

Semantic Theory

Instructors:

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Goals of the course: 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. This course is an introduction to the study of meaning, i.e., semantics and pragmatics.

Course schedule:

Date	Topic
09.04.19	Course overview, syllabus
	1. Sentence types, speech acts and meaning types (?:chs.2,5; ??:ch.4)
16.04.19	Sentence types and speech acts
23.04.19	Entailments and conversational implicatures
30.04.19	Presuppositions and other projective content
	2. Noun phrase meanings and negative polarity items (?; ??:ch.4)
07.05.19	Definite and indefinite noun phrases
14.05.19	Quantificational noun phrases
21.05.19	Negative polarity items
	3. Verbs: Tense and aspect (?:chs.7,9)
28.05.19	Tense
04.06.19	Aspect
11.06.19	<i>No class: Pfingstferien</i>
	4. Truth conditions and compositionality (?:ch.2)
18.06.19	Truth conditions, the principle of compositionality
25.06.19	Propositional logic
02.07.19	Comparing English to propositional logic
09.07.19	Spill-over class, review session
16.07.19	In-class exam (cumulative, open book, open notes)

Readings:

Slides:

Important: Each meeting will consist of me introducing new material and us doing exercises that will help you better understand the material covered. It is therefore vital that you attend class and regularly participate. If you have to miss class, please review the slides and to work with your class mates to understand what was covered.

Assessment:

1. **Homework assignments** (ungraded VL): There will be three short ungraded homework assignments, to help prepare you for the final exam. You will upload your assignments to a folder on ILIAS and we will discuss the answers in class.
2. **In-class final exam:** In the last class meeting, there will be a cumulative final exam (open book, open notes). The term 'open book' means that you can bring the assigned readings; the term 'open notes' means that you can bring your notes.

Academic misconduct:

I expect all the work you do in this course to be your own, unless collaboration is explicitly requested for a particular task. Academic dishonesty will not be allowed under any circumstances. Any case of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to academic policy.

Accommodations:

The University of Stuttgart strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability or chronic illness, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can privately discuss options. For accommodations concerning exams please contact the chair of the Prüfungsausschuss (<https://www.student.uni-stuttgart.de/beratung/pruefungsausschuss/>). Further information about accommodations and contact information for advisory services can be found here: <https://www.student.uni-stuttgart.de/en/counseling/disability/>.