

LIN241H1 S

Introduction to Semantics

Winter 2024 Syllabus

Course Meetings

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Section	Day & Time	Delivery Mode & Location
LEC0101	Tuesday, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM	In Person: SS 2102
TUT0101	Thursday, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	In Person: SS 2111
TUT0201	Thursday, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	In Person: SS 2111
TUT0301	Thursday, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	In Person: UC 261
TUT0401	Thursday, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	In Person: SS 1086

Refer to ACORN for the most up-to-date information about the location of the course meetings.

Course Contacts

Course Website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/335732>

Instructor: Prof. Guillaume Thomas

Email: guillaume.thomas@utoronto.ca

Office Hours and Location: Thursday 11:00-12:00 and by appointment, Sidney Smith, Room 4087

Additional Notes: Please allow 24-48 hours for response during regular business hours.

Course Overview

An introduction to meaning within linguistics and the interpretation of language in context. Topics include logical and semantic relations, pragmatic concepts such as presupposition and implicature, the nature of thematic roles, quantifiers and scope relations, the expressions of temporal and modal relations in natural language.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Discuss the foundational concepts of truth-conditional semantics: truth-conditions, entailment, contradiction, literal and non-literal meaning, presuppositions, implicatures.
- Use these concepts to make falsifiable hypotheses about the meaning of sentences of English and other languages, and test these hypotheses using elicitation of judgments of truth-value and felicity.
- Use propositional logic, predicate logic and set theory to reason about the meaning of sentences.
- Discuss how sentence interpretation is affected by different components of the grammar and lexicon of a language, such as determiners, coordinating connectives, negation, tense and aspect, and adverbial/adjectival modification.
- Discuss some examples of cross-linguistic variation in semantics

This course will allow you to practice the following skills:

- Logical reasoning using using formal languages (propositional and predicate logic).
- Qualitative analysis of linguistic data sets.
- Argumentation (making philosophical arguments about the nature of meaning in natural languages).
- Writing (presenting the aforementioned arguments in written form).
- Reading (students will be asked to reinforce their understanding of the material presented in lecture and tutorials by reading chapters from the textbook).

Prerequisites: LIN102H1

Corequisites: None

Exclusions: LIN237H5, LIN247H5, LINC12H3, FREC12H3

Recommended Preparation: None

Credit Value: 0.5

Course Materials

The required textbook for this course is:

Paul Kroeger, 2022. Analyzing meaning: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics, third edition. Language Science Press.

This is a free textbook. You can download it at the following URL. A copy will also be posted on Quercus:

<https://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/359>

Marking Scheme

Assessment	Percent	Details	Due Date
Midterm test	30%	In person during lecture time.	2024-02-27
Quiz 1	20%	In person during lecture time, duration 60 minutes.	2024-01-30
Quiz 2	20%	In person during lecture time, duration 60 minutes.	2024-04-02
In-Person Final Exam	30%		Final Exam Period

Late Assessment Submissions Policy

Not applicable.

Tutorials

Tutorials are a fundamental component of the course. Tutorials will take place on Thursdays at 9:00, 10:00, 15:00 and 16:00. You must register in and attend one of the tutorials (you must attend the tutorial you are registered in). Failure to attend and participate in tutorials regularly will seriously diminish a student's understanding and performance in the course.

Practice exercises

There will be weekly ungraded practice exercises. These exercises will be distributed during lecture and the solutions will be posted on Quercus. Solving these exercises will prepare you for the quizzes, midterm test and final assessment.

Student responsibilities

Attendance, preparedness and participation are expected both in lectures and tutorials. Students are expected to study any assigned readings before the corresponding lecture.

Course Schedule

Week	Description	Tutorials
Week 1 Jan 9-11	Foundational Concepts 1 (Kroeger ch. 1-3)	No tutorial
Week 2 Jan 16-18	Foundational Concepts 2 (Kroeger ch. 1-3) Propositional Logic (K. ch. 4.1-4.3)	Tutorial 1
Week 3 Jan 23-25	Conversational Implicatures (K. ch. 8-9)	Tutorial 2
Week 4 Jan 30	Quiz 1 (60 minutes)	No tutorial
Week 5 Feb 6-8	Speech acts and Conventional Implicatures (K. ch. 10-11)	Tutorial 3
Week 6 Feb 13-15	Presuppositions (Potts 2015; will be posted on Quercus)	Tutorial 4
Week 7 Feb 27	Midterm test	No tutorial
Week 8 Mar 5-7	Compositionality (K. ch. 12-13)	Tutorial 5
Week 9 Mar 12-14	Predicate Logic (K. ch. 4.4) Quantifiers (K. ch. 14)	Tutorial 6
Week 10 Mar 19-21	Modality (K. ch. 16)	Tutorial 7
Week 11 Mar 26-28	Evidentiality (K. ch. 17)	Tutorial 8
Week 12 Apr 2	Quiz 2 (60 minutes)	No tutorial

Policies & Statements

Email Policy

In order to make communication between students, instructor and TAs efficient, we ask you to follow the following rules:

- Do not contact your TA by email.
- Do not ask questions about the course contents or assignments to the instructor by email.
- Only use the instructor's email to discuss administrative matters.

When should you use the instructor's email? Examples are:

- You want to inform the instructor about an anticipated delay in submitting an assignment, or an issue with test scheduling.
- You want to discuss academic accommodations with the instructor.
- You want to schedule a meeting with the instructor.

How can you contact the course instructor if you have questions about lecture contents or assignment?

- Take advantage of the lectures themselves.
- Come to office hours. Note that office hours are not just for course related content. You are very welcome to discuss any topic you want in office hours.
- Post a question on the Piazza discussion board for the course (see details on Quercus). The instructor will answer questions on the discussion board every week.

Can you contact your TA outside of tutorials?

- Your TAs are students with a busy schedule like yourselves, and they are not responsible for overseeing the course administration, or assisting students outside of tutorials. Therefore, you not contact your TA outside of tutorials.
- Regrading questions should be addressed directly to the instructor.

Academic Integrity

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019) (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>). If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources. For example, to learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see [A&S Student Academic Integrity](https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity) (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>) and the [University of Toronto Website on Academic Integrity](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca) (<https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca>).

Religious Accommodations

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

Specific Medical Circumstances

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Accommodation for Personal Reasons

There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me or to an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can help you to decide if you want to request an extension or other forms of academic consideration. They may be able to email your instructors directly to provide a College Registrar's letter of support and connect you with other helpful resources on campus.

Quercus Info

This Course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. New information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term. To access the course website, go to the U of T Quercus log-in page at <https://q.utoronto.ca>. SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT GRADES POSTED ONLINE: Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Grading policy

The Department of Linguistics follows the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy. For more information on this policy, see the document at the following link:

<https://www.linguistics.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-programs/grading-policy>

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020>

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.