



AKNS A101I: Elementary Unangam Tunuu I

4 credits

M/W 17:30–19:10 via Zoom

Fall 2024

Instructor:

Madeline Snigaroff

mksnigaroff@alaska.edu

[I am a Ph.D. candidate](#) in Linguistics at The University of Chicago; I'm not a professor, so please feel free to refer to me as "Madeline" (or, if you're bold, "*Ayagam Uniikaza*").

Office hours: By appointment. Please don't be shy to reach out to me to arrange office hours!

A note about emails: I am currently in Chicago, IL, on Central Time. This means I am 3 hours ahead of Anchorage time and may not respond to your emails until the next day if you send them in the evening. Keep this in mind if you have an urgent question or concern!

Course Description:

This course introduces the basics of the Aleut (*Unangam Tunuu*, or UT) language, with specific focus on Western Aleut (*Niiġuġim Tunuu*, or NT). Students will learn everyday vocabulary and grammar connected to basic questions with the goal of being able to have basic conversations by the end of the class. Students will develop writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills. Students will also learn about the history of the Aleut people (the *Unangas* or *Unangan*), their language, and how they are currently working toward revitalization.

Prerequisites:

None.

Requirements fulfilled:

This course fulfills the Alaska Native-themed GER, Humanities GER, and the Diversity & Inclusion GER. See more [here](#).

Specific course objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to...

- Ask and answer basic *who*, *what*, *where*, *how*, and *from where* questions
- Introduce themselves, their age, and their family
- Play a game of Go Fish

...and students will further understand:

- The history of the Aleutian Islands and Aleut people
- Dialectical differences and differences with Inuit-Yupik side of the language family
- How UT is being revitalized, and what revitalization and documentation efforts there have been in the past

Requirements:

You must have access to...

- A computer with reliable internet, camera, and mic (for Zoom sessions)
- A device for making voice recordings (e.g, your computer, your phone, some other recorder)
- Blackboard Learn

See “Resources” below for some additional, but optional, resources that may help.

Grading breakdown:

- 10% written final
 - A cumulative final on Blackboard testing grammar and vocabulary
- 10% final presentation
 - Your final presentation can be either: a) a 5 min. solo presentation introducing you and your family and friends, or b) a 10 min. conversation between you and another student on any topic
- 10% midterm
 - A midterm on Blackboard testing grammar and vocabulary learned in the first half of the class
- 35% homework
 - Homework due (almost) every week, with a total of 11 homeworks. Homeworks will be short (< 1 hr.) tests of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar skills
- 35% participation
 - “Participation” is unfortunately somewhat subjective. Since this is a pretty small class, I expect to know you and have heard you improve your command of the language over the course of the semester. Regular, punctual attendance and engagement in class activities are also significant parts of the participation grade

Grading scale:

Percent grade	Letter grade
90–100%	A
80–89%	B
70–79%	C
60–69%	D
below 60%	F

(I will round up your grade to the nearest percent—so an 89.5% will be an A.)

Late policy:

For every day late, I deduct 5% from the assignment grade.

Collaboration policy:

You can collaborate with other students on the homeworks, as long as you list who you worked with.

Course schedule:

Below is a tentative schedule for our course. Note that this is subject to change; you are welcome to tell me if we should speed up or slow down.

Week 1 26 Aug., 2024 28 Aug.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction to the course and the Inuit-Yupik-Aleut language family ● History of the Aleutian Islands ● Phonology and writing system <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 1 due 1 Sep. at midnight</i></p>
No class 2 Sept.	
Week 2 4 Sept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Word order and basic verb endings ● <i>Alqux al?</i> ‘What is it?’: Basic items <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 2 due 8 Sept. at midnight</i></p>
Week 3 9 Sept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Negation and plurality ● Using Bergsland’s tools <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 3 due 15 Sept. at midnight</i></p>
Asynchronous class 11 Sept. (lecture will be posted to Blackboard)	
Week 4 16 Sept. 18 Sept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Qanang al?</i> ‘Where is it?’: Places, prepositions, noun case ● <i>Alqus maxt?</i> ‘What are you doing?’: Verb endings, basic actions <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 4 due 22 Sept. at midnight</i></p>
Week 5 23 Sept. 25 Sept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Alqus manaxt?</i> ‘What did you do?’: Past <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 5 due 29 Sept. at midnight</i></p>
Week 6 30 Sept. 2 Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practice, review, and catch-up <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Midterm due 6 Oct. at midnight</i></p>
Week 7 7 Oct. 9 Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction terms ● <i>Alqutat?</i> ‘How are you?’: Greetings ● <i>Alqux asaxtat?</i> ‘What is your name?’
Week 8 14 Oct. 16 Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● History of the Aleut kinship system ● Kinship terms ● <i>Kiin al?</i>: People + possessives <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 6 due 20 Oct. at midnight</i></p>
Week 9 21 Oct. 23 Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review ● <i>Qanang angagizaxt?</i> ‘Where do you live?’ ● <i>Qanaax angixtat?</i> ‘Where are you from?’ <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 7 due 27 Oct. at midnight</i></p>

Week 10 28 Oct. 30 Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full introductions • Commands <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 8 due 3 Nov. at midnight</i></p>
Week 11 4 Nov. 6 Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language revitalization: Past and present • Introduction to <i>Chalida!</i> ‘Go fish!’ <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 9 due 10 Nov. at midnight</i></p>
Week 12 11 Nov. 13 Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of <i>Chalida!</i> vocabulary • Prepositions + people <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 10 due 17 Nov. at midnight</i></p>
Week 13 18 Nov. 20 Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing <i>Chalida!</i> • Peeking into advanced language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building bigger verbs (postbases and agglutination) ○ Subject vs. object pronouns <p style="text-align: right;"><i>HW 11 due 24 Nov. at midnight</i></p>
Week 14 25 Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to move forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some differences from <i>Qawalangim Tunuu</i> (Eastern Aleut) ○ History of language revitalization in Aleut • Guest talk from APIA: Getting involved in language revitalization
No class 27 Nov.	
Week 15 2 Dec. 4 Dec.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final presentations
Final exam due 14 Dec. at midnight	

Resources:

The following resources are not required for successful completion of the course, but may be helpful or interesting.

- Language learning help—these are resources designed to be accessible to learners
 - Western dialect
 - Bergsland, K. & M. Dirks. (1981). *Atkan Aleut School Grammar*. National Bilingual Materials Development Center. Anchorage, AK: University of Alaska Press.
 - [This mini-course](#) by Knut Bergsland and Moses Dirks
 - [This mobile app](#) was produced by APIA and contains audio recordings, vocabulary items, and quizzes
 - [The Niiġuġim Tunuu Picture Dictionary](#)—an ongoing project I’ve been working on with elders and with the revitalization group at APIA
 - Eastern dialect
 - [Tanam Awaa](#) is a website produced by the revitalization effort in St. Paul for language learning and general cultural education
 - On [this site](#) you can enroll in free, asynchronous courses to read stories, go

through language lessons, and more

- Language documentation—these are thorough, oftentimes technical works that document all characteristics of the language. We'll talk about using Bergsland's dictionary in Week 14.
 - Bergsland, K. (1994). [Aleut Dictionary \[Unangam Tunudgusii\]](#). Alaska Native Language Center. Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press.
 - Bergsland, K. (1997). [Aleut Grammar \[Unangam Tunuganaan Achixaasiġ\]](#). Alaska Native Language Center. Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press.
- Language revitalization
 - [Where Are Your Keys](#) is the program used by the ongoing revitalization effort in Anchorage
 - The [Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association \(APIA\)'s Cultural Heritage Department](#) spearheads much of the revitalization effort, and has some resources for language learners
- Keyboard (for ġ/ġ)
 - For your computer: APIA has instructions on how to be able to write ġ/ġ [here](#). You have a few options:
 - Install a special font (Mac or PC)
 - [Install a keyboard](#)
 - For your phone: Search for and download "Chert" in your phone's app store
 - If all else fails:
 - Use [this website](#); ignore all the symbols except for ^
 - Just type a ^ in front of your capped x's and g's: *hati^x = hatiġ 'ten'*. It's ugly but it works!
 - Print out your assignments and write using a good, old-fashioned pencil and paper. You can upload a picture or scan of them to Blackboard
- Other things of interest
 - Prof. Anna Berge from UAF specializes in the history of the language and its family:
 - Berge, Anna. (2010). [Origins of linguistic diversity in the Aleutian Islands](#). *Human Biology*, 82(5–6): 557–581.
 - Berge, Anna and Gary Holton. (2015). [Toward a history of the Aleut language \(Unangam Tunuu\)](#). Presented at *Societas Linguistica Europaea*.
 - A unique dialect of the language, known as Copper Island Aleut (CIA), has sparked a lot of conversation in linguistics. It's a near perfect half-half mix of Aleut and Russian!
 - Golovko, Eugeni V. and Nikolai B. Vakhtin. (1990). [Aleut in contact: The CIA enigma](#). *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*, 22:97–125.
 - More on the traditional social system and kinship terminology:
 - Petrivelli, Patricia J. (2004). [Unangam Aleut social system](#). *Arctic Anthropology*, 41(2): 126–139.

UAA Policies

This course will adhere to all [UAA Academic Policies and Processes](#) as published in the most current version of the [UAA Catalog](#) and [UAA Student Handbook](#). Please take time to review both the UAA Catalog and UAA Student Handbook.

Notice of nondiscrimination and Title IX statement:

The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, educational institution and provider. The University of Alaska does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University's commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information, applicable laws, and complaint procedures are included on UA's statement of nondiscrimination available at www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination.

For more information, contact:

UAA Office of Equity and Compliance
3890 University Lake Drive, Suite 106, Anchorage, AK
907-786-0818; uaa_titleix@alaska.edu

If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to the [UAA Office of Equity and Compliance](#) or call 907-786-0818. You also may make an anonymous report online. The Office of Equity and Compliance website also includes a list of confidential resources for support and advocacy.

The Dean of Students Office [Care Team](#) can provide assistance to students who need help with academics, housing, or other issues.

Accessibility and Disability Support Statement:

If you experience a disability or suspect you experience a disability, please contact [Disability Support Services](#) to arrange for disability-related accommodations. UAA is committed to providing equal access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. To ensure access to this class, and your program, please contact DSS to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting accommodations.

Academic honesty and integrity:

Academic integrity is a basic principle that requires students to take credit only for ideas and efforts that are their own. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are defined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#), which can be found in the UAA Student Handbook.

Instances of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will first go through the student conduct process and then, if a violation of the Student Code of Conduct is found, academic sanctions may occur in addition to disciplinary sanctions. The Student Conduct Review Procedures are outlined in the UAA Student Handbook.

Academic disputes:

The University has policies related to your rights as a student and the process for working through any disputes you may have. Those processes can be found in the section of the catalog covering [Academic Rights of Students](#) and the Academic Dispute Resolution Procedure.

Dates and deadlines:

Students are responsible for knowing deadlines related to registration including add/drop, withdrawal, and refund deadlines. Those are posted by the [UAA Registrar](#).

Student support resources:

There is a wide range of services and resources available to help you succeed in your courses and thrive at UAA. Please review all of the resources listed at [Student Help and Support](#). We will talk more about how to use the learning supports throughout the semester. I also strongly encourage you to look through the Health and Well-being Resources (under Student Services on that page). Please take care of yourself this semester and reach out to these services to help you stay healthy and safe.

Disclaimer:

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus as needed. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with any changes. All changes will be posted in Blackboard.