

LING 4345/5345: Semantics

Spring 2013

Section Information: LING 4345-001 / 5345-001

Place & Time of Class Meetings: Trimble Hall [TH] 218 — TuTh 12.30PM - 1.50PM

Instructor: Benjamin Slade

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Office: Hammond Hall Room 132E

Office Hours: tba/by appt.

Linguistics Main Office Phone No.: 817-272-3133

Description of Course Content: This course introduces students to the study of compositional semantics: the calculation of phrase- and sentence-level meaning based on the meaning of component parts and a set of formal rules. Topics include propositional logic, predicate logic, lambda calculus, predication & quantification, scope & anaphora, time/tense, modality, & possible world theory.

Student Learning Outcomes: This is a graduate-level course introducing notions of formal semantics, focussing on the representation of linguistic meaning at the sentence level. Successfully completing this course should enable students to engage with current research in formal semantics. This course serves as a “Meaning and Use” course for the MA and PhD course selections.

Requirements: Prerequisite: LING 3340.

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials: De Swart, Henriëtte. 1998. *Introduction to Natural Language Semantics*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications. Any other materials will be provided by instructor in electronic form.

Descriptions of major assignments and examinations:

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS: (55%) Homeworks will constitute the majority of the final course grade.

A MIDTERM EXAM (15%) There will be a midterm examination, the format will resemble the format of your homework.

A FINAL EXAM (20%) There will be a final examination (date to be announced). Like the midterm, the format of the final exam will resemble the format of your homework assignments.

PARTICIPATION (10%): Attendance of classes and participation in class discussion.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance is required. You are responsible for the material presented in class lectures and for any handouts passed out in class; for your own benefit, come to class. But if you must miss a class, get notes and information from another student, do the reading, and do the assignments. Assignments are due on the day listed in the schedule, and no later, unless you make arrangements with me prior to the due date. If you miss more than 3 classes, your participation grade will be lowered half a letter grade per absence.

Grading Policy: Your grade for all requirements will be determined as follows: Each requirement will be worth a certain number of points (e.g. assignments will typically be 50 points). Your grade on each assignment will be determined on the basis of the percentage of points earned to points possible: 100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D, 59-0% = F. Your final grade will be determined in the same fashion but taking into account the weightings described above.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

Make-up Exam Policy: You will be allowed to take a make-up only if your absence occurs as the result of an extreme and reasonably unforeseeable circumstance (e.g. sudden serious illness, major family crisis). Should you find yourself in such a predicament, you must contact the professor by phone or email before 8.00pm of the exam date to request a

make-up. Students who miss an exam but do not notify the professor as specified herein will receive a grade of zero (0).

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

While the Department of Linguistics and TESOL hopes to foster a sense of community in which students can enhance their educational experience by conferring with each other about the lectures, readings, and assignments, all work submitted must be the product of each student's own effort. Students are expected to know and honor the standards of academic integrity followed by American universities; ignorance of these standards is not an excuse for committing an act of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism). If you have questions, please speak with your instructor, your academic advisor, or the department chair.

Please be advised that departmental policy requires instructors to formally file charges with the Office of Student Conduct, following procedures as laid out for faculty (<http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/faculty.html>), as well as notify the department chair of the filing of the charges.

Student Support Services Available: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the course syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week.

Auditors: The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. However, with instructor permission, Department of Linguistics and TESOL faculty, staff, and students enrolled in a linguistics/TESOL program may be able to sit in on a course. These courses cannot be used to satisfy any degree or program requirements/electives, nor will any credit (including retroactive credit) be granted.

Electronic devices: Please turn off and keep off all pagers, electronic games, MP3 and CD players, and cell-phones. If you are using a lap-top, please use it only for course related matters; failure to do so will negatively affect your participation grade.

Late submission of assignments: Turn in all assignments on time. Late assignments may be accepted (at the instructor's discretion) but with a grade penalty. Assignments submitted late are unlikely to be returned to you in a timely manner, and they will not receive the same amount of feedback as an assignment handed in on time.

Projected Course Schedule: (dates are approximate; change is likely)

Week 1 (Jan 15 & 17) / General Concepts. What is meaning? Some history of the study of semantics.
Reading: Ch. 1

Week 2 (Jan 22 & 24) / A theory of meaning
Reading: Ch. 2

Week 3 (Jan 29 & 31) / Truth, connectives; propositional logic
Reading: Ch. 3 + electronic reading from Partee et al.

Week 4 (Feb 5 & 7) / Predicate logic; Predication & quantification
Reading: Ch. 4 + electronic reading from Partee et al.

Week 5 (Feb 12 & 14) / Predication & quantification (cont.)
Reading: Ch. 4

Week 6 (Feb 19 & 21) / Compositionality & Lambda calculus
Reading: electronic reading from Partee et al.

Week 7 (Feb 26 & 28) / Compositionality & Lambda calculus (cont.)
Reading: electronic reading from Partee et al.

Week 8 (Mar 5 & 7) / Review/catch-up + Midterm
MIDTERM ON THU 7 MAR

Week 9 / SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (Mar 19 & 21) / Scope & Anaphora
Reading: Ch. 5

Week 11 (Mar 26 & 28) // Scope & Anaphora (cont.)

Reading: Ch. 5

Week 12 (Apr 2 & 4) // Discourse & donkey anaphora (maybe)

Reading: Ch. 6

Week 13 (Apr 9 & 11) // Limits of 1st-order predicate logic

Reading: Ch. 7

Week 14 (Apr 16 & 18) // Generalised Quantifier Theory

Reading: Ch. 8

Week 15 (Apr 23 & 25) // World & Times

Reading: Ch. 9

Week 16 (Apr 30 & May 2) // Catch-up; Review etc.

Other important dates: Jan 30: Census Day - last day to add; Mar 29: last day to drop
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