LING/PHIL 4505
Formal Semantics

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Office hours:	M 11:30-12:30, W 9:00-10:00, or by appt	**Office:**	3A41 Paterson Hall
Class time:	T 8:35 - 11:25	**Classroom:**	415 Southam Hall

1 Course outline

The objective of this course is to expose students to advanced topics in compositional semantics. The first couple of weeks of class, we will focus on reiterating what the project of formal semantics is, and getting hands-on practice via exercises using the formal language. Later classes will consist of both classic and contemporary topics in semantics, and class discussions will largely draw from the primary literature, which students are expected to read.

By the end of this course, you will:

- have an understanding of the formal language in semantics;

- have exposure to both classic and contemporary puzzles in semantics;

- be able to analyze semantic data;

- be able to read and critically respond to formal semantics literature.

This is a high-engagement class that aims to expand students' problem solving skills and logical reasoning strategies. Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions. Out-of-class assignments are designed to facilitate class discussion, and it is imperative that students complete them in a timely manner in order to get the most out of this course.

2 Prerequisites and preclusions

- This course precludes additional credit for LALS 4507 (no longer offered).

- The prerequisite for this class is LING 3505 (minimum Grade of D-) or PHIL 3506 (minimum Grade of D-).

3   Textbook

Here's the required textbook:

  Heim, Irene & Angelika Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in generative grammar.* Blackwell Publishing.

It's available at the Carleton bookstore. When I say "Heim and Kratzer" (H&K), I mean this textbook. The first part of this course will use H&K in a very direct way. Later classes will be a mixture of H&K and the primary literature.

The following are recommended books for this class. You don't have to get them, but I personally think they're excellent resources for formal semantics. The Bach book is a great little book that explains the foundational ideas in semantics in a readable way. The Gamut books are great as reference for the formal side of semantics.

  Bach, E. (1989). *Informal lectures on formal semantics.* Suny Press.

  Gamut, L. (1991b). *Logic, Language, and Meaning: Introduction to Logic, volume 1.* University of Chicago Press.

  Gamut, L. (1991a). *Logic, Language, and Meaning: Intensional logic and logical grammar, volume 2.* University of Chicago Press

4   Evaluation

You will be graded on the accuracy of your analyses, the logicalness of the reasoning in your argumentation, and the depth and thoughtfulness of your discussion of data/literature/analyses. You will be assessed via problem sets (homework), reading responses, and a take-home exam. Here is the weight of each type of assessment for grade calculation purposes, as well as the scale used for assigning grades.

4 Problem Sets	(12.5% each)	50%		90-100	A+	67-69	C+
5 Reading Responses	(2% each)	10%		85-89	A	63-66	C
1 Take-home final		40%		80-84	A-	60-62	C-
TOTAL		100%				
				77-79	B+	57-59	D+
				73-76	B	53-56	D
				70-72	B-	50-52	D-
				0-49	F	

Excepting the final exam, you will get graded assessments back in class or receive feedback via cuLearn. You are not graded on attendance or participation, but participating in class discussions will be integral to your success in this class.

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.

5 Course Policies

5.1 General guidelines

- Problem Sets (homework) are due at the beginning of class on each due date indicated on the schedule. No exceptions.

- Late work is not accepted. No exceptions.

- Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is not tolerated. Carleton University's academic integrity policy, including definitions and potential penalties, can be found at: http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity. See "Plagiarism" below.

- Make-up exams will be allowed only for university-approved reasons. You must let me know any exam conflicts as soon as possible. See "Requests for academic accommodations" below.

5.2 Plagiarism

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

- 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 acknowledgement in any academic assignment;

- using another's data for research findings;

- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works an/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 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.

5.3 Requests for academic accommodations

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

- *Pregnancy obligation*: write to me 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 see the Student Guide <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

- *Religious obligation*: write to me 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 see the Student Guide <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

- *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 me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and 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 me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

5.4 Homework

- Homework will be assigned in the form of problem sets (PSets). The content of the PSet will range from technical exercises to free-response type questions. PSets will be collected at the beginning of class on the due date indicated on the schedule, and may not be turned in late. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

- There will be 4 (four) PSets total. Each one will be worth 12.5% of your grade.

- PSets are individual work. Turn in your own copy. Discussion of problems with your classmates is fine, but copying answers from a classmate and letting a classmate copy your answers are both forms of cheating. Don't cheat. Please submit your own work.

- PSets will be posted on cuLearn as a PDF file. Please print it and handwrite your answers on it. Please do not type answers or turn in answers on a separate sheet of paper.

- This course is problem-solving-oriented. You will not be simply replicating information from class on the PSets — you will be applying your knowledge to solve novel puzzles. Be prepared to work ahead and dedicate multiple days to work on the PSet. Last-minute work often results in a low grade, and is highly discouraged.

5.5   Reading Responses

For certain assigned readings (as indicated in the schedule), you will submit short but thoughtful responses to them. By "short" I mean at least four sentences; longer responses are fine too. Responses can include (but are not limited to):

- what you found interesting about the paper and why;

- things you agree with the author on (data, analysis, etc.) and why;

- things you disagree with the author on (data, analysis, etc.) and why;

- counterexamples to the paper's analysis;

- how the paper might be related to something else we've discussed in class;

- how you feel about the author's writing style or clarity;

- things you understood;

- things you did not understand or want to know more about.

Note that "I liked / didn't like the paper" does not count as a response, and neither does simply summarizing the paper.

You will submit Reading Responses (RR's) electronically on cuLearn using the "Reading Response" tool. RR's are due by **8:30 AM** on the day indicated on the schedule.

There will be 5 RR's during the term. Each one is worth 2% of your entire grade. This is a pass/fail type of assessment.

5.6   Exams

There will be one exam at the end of the term. It will be a take-home final exam. It's worth 40% of your entire grade. As with PSets, discussion with your classmates is fine, but do NOT copy answers from each other. Submit your own answers in your own words. You must be able to defend your own answers. You may use your class notes and papers we have read in class, but don't google things. Don't look up answers.

5.7   cuLearn

PSets and links to readings will be posted on cuLearn. Make sure you check it often. You will submit reading responses electronically via cuLearn.

5.8   Office hours and communication

E-mail correspondence and office visits (with both the TA and the instructor) are very strongly encouraged. If the office hours listed above do not work for your schedule, please make an appointment via e-mail.

Check your Carleton e-mail often. Important announcements, including deadline reminders and PSet hints, will be sent to your Carleton e-mail via cuLearn.

You are encouraged to ask questions in class. If you do not understand something, please ask!

6 Schedule

✓ = PSet posted on cuLearn   ☉= PSet due   ✎= Reading Response (RR) due   ⚠= Exam

Note: The listed readings are readings to be discussed in class, that day. Make sure you do the readings *before* coming to class.

CLASS	READINGS
9/12 Modeling natural language meaning ✓ PSet1 assigned	
9/19 Compositionality, lambdas, and types	**Required**: Heim & Kratzer (1998), Chapters 1-3 **Optional**: Heim & Kratzer (1998), Chapter 4
9/26 Quantification ☉ PSet1 DUE	**Required**: Heim & Kratzer (1998), Chapters 6-7 **Optional**: Heim & Kratzer (1998), Chapter 8
10/3 Plurals ✎ RR1 DUE ✓ PSet2 assigned	**Required**: Sauerland et al. (2005) - ✎RR1 **Optional**: Link (1998); Lasersohn (2011)
10/10 Kinds and genericity ✎ RR2 DUE	**Required**: Chierchia (1998) - ✎RR2 **Optional**: Carlson (1977)
10/17 Modification and degrees ☉ PSet2 DUE ✓ PSet3 assigned	**Required**: Morzycki (2015), Chapter 3 **Optional**: Kennedy (1999); Kennedy & McNally (2005)
10/24 NO CLASS - FALL BREAK	**Required**: Heim & Kratzer (1998), Chapter 12

CLASS	READINGS
10/31 Negation ✎ RR3 DUE	**Required**: Horn (2010) - ✎RR3 **Optional**: Horn (1989); Yoon (2013); Chierchia (2013)
11/7 Alternatives, questions, and focus ⊙ PSet3 DUE	**Required**: Rooth (1992) **Optional**: Hamblin (1973); Karttunen (1977)
11/14 Discourse anaphora ✎ RR4 DUE ✓ PSet4 assigned	**Required**: Heim (1983) - ✎RR4 **Optional**: Kamp (1981)
11/21 Illocutionary meaning , ✎ RR5 DUE	**Required**: Stalnaker (1978) - ✎RR5 **Optional**: Farkas & Bruce (2010); Searle (1965); Gunlogson (2004)
11/28 Subjectivity and non-at-issue meaning ⊙ PSet4 DUE	**Required**: Lasersohn (2005) **Optional**: Umbach (2016); Potts (2007)
12/5 Review and wrap-up ✓ Take-home final exam assigned	

⚠ **FINAL EXAM:** Take-home exam. Due by **5:00pm on Friday, December 22**. Please drop it off at the School of Linguistics and Language Studies (SLALS) front office, **358 St. Patrick's Building**. Say it's for Ai Taniguchi. *Do NOT leave your assignment under my office door.* I could get in trouble if you do that. E-mail me in case of exam-related emergency.

References

Carlson, Gregory Norman. 1977. *Reference to kinds in English*: University of Massachusetts Amherst dissertation.

Chierchia, Gennaro. 1998. Reference to kinds across language. *Natural language semantics* 6(4). 339–405.

Chierchia, Gennaro. 2013. *Logic in grammar: Polarity, free choice, and intervention*. OUP Oxford.

Farkas, Donka F & Kim B Bruce. 2010. On reacting to assertions and polar questions. *Journal of Semantics* 27(1). 81 –118.

Gunlogson, Christine. 2004. *True to form: Rising and falling declaratives as questions in English*. Routledge.

Hamblin, Charles L. 1973. Questions in montague English. *Foundations of language* 10(1). 41–53.

Heim, Irene. 1983. File change semantics and the familiarity theory of definiteness. In Rainer Bäuerle, Christoph Schwarze & Arnim von Stechow (eds.), *Meaning, use, and interpretation of language*, 164–189. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Heim, Irene & Angelika Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in generative grammar*, vol. 13. Blackwell Oxford.

Horn, Laurence. 1989. *A natural history of negation*. University of Chicago Press.

Horn, Laurence R. 2010. Multiple negation in English and other languages. In Laurence R Horn (ed.), *The expression of negation*, 111–148. Mouton de Gruyter Berlin.

Kamp, Hans. 1981. A theory of truth and semantic representation. In Jeroen Groenendijk (ed.), *Formal methods in the study of language*, 277–322. University of Amsterdam.

Karttunen, Lauri. 1977. Syntax and semantics of questions. *Linguistics and philosophy* 1(1). 3–44.

Kennedy, Christopher. 1999. *Projecting the adjective: The syntax and semantics of gradability and comparison*. Routledge.

Kennedy, Christopher & Louise McNally. 2005. Scale structure, degree modification, and the semantics of gradable predicates. *Language* 81(2). 345–381.

Lasersohn, Peter. 2005. Context dependence, disagreement, and predicates of personal taste. *Linguistics and philosophy* 28(6). 643–686.

Lasersohn, Peter. 2011. Mass nouns and plurals. In Claudia Maienborn, Klaus von Heusinger & Paul Portner (eds.), *Semantics: An international handbook of natural language meaning*, Mouton de Gruyter.

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Morzycki, Marcin. 2015. *Modification*. Cambridge University Press.

Potts, Christopher. 2007. The expressive dimension. *Theoretical linguistics* 33(2). 165–198.

Rooth, Mats. 1992. A theory of focus interpretation. *Natural language semantics* 1(1). 75–116.

Sauerland, Uli, Jan Anderssen & Kazuko Yatsushiro. 2005. The plural is semantically unmarked. *Linguistic evidence* 413–434.

Searle, John. 1965. What is a speech act? *Philosophy in America* 221–239.

Stalnaker, Robert. 1978. Assertion. In Peter Cole (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 9*, 315–332. New York: Academic Press.

Umbach, Carla. 2016. Evaluative propositions and subjective judgments. *Subjective Meaning: Alternatives to Relativism* .

Yoon, Suwon. 2013. Parametric variation in subordinate evaluative negation: Korean/Japanese versus others. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 22(2). 133–166.