PHIL 3506 A / LING 3505 A, Winter 2023

Semantics (CRN: 10800)

**Chris Genovesi**

Carleton University

# General Information

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:05 pm – 5:25 pm

Place: ZOOM

Instructor: Chris Genovesi

Email: [genovesi.c@gmail.com](mailto:genovesi.c@gmail.com)

Office hour: Mondays 1-2 on ZOOM by arrangement

# Teaching assistant

Teaching assistant: TBA

Email:

Office hour:

# Prerequisites

Third-year standing, and one of LING 1001, PHIL 2001, PHIL 2504/LING 2504/COMM 2504 or PHIL 3504/LING 3504, or permission of the Department of Philosophy or School of Linguistics and Language Studies.

# Course Description

Study of language meaning. Lexical meaning and meanings of larger linguistic expressions, including nominal units, verbal units, and sentences. Meaning relationships between utterances. Relationship between linguistic meaning (semantics) and contextual meaning (pragmatics). Basic formal treatments of semantics. This course will introduce various topics in semantics. We discuss the literal meaning of words. We go over the basics of propositional logic and first- and second-order logic, and use these logics as tools to understanding how words are put together. We discuss formal and alternative approaches to semantics.

# Evaluation

The course consists of four tests (60% of total) and a take-home final exam (40%). See below. The letter grades assigned in the course will have the percentage equivalent provided in the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar.

Test 1 January 26 15%

Test 2 February 28 15%

Test 3 March 16 15%

Test 4 March 30 15%

Take-home final April 28 40%

# Readings

There is no required reading for this course, but it will be helpful to have access to an introductory semantics textbook. I try and stay very close to two:

(1) Kate Kearns, 2011. *Semantics* (2nd edition), New York Palgrave MacMillan, Chapters 2 – 7; (2) John I. Saeed, 2016. *Semantics* (4th edition), Wiley Blackwell, Chapter 11.

These chapters should be available on reserve at the library for this course. If you find the course difficult, I recommend these books.

# Student requirements

Students should attend on-line classes and complete the tests and exam on time. Please also familiarize yourself with the policies outlined below.

## 7.1 Missed assignments

If you cannot complete an assignment by the deadline, please contact me as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

## 7.2 Policy on collaborative work

Students are allowed to work together and discuss test questions. However, each student must complete their own tests. Copying is not allowed. Please see section 7.3.

## 7.3 Statement Regarding Plagiarism

The Senate of the University has labeled plagiarism an instructional offence. For the University's purposes, plagiarism is “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ides or work of others as one's own”. Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course. For more information, please go to the following web page: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

## 7.4 Copyright policy

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). The PowerPoint presentations, lecture videos, lectures notes, and other materials available to you on Brightspace may not be distributed online.

# Covid

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) and mandatory self-screening prior to coming to campus daily.

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory symptom reporting tool. For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the COVID-19 website.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the University's COVID-19 webpage and review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca)

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy. Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

# Request for academic accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

## 9.1 Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

## 9.2 Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

## 9.3 Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made: carleton.ca/pmc

## 9.4 Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/sexual-violence-prevention-survivor-support/

## 9.5 Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>. For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>

# Resources

# Course Schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
| Jan | 10 | Preliminaries | Introduction |
|  | 12 |  | Meaning, thought, reality |
|  | 17 | Logic and language | Sentence relations & Truth |
|  | 19 |  | Propositional logic |
|  | 24 |  | Presupposition |
|  | 26 |  | **Test 1** |
|  | 31 |  | Predicates and arguments |
| Feb | 2 |  | Predicate logic |
|  | 7 |  | Predicate logic |
|  | 9 | Formal Semantics | Semantic types |
|  | 14 |  | Lambda calculus |
|  | 16 |  | Lambda calculus |
|  | Break |  |  |
|  | 28 |  | **Test 2** |
| March | 2 |  | Modality |
|  | 7 |  | Modality |
|  | 9 |  | Generalized quantifiers |
|  | 14 |  | Generalized quantifiers |
|  | 16 |  | **Test 3** |
|  | 21 |  | Referential opacity |
|  | 23 |  | Referential opacity |
|  | 28 | Semantics + | Implicatures & Literal/figurative divide |
|  | 30 |  | **Test 4** |
| April | 4 |  | Implicature |
|  | 6 | Cognitive semantics | Figurative language |
|  | 11 |  | Review |
|  | 28 |  | Take Home |