, ransom notes, criminal intelligence disinformation, intercepted communications.

Instructors

Robert Leonard and James Fitzgerald are the Directors of the Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment and Strategic Analysis at Hofstra University.

James R. Fitzgerald, MS, is a violent crime consultant and forensic linguist. An FBI Supervisory Special Agent (ret.), criminal profiler, and program director of forensic linguistic services for the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) of the Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Mr. Fitzgerald focused his efforts on counterterrorism, threat assessment, and other forensic linguistics services. He created and developed the CTAD, a one-of-a-kind computer repository for all criminally-oriented communications in the United States. It was Fitzgerald's groundbreaking forensic linguistic work on the Unabomber case that led to the FBI's recognition of the strategic necessity of forensic linguistics, (and prompted his real-life persona to be the central character in the recent Discovery Channel scripted series *Manhunt: Unabomber*). He the author of a three-book memoir series titled *A Journey to the Center of the Mind*.

Robert A. Leonard, PhD, Professor of Linguistics, is Director of the Graduate Program in Linguistics: Forensic Linguistics at Hofstra as well as the Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis. The *New Yorker Magazine* calls Leonard "One of the foremost language detectives in the country". A Fulbright Fellow for his doctoral work at Columbia University, he has consulted to the FBI and police, counter-terrorism, and intelligence agencies throughout the U.S., Canada, the U.K., and continental Europe, as well as to many defense teams. Other clients include Apple, Facebook, the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, and the Prime Minister of Canada. Leonard's testimony proved pivotal in investigating and prosecuting several high-profile cases, including the JonBenet Ramsey murder, death threats to judges and U.S. Congress members, and the triple homicide of the Coleman family in Illinois. He has been qualified as a forensic expert witness in linguistics and language in courts in 12 states and 7 U.S. federal district courts and has also testified before International Tribunals in Washington DC and Paris.

Requirements and credits

There are no prerequisites. The course is aimed at professionals, researchers, and students. Graduate students earn three credits upon successful completion of all requirements.

Continuing Education participants can email Michael.Chisena@hofstra.edu to register. For more information please contact forensiclinguistics@hofstra.edu.