LING 4090/5530   Semantics and Pragmatics

Instructor: Professor Salmon
Time: M/W 12:00-1:20
Office: Disco Park B201
Office Hours: TBA, and by appointment
Email: *william.salmon@unt.edu*

Course Description
(A) This course provides an introduction to the study of what is said (semantics) and what is meant (pragmatics) in natural human language. (B) Students will master topics in lexical semantics, compositional semantics, pragmatics, and interfaces of these three areas. (C) In a special focus of this course, students will examine the ways in which the topics in (B) are useful in understanding "social meaning," which is information that linguistic forms convey about the social identity of language users and their relationships with interlocutors.

Textbook
Saeed, John. 2023. *Semantics*. 5th Edition. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford.

Additional readings will be posted on the course Canvas site.

<u>I encourage you to purchase a hard copy of the textbook,</u> or at least print it out and bring it to class with you. Research shows that reading a hard copy is better for retention and comprehension, while reading digitally is better for convenience, scanning, and accessibility. In this class, we are aiming for the former.

Evaluation
Evaluation will be based on the following assignments:

Exam 1	25 points
Exam 2	25 points
Exam 3	25 points
Participation	08 points
House Presentation	02 points
Final Project	15 points
*Extra Credit	1-2 points offered on Exams periodically

Attendance and Participation
Your attendance and participation in class is very important. Regular and consistent attendance is **required** to earn full credit for the course. Do not miss a class unless you have a genuine excuse to do so. Unexcused absences will be penalized. If you have 3-7 unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by one letter grade. If you have 8 or more unexcused absences, you will receive a failing grade in the course. Your grade will be affected by your attendance record and by how you conduct yourself when you attend. The students, who have few absences, come to class prepared and contribute regularly to discussion and in-class problem solving will be awarded full credit. <u>Please **switch off** your cell phone or other electronic devices before class starts</u>.

Final Project
The Final Project will be an 8-10 page squib, which we will discuss in early October.

Final Grades

93-100	A	80-82	B	67-69	D+
90- 92	A-	77-79	C+	63-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	60-62	D-
83-86	B	70-72	C-	59 or less	F

Graduate Students
Will be required to do two, 20-minute presentations to the class on reading material for that day. Graduate students will also serve as "house captains" in their respective groups, leading discussions periodically in in-class group work.

Semantics and Pragmatics Houses
The class will be divided up into groups (houses) at the beginning of the semester, consisting of 4-5 undergraduate students per 1 graduate student, who will serve as "house captain". Each house will work together on in-class group work, presentations, and final projects throughout the term. There will be a competition and party at the end of the term. The house that wins the competition will receive extra credit on their final grade for the course.

Houses are named after important figures in the history of contemporary semantics and pragmatics, and are thus:

Austin House
Frege House
Grice House
Partee House
Peirce House

Your first house assignment, due Aug 29, is a short presentation to the class on the namesake of your house and their significance to the disciplines of semantics and pragmatics.

Contacting the Professor
The best way to get in touch with me is via email. I will try to answer all emails within 24 hours; though, it might be longer than this on some occasions or on weekends.

Class Reading Schedule
Please note there will be no rigid adherence to this schedule, should the class need more time for some sessions and less for others.

Week	Contents	Assignments
WEEK 1 Aug. 18-22	Introduction Chapter 1: *Semantics in Linguistics*	Sections 1.1-1.7
WEEK 2 Aug. 25-29	Chapter 2: *Meaning, Thought, and Reality*	Sections 2.1-2.6 ***Wednesday: House Presentations***
WEEK 3 **Sept. 1 Labor Day** Sept. 2-5	Chapter 3: *Word Meaning*	Sections 3.1-3.5
WEEK 4 Sept. 8-12	Chapter 3: *Word Meaning (cont.)*	Sections 3.6-3.8 ***Wednesday Exam 1***
WEEK 5 Sept. 15-19	Chapter 4: *Semantic Relations and Truth*	Sections 4.1-4.4
WEEK 6 Sept. 22-26	Chapter 4: *Semantic Relations and Truth (cont.)*	Sections 4.5-4.6
WEEK 7 Sept. 29-Oct. 3	Chapter 5: *Sentence Semantics 1: Situations*	Sections 5.1-5.2.8
WEEK 8 Oct. 6-10	Chapter 5: *Sentence Semantics 1: Situations*	Sections 5.3-5.4 ***Wednesday Exam 2***
WEEK 9 Oct. 13-17	Chapter 6: *Sentence Semantics 2: Participants*	Sections 6.1-6.7
WEEK 10 Oct. 20-24	Chapter 6: *Sentence Semantics 2: Participants*	Sections 6.8-6.10

WEEK 11 Oct. 27-31	Chapter 7: *Context and Inference* (Pragmatics)	Sections 7.1-7.5
WEEK 12 Nov. 3-7	Chapter 7: *Context and Inference* (Pragmatics) Grice: *Logic and Conversation* [on Canvas]	Sections 7.6-7.9
WEEK 13 Nov. 10-14	Catch up day	***Wednesday Exam 3***
Thanksgiving (08/24-28)		
WEEK 14 Nov. 17-21	**Salmon**: *Social Markers and Dimensions of Meaning* [on Canvas]	
WEEK 15 (Pre-final w) Dec. 1-5 **Dec. 5 Reading Day**	**Horn**: *The Stigma Enigma* [on Canvas]	
Final Exam Date		***Final Project Due***

Informal Note on AI, Plagiarism, etc.

Most graded work in this class will be done during class time in pen and paper exam booklets. No AI or internet use is allowed.

AI summaries of course readings should not be bothered with, as they will gloss over many important nuances that you would otherwise get from close readings of the text. Note, the readings are theoretical, and they can be abstract and complex at times. The best bet, though, is to read and re-read them until they make sense. It's not supposed to be easy!

Official Formal Note on AI

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like e.g., Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy.

Absence Policy

Please see UNT Policy Student Attendance and Authorized Absences.

Religious Observance

Should you have a religious observance that will prevent you from attending class, from completing an assignment on time, or from writing a test, please be sure to let me know two weeks in advance so that alternate arrangements can be made. Please see the linked UNT Policy.

Disability Information

The Linguistics Department at UNT cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability, which requires accommodation under the terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please provide your request by email within the first week of class.