

# Attention!

This is a representative syllabus.

The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Spring 2016

**Linguistics 4400: Linguistic meaning**

**Monday-Wednesday 9:00-10:20, Bolz Hall 318**

Instructor: XXX  
Ohio Stadium East  
Email: XXX

Office hours: XXX

**Course description:**

The meanings conveyed by natural language utterances are subtle and complex, arising as a function of the conventional content of the expressions uttered and of various contextual factors. Semantics is the study of the conventional system itself, while pragmatics studies how context plays a role in conveying meaning. The course is an introduction to the study of meaning (semantics and pragmatics) across languages, including word meaning, the contribution of syntactic structure, and the role of context in interpretation.

**Prerequisite:** 2000 (201), 2000H (201H), or 4000 (601)

**Course requirements and assessment:**

Your success in this course crucially depends on attending the class meetings and participating in class. You are expected to have read the assigned readings for the class meeting in which they are due. You are strongly encouraged to attempt assignments *prior* to the day on which they're due, so that you have time to contact me if you are confused or find the assignment unclear. I want every one of you to succeed to your best ability, but this will only happen if you are motivated and disciplined, and help me to diagnose any problems.

Assessment is based on the following three components:

**1. Attendance, reading and participation: 15%**

Attendance in class is mandatory and you are strongly encouraged to participate in the in-class discussion and exercises. You are expected to do the assigned readings – doing the readings will help you prepare for the in-class discussions and exercises, and thus greatly contribute to your success in the course.

**2. Assignments: 50% (5 assignments, each worth 10% of your final grade)**

The assignments will be posted on Carmen and are due at the beginning of class (on

the dates indicated in the syllabus). Assignments need to be turned in as hard copies, unless indicated otherwise.

You may discuss homework assignments with each other, but I expect you to write up your **own** individual solutions and to indicate whom you have discussed the assignment with.

Give full answers to the questions: make clear how you reached your conclusion; also lay out any assumptions you make and show how they play a part in your conclusions. Your grade will reflect not only your answer (and there often won't be a single "correct" answer), but also the argument you make for it.

### **3. Cumulative final: 35%**

The final will be cumulative (i.e., it will cover material from all weeks of the semester). The final will be take-home, open-book and open-notes. You should not discuss the exam with anyone else. The take-home exam will be due at the time the scheduled final exam for the class would have been concluded: Friday April 29 at 11:45am. You will need to bring it to my office by that time. There will be no exceptions.

I use the OSU Standard Grade Scheme:

93 - 100 (A)	83 - 86.9 (B)	73 - 76.9 (C)	60 - 66.9 (D)
90 - 92.9 (A-)	80 - 82.9 (B-)	70 - 72.9 (C-)	Below 60 (E)
87 - 89.9 (B+)	77 - 79.9 (C+)	67 - 69.9 (D+)	

### **Late policy:**

All deadlines mentioned in this syllabus and on the assignments are hard deadlines. Barring documented medical or other emergencies, late submissions will not be accepted.

### **Academic misconduct:**

I expect all the work you do in this course to be your own, except on those tasks for which collaboration is explicitly encouraged. Academic dishonesty will not be allowed under any circumstances. It is surprisingly easy to spot when students have been cheating or copying others' work. Any suspected case of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the university committee on academic misconduct, and will be handled according to academic policy.

### **Use of cell phones or computers:**

Use of cell phones or computers during class is not permitted.

**Special needs:**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohiostate.edu/>.

**Syllabus (subject to changes!)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Other</b>
Week 1	1/11 (M)	Introduction: Knowledge of meaning		
	1/13 (W)	Reference and sense		
Week 2	1/18 (M)	<b>NO CLASS—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY</b>		
	<b>LEXICAL SEMANTICS</b>			
	1/20 (W)	<b>Nouns:</b> polysemy and facets		
Week 3	1/25 (M)	Lexical relations	J&M 2009	
	1/27 (W)	Word representations in NLP		HW1
Week 4	2/1 (M)	<b>Adjectives:</b> Markedness and scales		
	2/3 (W)	Cross-linguistic inventories	Dixon 1977	HW1 due
Week 5	2/8 (M)	<b>Verbs:</b> Semantic roles	Fillmore 1970	
	2/10 (W)	Semantic roles		HW2
Week 6	2/15 (M)	<b>Phrases:</b> Idioms	Sag 2002: sec 1-2	
	<b>COMPOSITIONALITY AND QUANTIFIERS</b>			
	2/17 (W)	Compositionality		HW2 due

Week 7	2/22 (M)	Propositional logic		
	2/24 (W)	Quantifier meaning		HW3
Week 8	2/29 (M)	Negative polarity items		
	3/2 (W)	Cross-linguistic quantifier variation		HW3 due
Week 9	3/7 (M)	Scope and ambiguity		
	<b>MEANING IN CONTEXT</b>			
	3/9 (W)	Literal/pragmatic meaning		
<b>SPRING BREAK: MON. 3/14–FRI. 3/18</b>				
Week 10	3/21 (M)	Conversational implicatures	Grice 1975	HW 4
	3/23 (W)	Frames of reference and spatial prepositions		
Week 11	3/28 (M)	Modality and evidentiality		HW4 due
	3/30 (W)	Projective content		
Week 12	4/4 (M)	Projective content		
	<b>COMPUTATIONAL ASPECTS</b>			
	4/6 (W)	Coreference		HW5
Week 13	4/11 (M)	Visual salience		
	4/13 (W)	Grounding demonstrative uses	Acton&Potts 2014	HW5 due
Week 14	4/18 (M)	Grounding adjective scales		
	4/20 (W)	Disagreement detection		
Week 15	4/25 (M)	Review session		
<b>Finals (Weds. 4/27 – Tues. 5/3)</b>				