

LING 115: SEMANTIK I

Syllabus SoSe2017

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the students to the foundations and essential concepts of Semantics (Formal Semantics). A procedure will be developed which derives the meaning of a complex linguistic unit (for example, a sentence or a phrase) from the meaning of the words and the syntactic structure that compose it. By examining different aspects of semantic composition, this course provides techniques and formal tools to investigate the empirical properties of natural language.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Andrea Beltrama
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H132 (watch out! My name is still on H134, but my office is H132)
Office hours: Thursday 11:30h-12:30h

TUTOR: Erlinde Meertens
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H146
Office hours: Tuesdays 13:00h-14:00h

Tutorium: Wednesday 11.45h-13.15h in H303

PREREQUISITES: Ling101 (Introduction to Linguistics)

READINGS (see Ilias)

- Textbook: Heim, I., and A. Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Blackwell.
- Other books: Chierchia, G. and S. McConnell-Ginet. 1990. *Meaning and Grammar. An Introduction to Semantics*. MIT Press.
- Lohstein, H. 2011. *Formale Semantik und natürliche Sprache*. De Gruyter.
- Partee, B., Ter Meulen, A. , and Wall. 1990. *Mathematical Methods in Linguistics*. Kluwer.

Other articles and readings will be added on Ilias as the course develops. I will make sure to send an announcement well in advance every time a new reading is added.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE

Attendance to lecture and Tutorium	
Weekly exercises to practice	0%
Two take-home exams (together)	50%
Final exam (Klausur)	50%

[1) You need to pass the Klausur by itself to pass the course.

2) You can collaborate on take-homes, but each person **must** write the exam individually!]

Important! While attendance to class is not mandatory, **you will be tested on both the readings and the materials covered in class on both the take-homes and the final exam.** I will make the slides and the handouts available on Ilias after each class. However, attendance to lectures and tutoriums is *strongly recommended* to perform well in the class.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

I. Foundations and formal tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The empirical domain of semantics• Lexical semantics vs. Compositional Semantics• Set Theory• Propositional Logic• Lambda Calculus
⇒ TAKE-HOME I (<u>TENTATIVELY DUE JUNE 7</u>)

II. Compositional Semantics: Building simple sentences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compositionality in the semantics of natural language• Names and predicates• Modifiers (adjectives, prepositional phrases, etc.)• Computing ambiguities from syntactic attachment.
⇒ TAKE-HOME II (<u>TENTATIVELY DUE JULY 5</u>)

III. Semantic phenomena: formal and experimental approaches.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantifiers• Negative Polarity Items• Gradability

FINAL EXAM (KLAUSUR): July 26 at 10:00h - 11:30h
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