

PHIL/LING/COMM 2504A: Language and Communication
Updated Course Outline
Late Summer 2020

Class Information

Dates: Asynchronous, two lectures per week

Time: N/A

Location: N/A

Instructor Information

Instructor: Josh Redstone

E-mail: josh.redstone@carleton.ca

TA Information

TA: William Languedoc

E-mail: williamlanguedoc@cmail.carleton.ca

Course Description

In this class we will examine some of the central topics in the philosophical study of language and communication, paying close attention to how these topics were developed and are debated within the analytic tradition. These topics include the nature and function of language, connections between language, thought, and reality, the relationship between truth and meaning, and the social and pragmatic features of language and communication. We will also explore how theoretical issues in the study of language and communication relate to debates in psychology, ethics, and politics, as well as to concrete challenges in understanding and getting along with one another in the world.

Required Text

Primary (required) textbook: **Lycan, William G. *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction*, 2nd edition, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008.**

The textbook is available for free download and online reading through MacOdrum library. Electronic copies of the text can also be rented or purchased online (e.g. through Kobo or VitalSource). The text can also be purchased in hard copy from your preferred seller. **Note:** *Many required course readings are not in the textbook; outside articles and chapters are accessible through cuLearn. Additional recommended readings and resources will be posted on cuLearn from time to time.*

Accessing Course Resources

Much of the important course material will be available on cuLearn: <https://carleton.ca/culearn/>

Here you will find this course outline, lecture schedule, PowerPoint slides or notes that accompany the lectures, and other supplementary materials that will be made available as we proceed through this course. You will also find the discussion forums, which are a great way for you to ask questions about the course material, share and discuss your own ideas, organize study groups for your tests, and so forth.

Most lectures will be posted to my YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBOvpBTtLsP7MMjqOZO67Dq>

Since we will not be meeting in person, I highly recommend that everyone watches the lectures I've prepared. Here, I will explain and elucidate key ideas from our readings. Students can ask questions in the video comments section, or in the discussion board on cuLearn. Other live lectures will take place on Big Blue Button via cuLearn. Dates and times for these will be announced in advance of the live lecture.

Office hours will be held virtually using my Discord Server, which you can join by following this link:

<https://discord.gg/NbrGNuD>

Office hours will be held by appointment/as needed. Please don't be shy! I encourage everyone to request an appointment for a virtual meeting at any time if they have any questions or concerns.

Methods and Policies

This is an online course due to the Coronavirus. Recorded lectures and slides will be posted to cuLearn (asynchronous, two lectures per week). Some classes will include a livestreamed session, the date and time of which will be announced in advance of the live component of the lecture. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these livestreamed sessions. ***The only mandatory attendance day is for our paper workshop.*** While my TA and I will respond to e-mails as promptly and fully as possible, e-mail exchanges should generally be reserved for brief and/or logistical/administrative questions. ***You should check cuLearn regularly for notices and updates e.g., re: scheduling, readings, and assignment instructions.*** You are also encouraged to use the student discussion forum on cuLearn for peer discussion, forming study groups, exchanging class notes, etc. If you have any concerns about your ability to fulfil any of the course requirements but are unsure of how to proceed, please speak with me *as soon as possible* and take care to inform yourself on relevant departmental and university policies and accommodations services. There is a complete list of these on the last pages of this syllabus, with which all students should become familiar. ***I tend to be fairly accommodating when extenuating circumstances arise, so long as you contact me in a timely manner.*** Please, don't be shy if such circumstances arise! Finally, ***violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated.*** If you are unclear on the nature of academic integrity or Carleton's academic integrity policy, please consult with me and/or the information and links to further resources on the last pages of the syllabus.

Evaluation

Take-Home Quizzes (25%)

In this class you will complete 5 take-home quizzes via cuLearn. The quizzes will be based on the material (lectures and readings) from the previous week (e.g., Quiz #1 takes place during Week 3, but covers material from week 2). Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade. Each quiz will take place on the Friday of the week during which it occurs, from 12:00 am to 11:59 pm. You will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz. While our reading material is tough, the quizzes are designed to be fairly easy if you have read the readings and viewed the lecture videos. They are designed to work as a study tool just as much as they are a quiz. Each quiz will include 10 questions which will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false, each worth 1 mark. I will post a brief review video after each quiz to go over the correct answers.

Paper (30%)

Students will choose an essay prompt from a set list and write an argumentative paper of approximately 1500 words in response. ***The paper is due Friday, August 7th at 11:59 pm.*** Paper topics will cover material up to and including July 21st. Topics and detailed instructions will be provided the week of Tuesday July 14th.

Paper Workshop and Assignment (5%)

Our class on Tuesday July 28th will primarily be devoted to a workshop that is designed to support the paper writing process. This day's class will be live-streamed via Big Blue Button, and students will be expected to be present online, as well as to prepared a proposal, outline, draft, or other comparable rough work on the paper. You will draw on this rough work to participate in writing and small group discussion exercises, as well as to complete a group workshop assignment. At the end of class, each group will submit one copy of their completed workshop assignment. The workshop assignment and participation will contribute 5% to your final grade.

Take-Home Final exam (40%)

The final exam will be a take-home requiring an essay-type response to 2 of 4 questions. Each response is worth 20% of your final grade. The take-home will cover all course material but will focus on the second half. Essay questions will be provided on the last day of class.

Course Schedule: *Note, this schedule may be subject to minor adjustments.*

Week 1: July 2

Introduction (No assigned readings)

Week 2: July 7/9

Foundational Issues: the nature of language and communication

Lecture 2.1: Noam Chomsky (1988): "Language and the Problems of Knowledge"

Lecture 2.2: Donald Davidson (1985), "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs"

Week 3: July 14/16

Intro to Theories of Meaning and Reference

Lecture 3.0: Introduction and Essay Topics

Lecture 3.1: Lycan ch. 1, "Introduction: Meaning and Reference" and Frege (1892), "On Sense and Reference"

Lecture 3.2: Lycan ch. 2, "Definite Descriptions" and chapter 3, "Proper Names: The Description Theory"

Quiz #1

Week 4: July 21/23

Theories of Meaning

Lecture 4.1: Lycan ch. 4, "Proper Names: Direct Reference and the Causal-Historical Theory" and Saul Kripke (1972), "Naming and Necessity" (selection)

Lecture 4.2: Lycan ch. 6, "'Use' Theories" and chapter 7, "Psychological theories"

Quiz #2

Week 5: July 28/30

Meaning Beyond Utterance: Implicature and Metaphor

Lecture 5.0: Paper Writing Workshop

Lecture 5.1: Lycan ch. 13, "Implicative Relations" and Grice (1975), "Logic and Conversation"

Lecture 5.2: Lycan ch. 14, "Metaphor" and Max Black (1979), "How Metaphors Work: A Reply to Donald Davidson"

Quiz #3

Week 6: August 4/6

Language, Mind, and Social Justice

Lecture 6.1: Alison Gopnik (2003), "The Theory Theory as an Alternative to the Innateness Hypothesis" and Fausey, Long, Inamori and Bodoritsky (2010), "Construction Agency: The Role of Language"

Lecture 6.2: Carol Adams (2006), "The War on Compassion"

Quiz #4

Week 7: August 11/13

Language Reform and Course Wrap-Up

Lecture 7.1: Adele Mercier (1995), "A Perverse Case of the Contingent A Priori: On the Logic of Emasculating Language (A Reply to Dawkins and Dummett)"

Lecture 7.2: Guest Lecture (Readings TBA) & Take-Home Exam Review

Quiz #5

Paper due!

Assignment Deferral Policy

Students who are unable to complete a test or an assignment may ask for a deferral only under two conditions: illness or bereavement. Should you miss a test for these reasons, you must contact me by email within 24 hours of missing the test/assignment due date to request a deferral and arrange to provide me with the appropriate documentation (e.g. doctor's note, etc.).

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor (me). The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of "F" for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

Grading System

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B = 73-76	C - = 60-62
A = 85-89	B - = 70-72	D+ = 57-59
A - = 80-84	C+ = 67-69	D = 53-56
B+ = 77-79	C = 63-66	D - = 50-52

F Failure. No academic credit

DEF Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. Further details can be found on the next page.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 2020)

Assignments:

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically. There will be NO hard copies placed in the essay box this summer.

Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

Deferrals for Final Examinations:

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](#))

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or religious obligation:* write to your professor 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 [EDC](#) website.
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* The [Paul Menton Centre](#) for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.
- *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 where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per [Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy](#).
- *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.

Important Dates:

May 4	Classes start.	July 1	Statutory holiday, University closed.
May 11	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>early</u> summer courses.	July 2	Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.
May 15	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>full</u> summer courses.	July 9	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>late</u> summer courses.
May 18	Statutory holiday, University closed.	July 17	Last day to withdraw from <u>late</u> summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
May 22	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from <u>early</u> and <u>full</u> summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	Aug. 3	Civic holiday, University closed
June 9	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>early</u> summer courses before the official examination period.	Aug. 7	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>late</u> summer and <u>full</u> summer courses before the official examination period.
June 16	Last day for <u>early</u> summer classes. Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline. Last day for academic withdrawal from <u>early</u> summer courses.	Aug. 14	Last day of <u>late</u> and <u>full</u> summer term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline.
June 19-25	Final examinations.	Aug. 17-23	Last day for academic withdrawal from <u>late</u> summer and <u>full</u> summer courses. Final examinations.
June 25	Take-home examinations for <u>early</u> summer courses are due.	Aug. 23	Take-home examinations for <u>late</u> or <u>full</u> summer courses are due.

Useful Contacts:

Department of Philosophy: www.carleton.ca/philosophy
520-2110

Registrar's Office: www.carleton.ca/registrar
520-3500

Academic Advising Centre: www.carleton.ca/academicadvising
520-7850

Centre for Student Academic Support: <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
520-3822

Student Support Services : <https://carleton.ca/academics/support/>