

Philosophy 222, The Philosophy of Language
Mon, Wed 12:00pm-1:15pm
Rockefeller Hall 301
Fall 2008 Syllabus and Reading Schedule

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This course will introduce you to some major issues in the theory of linguistic meaning from a quasi-historical approach. We will also look at the philosophical study of language as well as the philosophical problems that such studies purport to illuminate, solve, or dissolve. We will discuss referential theories of meaning originating with Frege and Russell, use-theories of meaning associated with Austin and Strawson, Grice's theory of implicature, truth-conditional theories of meaning, and the theory of direct reference. Philosophical problems will include ontology and essence, knowledge of objects, the nature of truth, and necessity and a priority. The course will give you a strong grounding in the development of philosophy of language in the 20th century, as well as introduce you to the problems that philosophers of language study today.

Texts: *The Philosophy of Language*, ed. A.P. Martinich, Oxford University Press (2008).
Language, Truth, and Logic, by A.J. Ayer, Dover (1936)

Additional Articles on Blackboard Readings and E-Reserves.

Requirements: There will be two papers, about 2000 words each, and a take-home final exam. Study questions will be handed out in advance of the final exam. Students interested in the philosophy of language may write a 12-15 page paper in lieu of the final exam. Topics must be discussed with instructor.

Reading Schedule

(Any changes will be announced in class.)

Sept. 3rd, Overview of Philosophy of Language, Introduction to Frege's metaphysical program.

Week 1: Sept. 8th, 10th, Sense Determines Reference

Sept. 8th: Frege's "On Sense and Nominatum" (change "Nominatum" to "Reference" throughout the article), in Martinich.

Week 2: Sept. 15th, 17th, Referentialism and Ontology

Sept. 15th: Frege's "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry" Skip §on Dr. Gustav Lauben, in Martinich.

Week 3: Sept. 22nd, 24th, Meinong, Russell and Definite Descriptions

Sept. 22nd: Meinong's "On the Theory of Objects" pp. 76-92 on Blackboard E-Reserves.

Sept. 24th: Russell's "On Denoting" and "Descriptions" in Martinich. Skip section on Gray's Elegy in "On Denoting." First paper topics distributed.

Week 4: Sept. 29th, Oct 1st, Russellian Epistemology and Metaphysics

Sept. 29th: Russell's "Appearance, Reality, and Knowledge by Acquaintance", from *Problems of Philosophy*, on Blackboard E-Reserves, Excerpts from *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, pp. 49-63, on Blackboard E-Reserves.

Oct. 1st: Ayer, Chapters 1, 2, 3 from *Language, Truth, and Logic*.

Week 5: Oct. 6th, 8th, Verificationism and Meaning Holism

Oct. 6th: Ayer, Chapters 6, and the Introduction pp. 5-26.

Oct. 8th: Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" §1-3, 5-6 in Martinich. First papers due.

Week 6: Oct. 13th, 15th, Ordinary Language and Use-Theories

Oct 13th: More on Quine's Two Dogmas

Oct 15th: Strawson's "On Referring" in Martinich.

Fall Break

Week 7: Oct. 27th, 29th, Use-Theories of Meaning

Oct. 27th: Strawson's "Meaning and Truth", on Blackboard.

Oct. 29th: Austin, excerpts from *Sense and Sensibilia* on Blackboard E-Reserves.

Week 8: Nov. 3rd, Nov. 5th, Grice and Conversational Implicature

Nov. 3rd: Grice's "Logic and Conversation" in Martinich. "Prolegomena" and "Further Notes" from Grice's *Studies in the Way of Words* on Blackboard E-Reserves.

Nov. 5th: Second paper topics distributed.

Week 9: Nov. 10th, 12th, Semantics in light of Grice

Nov. 10th: Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions", in Martinich.

Nov. 12th: Kripke's "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference" on Blackboard E-Reserves.

Week 10: Nov. 17th, 19th, Names and Rigid Designation

Nov. 17th: Kripke's "Naming and Necessity", in Martinich.

Nov. 19th: Kripke continued: Second papers due.

Week 11: Nov. 24th, 26th Indexicality and Context-Sensitivity

Nov. 24th: Kaplan's "Demonstratives", pp. 483-507, pp. 512-540, on Blackboard E-Reserves..

Nov. 26th: Lewis' "Scorekeeping in a Language Game" on Blackboard. Second papers returned.

Week 12: Dec. 1st, 3rd, Direct Reference and the Problem of Propositional Attitudes

Dec. 1st: Perry's "The Problem of the Essential Indexical" in Martinich.

Dec. 3rd: Kripke's "A Puzzle about Belief", in Martinich.

Week 13: Dec. 8th. Speaking and Meaning

Dec 8th: Soames' "The Gap Between Meaning and Assertion" on Blackboard. Final examination study guide distributed.

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability and Support Services. Students in need of disability accommodations should schedule an appointment with me early in the semester to discuss any accommodations for this course which have been approved by the Office of Disability and Support Services, as indicated in your DSS accommodation letter.