

# **LALS 4507 · PHIL 4505**

## **Semantics II**

**Winter 2009**

**Ash Asudeh**  
Carleton University

## **1 General Information**

### **1.1 Class Time and Location**

Mondays & Wednesdays 11:35–12:55, 213 Tory

### **1.2 Class Website**

[**Note:** All links in the electronic (PDF) version of this document are clickable.]

<http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/>

### **1.3 Instructor's Contact Information**

**Instructor** Ash Asudeh

**Email** [ash\\_asudeh@carleton.ca](mailto:ash_asudeh@carleton.ca)

**Web** <http://www.carleton.ca/~asudeh/>

**Phone** 613-520-2600 x1492

**Office** 2206A Dunton Tower

### **1.4 Office Hours**

Wednesdays 13:30–15:00, or by arrangement

## **2 Course Description**

This is an advanced course on linguistic meaning. We begin by considering semantics from the foundational perspective of philosophy of language. We then start building students' understanding of some of the basic formal tools (logic, lambda calculus). We next proceed to some specific advanced topics in semantics, such as quantifiers and noun phrase interpretation, possible worlds and intensions, propositional attitudes, modality and conditionals. We finish with a consideration of the relation of sentential semantics to formal pragmatics and discourse semantics.

**Prerequisites:** LALS 3505 or PHIL 3506 or permission of the Department of Philosophy or School of Linguistics and Language Studies.

## **3 Readings**

The reading(s) for each class are given in section 9 of this document and will also be announced in class. Revisions to the reading list may also be announced in class. If you miss class, it is *your* responsibility to find out what the readings are.

### 3.1 Textbook

There are no texts to purchase for this class, just some required readings (see next section).

### 3.2 Required Readings

There are a number of required readings for the course.

Each reading is available electronically at the URL provided (see section 8).

**Note:** Links annotated with an asterisk (\*) are subscription resources that must be accessed on campus at Carleton, or through the library's web site or after having logged in to the Carleton VPN. Carleton's VPN software is available at <http://apps.carleton.ca/ntw/vpn/>. If you are not a Carleton student, you should be able to access these sites through your own institution's library subscriptions. If you have difficulties, please contact me.

Any readings whose link is not annotated with an asterisk is available for download here:

<http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

You will be provided with a user name and password in class. Please do not share this information with people outside the class.

## 4 Assessment

There are four components to how you will be assessed in this course: in-class participation (including attendance), assignments, a squib, and a final exam.

### 4.1 Assignments

You are allowed to collaborate on assignments, but **each student must submit their own write-up**. I would appreciate it if assignments were typed, but feel free to draw structures or make annotations by hand.

**Assignment 1** Distributed **January 26, 2009**, due **February 9, 2009**.

**Assignment 2** Distributed **February 11, 2009**, due **March 9, 2009**.

**Assignment 2** Distributed **March 16, 2009**, due **April 1, 2009**.

Assignments are non-cumulative. This means that they will not test material that was covered in a previous assignment (but that material could be relevant to understanding of new material). Each assignment may cover up to the last Wednesday class before the assignment is due.

### 4.2 Squib

You will have to write a squib as your term paper in this class. It should be **5–10 pages long**, assuming **double spacing and reasonable font size and margins**.

A squib is a very short paper that identifies a set of data that is somehow puzzling or theoretically problematic. A squib does not necessarily posit a solution to the problem, but the very best squibs will at the very least try to form some kind of coherent generalization about the data, although typically stopping short of providing a theoretically well-founded or formalized solution (these would be appropriate for a full-fledged article). For examples of linguistics squibs, see the journal *Linguistic Inquiry*. The 'golden age' of LI squibs was arguably the 1970's, but many excellent squibs were published subsequently and the journal maintains its squibs section to this day. Another great source for squibs is the online journal *Snippets* (<http://www.ledonline.it/snippets/>).

Chris Potts at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Linguistics Department has some excellent material on his website about writing for linguistics in general and about squibs more particularly, including a sample squib:

1. Squibs in linguistics: click [here](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Full URL:

<http://udrive.oit.umass.edu/potts/web/2008/f/ling610/handouts/ling610-handout-2008-11-25-squibs.pdf>

2. Sample semantics squib: click [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.
3. Writing in Linguistics more generally: click [here](#)<sup>3</sup>.

You are free to choose your topic. One option is to expand on some aspect of a homework assignment. Another option is to explore a phenomenon/set of data from your native language (English counts!) or a set of data that you've encountered in a grammar, etc. For the purposes of this class assignment, if the phenomenon/data you write about *turns out* to have been well-studied, that's okay. However, do not intentionally choose a well-studied topic. I advise you to make an appointment to discuss your topic with me in a timely fashion.

A complete first draft of your squib is due **March 16, 2009**. The final draft is due on **April 7, 2009** and should be submitted **in the SLALS drop box outside 215 Paterson Hall**.

## 5 Final Exam

The final exam is cumulative and will be held during the scheduled exam period.

## 6 Grading Policies

### 6.1 Weighting of Grades

Participation	10%
Assignment 1	10%
Assignment 2	10%
Assignment 3	10%
Squib, draft	10%
Squib, final	25%
Final exam	25%

### 6.2 Submission Policy

1. No submissions are accepted by fax or email.
2. Students are required to keep copies of their submissions.

### 6.3 Deferrals and Late Work

If, due to exceptional circumstances, you miss any of the submission deadlines, you must notify me *as soon as possible*.

Late submissions will automatically have 20% of their total mark deducted per 24 hours of lateness or part thereof. No submission will be accepted after the fifth day.

Late submissions **must** be submitted to the SLALS office (215 Paterson Hall) or in the drop box immediately outside the office. Submissions will be date-stamped (during normal opening hours on weekdays only, not on weekends or university holidays). **Clearly indicate course code, your name and my name on the submission.**

### 6.4 Statement Regarding Plagiarism

From Carleton University's Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars:

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports,

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<sup>2</sup> Full URL:

<http://udrive.oit.umass.edu/potts/web/2008/f/ling610/handouts/ling610-handout-2008-11-25-samplesquib.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Full URL:

<http://udrive.oit.umass.edu/potts/web/2008/f/ling797a/materials/ling797a-2008-09-04-writing.pdf>

research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet.

In cases where an investigation determines that a violation of the *Academic Integrity Policy* has occurred, sanctions may be applied by the Faculty Dean, the Provost and Vice President (Academic), or by Senate Executive.

Sanctions may include but are not limited to completion of a remediation process, a written reprimand, assignment of a failing grade, withdrawal from a course, suspension from a program, suspension or expulsion from the University. Sanctions may be used independently or in combination for any single violation. This list is not exhaustive and intended only as a guide. For a complete description of possible sanctions, consult Section IX, Sanctions, of the *Carleton University Academic Integrity Policy*, available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/studentsupport>.

## 7 Student Resources and Requests for Academic Accommodations

A statement can be found here:

<http://www.carleton.ca/~asudeh/resources-accommodations.pdf>

## 8 Course Readings

Barwise, Jon, and Robin Cooper. 1981. Generalized Quantifiers and Natural Language. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 4(2): 159–219. Link\*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF00350139>

Carpenter, Bob. 1997. *Type-Logical Semantics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Selected chapters. Link\*: <http://cognet.mit.edu.proxy.library.carleton.ca/library/books/view?isbn=0262531496>

Davidson, Donald. 1967. Truth and Meaning. *Synthese* 304–323.  
Link\*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF00485035>

Davis, Steven, and Brendan S. Gillon, eds. 2004. *Semantics: A Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Selected sections. Link: <http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

Dekker, Paul. 1994. Predicate Logic with Anaphora. In Lynn Santelmann and Mandy Harvey, eds., *Proceedings of the Fourth Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference*. Ithaca, NY: DMLL Publications, Cornell University.  
Link: <http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

von Fintel, Kai, and Irene Heim. 2007. Intensional Semantics. Lecture notes, MIT. Selected chapters.  
Link: <http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

Keenan, Edward L. 2003. The Definiteness Effect: Semantics or Pragmatics. *Natural Language Semantics* 11(2): 187–216. Link\*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A:1024400425028>

Lewis, David. 1970. General Semantics. *Synthese* 22: 18–67.  
Link\*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF00413598>

Lewis, David. 1979. Scorekeeping in a Language Game. *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 8: 339–359.  
Link\*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF00258436>

Partee, Barbara H. 1986. Noun Phrase Interpretation and Type-Shifting Principles. In Jeroen Groenendijk, Dick de Jongh, and Martin Stokhof, eds., *Studies in Discourse Representation Theory and the Theory of Generalized Quantifiers*, vol. GRASS 8, 115–143. Dordrecht: Foris.  
Link: <http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

Potts, Christopher. 2007. Logic for Linguists. Lecture notes, Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute (Stanford, CA). Link: <http://134.117.124.204:8000/Carleton/LALS4507-2009/Readings/>

## 9 Course Schedule

**Note:** The course schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion, with appropriate notice.

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### Week 1

Mon. 5.1.2009

The semantic enterprise

**Reading:** [Carpenter \(1997\)](#). **Chapter 1.**

Wed. 7.1.2009

Perspectives on semantics

**Readings:** [Davis and Gillon \(2004\)](#). **Chapters 2 (pp. 9–21), 4 (pp. 69–91), and 5 (pp. 92–100).**

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### Week 2

Mon. 12.1.2009 & Wed. 14.1.2009

Some foundational work

**Readings:** [Davidson \(1967\)](#), [Lewis \(1970\)](#).

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### Week 3

Mon. 19.1.2009 & Wed. 21.1.2009

Logical foundations, I

**Reading:** [Potts \(2007\)](#). **Sections TBA.**

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### Week 4

Mon. 26.1.2009 & Wed. 28.1.2009

Logical foundations, II

**Reading:** [Potts \(2007\)](#). **Sections TBA.**

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### Week 5

Mon. 2.2.2009 & Wed. 4.2.2009

Lambda Calculus

**Reading:** [Carpenter \(1997\)](#). **Chapter 2.**

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### Week 6

Mon. 9.2.2009 & Wed. 11.2.2009

Higher-Order Logic and Quantifiers

**Reading:** [Carpenter \(1997\)](#). **Chapter 3.**



**MON. 9.2.2009: ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE**

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**16/02/2009 & 18/02/2009: No class (Winter Break)**

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### Week 7

Mon. 23.2.2009 & Wed. 25.2.2009

Generalized Quantifier Theory

**Reading:** [Barwise and Cooper \(1981\)](#).

Continued on next page

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**Week 8**

Mon. 2.3.2009

Determiner Strength and the Definiteness Effect

**Reading:** [Keenan \(2003\)](#).

Wed. 4.3.2009

Type-Shifting

**Reading:** [Partee \(1986\)](#).

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**Week 9**

Mon. 9.3.2009

Approaches to the Syntax–Semantics Interface

**Reading:** TBA

**!** **ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**

Wed. 11.3.2009

Quantifiers: Scope and Binding

**Reading:** TBA

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**Week 10**

Mon. 16.3.2009

Intensional Semantics

**Reading:** [von Fintel and Heim \(2007\)](#). **Chapter 1.**

**!** **SQUIB DRAFT DUE**

Wed. 18.3.2009

Propositional Attitudes

**Reading:** [von Fintel and Heim \(2007\)](#). **Chapter 2.**

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**Week 11**

Mon. 23.3.2009

Modality

**Reading:** [von Fintel and Heim \(2007\)](#). **Chapter 3.**

Wed. 25.3.2009

Conditionals

**Reading:** [von Fintel and Heim \(2007\)](#). **Chapter 4.**

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**Week 12**

Mon. 30.3.2009 & Wed. 1.4.2009

Semantics & Pragmatics

**Readings:** [Lewis \(1979\)](#), [Dekker \(1994\)](#).

**!** **WED. 1.4.2009: ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**!** **APRIL 7, 2009: SQUIB DUE (SLALS DROP BOX)**