

<p style="text-align: center;">UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS</p>
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Semantics and Pragmatics – LING 5530/6030
Fall Semester 2023

General Information:

Instructor: Dorian Roehrs
Email: roehrs@unt.edu
Main office: (940) 565-4552

Office hours: **T** 5:30 – 6:20 (LANG 405-K)
W 6:00 – 6:20 (LANG 405-K) and by appointment

Class meets: **T** 6:30 – 9:20 (LANG 114)

Important Dates:

Final project: **Tuesday, December 12**

Course Description and Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to help students acquire formal tools for linguistic theory, and to help them make their first steps toward applying those tools to natural language semantics and pragmatics. The focus, especially toward the end of the course, will be on modelling the semantic intuitions of human beings, much like the theory of syntax models intuitions about possible sentences. A substantial area of concern here is the relationship between natural language syntax and semantics.

The goals of this course are twofold:

- 1) to develop the conceptual tools needed for the analysis of meaning
- 2) to get acquainted with a number of issues in semantics

The main language of investigation will be English, but occasionally we will discuss examples from other languages as presented in the textbook. More generally, the course aims at further developing analytical linguistic skills and a deeper understanding of language. The class is participatory (this is not just a lecture course); that means, students should take notes on their readings at home.

Required Text:

Saeed, John I. 2016. *Semantics*. 4th ed. Wiley Blackwell.

General Course Policies:

1. Attendance: Repeated unexcused absences and tardiness will affect your grade significantly. Three tardies are the equivalent of one absence. You are allowed a maximum of one (1) absence without penalty. After one absence, your attendance grade will suffer in percent. After the fourth absence, you will receive a failing grade for the entire class. Under certain circumstances, special accommodations can be made at the instructor's discretion.

2. Participation: Careful preparation for class and regular, active participation are the foundation of this course!

3. Homework: There are reading assignments due for each class period. These assignments will consist of taking notes and/or completing exercises. In addition, students will write up two exercises as short essays.

4. Final Project: The Final Project will consist of a longer exercise/project that students will write up. It will be due on **December 12**.

5. Length and Formatting of Write-ups:

Chapter Essays (2): 2 - max. 3 pages
Final Project: 7 - max. 10 pages

12-point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch margins all around

COLLECTIVE WORK. Students are allowed (in fact, encouraged) to work together on the homework assignments. However, every student will turn in their own write-up (and not a copy of somebody else's).

All class communication will be sent to your official UNT email address.

Evaluation:

Grade Distribution:

Attendance and <i>active</i> participation	10%	A = 100 – 90%
Chapter Essays (2 x 15 points)	30%	B = 89.9 – 80%
Presentation of Research Article	10%	C = 79.9 – 70%
Presentation of Final Project	10%	D = 69.9 – 60%
Write-up of Final Project	40%	F = 59.9 – 0%

Religious Holidays:

In accordance with Section 51.911 of the Texas Education Code, UNT will allow a student who is absent from class for observance of a religious holy day to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time. Students are required to file a written request with each professor within the first 15 days of the semester to qualify for an excused absence. A copy of the state rules and procedures regarding holy days and the form for notification of absence from each class under this provision are available from the Registrar's Office.

American with Disabilities Act Compliance:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable

accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Acceptable Student Behavior:

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources>.

The UNT Survivor Advocates can be reached by emailing SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or calling 940-565-2648. The UNT Survivor Advocates connect students who have been impacted by violence to resources (counseling, health, safety, academics, legal, etc.), and act as their advocate. They can assist a student by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change (if needed), and connecting students to the many other resources that are available, both on and off campus. They are here to help! For more information see <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct/reporting-sexual-misconduct>

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT):

The student evaluation of teaching effectiveness is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. A short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Tentative Schedule

PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO RIGID ADHERENCE TO THIS SCHEDULE, SHOULD THE CLASS NEED MORE TIME FOR SOME LESSONS AND LESS TIME FOR OTHER LESSONS.

week	contents	assignments
WEEK 1 Aug. 21 – Aug. 25	Introduction to course; Chapter 1: Semantics in Linguistics	Sections 1.1-1.7
WEEK 2 Aug. 28 – Sept. 1	Chapter 2: Meaning, Thought, and Reality	Sections 2.1-2.6
WEEK 3 Sept. 4 Labor Day Sept. 5 – 8	Chapter 3: Word Meaning	Sections 3.1-3.5
WEEK 4 Sept. 11 – 15	Chapter 3: finish	Sections 3.6-3.8
WEEK 5 Sept. 18 – 22	Chapter 4: Semantic Relations and Truth	Sections 4.1-4.4
WEEK 6 Sept. 25 – Sept. 29	Chapter 4: finish	Sections 4.5-4.6 Essay 1
WEEK 7 Oct. 2 – 6	Chapter 5: Sentence Semantics 1: Situations	Sections 5.1-5.2.8
WEEK 8 Oct. 9 – 13	Chapter 5: finish	Sections 5.3-5.4
WEEK 9 Oct. 16 – 20	Chapter 6: Sentence Semantics 2: Participants	Sections 6.1-6.7
WEEK 10 Oct. 23 – Oct. 27	Chapter 6: finish	Sections 6.8-6.10 Essay 2
WEEK 11 Oct. 30 – Nov. 3	Chapter 7: Context and Inference (Pragmatics)	Sections 7.1-7.5
WEEK 12 Nov. 6 – 10	Chapter 7: finish	Sections 7.6-7.9 Preparation of Final Project
WEEK 13 Nov. 13 – 17	Chapter 8: Functions of Language: Speech as Action	Presentation of Research Article TBA
Thanksgiving (08/20-24)		
WEEK 14 Nov. 27 – Dec. 1	Chapter 10: Formal Semantics	Sections 10.1-10.5
WEEK 15 (Pre-final w) Dec. 4 – Dec. 7 Dec. 8 Reading Day	Presentations and feedback	Presentation of Final Project
Finals	December 12, 2023	Write-up of Final Project