

PHI 189J: Topics in Philosophy of Language
Fall 2007

INSTRUCTOR

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Office hours: M 11:00-12:00, W 2:00-3:00

TIME AND PLACE

M, W, F 12:10-1:00, 211 Wellman.

DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the semantics of natural language. It will investigate the semantics of specific constructions in language, such as quantification and verb phrases. It will also explore the foundations of semantic theory, concentrating on the roles of possible worlds and logical form.

PREREQUISITES

Background in philosophy of language or permission of instructor.

TEXTS

Meaning and Grammar, Second Edition, by Genarro Chierchia and Sally McConnell-Ginet.

REQUIREMENTS

Midterm exam, final exam, problem sets.

GRADING

Grades will be based on the following distribution.

30% problem sets: three problem sets, 10% each.

30% midterm.

40% final exam

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 September 28	Organization, Chapter 1, "The Empirical Domain of Semantics."
Week 2 October 1, 3 (No class October 5: We will find a make-up day.)	Chapter 2, "Denotation, Truth, and Meaning."
Week 3 October 8, 10, 12	Chapter 2 continued.
Week 4 October 15, 17, 19	Chapter 3, "Quantification and Logical Form."

[Problem set 1 due October 19]

Week 5
October 22, 24, 26

Chapter 3 continued.

Week 6
October 29, 31
November 2

Chapter 5, “Intensionality.”

[Midterm exam November 2]

Week 7
November 5, 7, 9

Chapter 7, “Lambda Abstraction.”

Week 8
November 14, 16
(Note Monday Holiday)

Chapter 8, “Word Meaning.”

[Problem set 2 due November 16]

Week 9
November 19, 21
Thanksgiving holiday November 23

Chapter 8 continued.

Week 10
November 26, 28, 30

Chapter 9, “Generalized Quantifiers.”

[Problem set 3 due November 30]

Week 11
December 3, 5, 7

Chapter 9 continued.