Pragmatics
LING 565, CRN 13007
Winter 2017
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:35am-9:55pm
1085 Penfield, Room 002

Instructor
Luis Alonso-Ovalle
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Office hours: Wednesdays, 1:00pm - 2:00pm or by appointment.
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Content of course
We can conceive of the semantic component of grammar as an algorithm that assigns truth-conditions to sentences, based on the interpretation of their parts. These truth-conditions correspond to what we can call the literal meaning of sentences. When sentences are uttered in a particular context, however, they usually convey more than what their truth-conditions convey. As part of linguistic theory, pragmatics studies those non truth-conditional aspects of the meaning of linguistic expressions. This course provides an introduction to central topics in pragmatics. We will focus on two: conversational implicatures and (to a lesser extent) presupposition. The plan is to read and discuss in depth some original literature in these areas.

Evaluation
• 4 homework assignments: 48% (12% each)
• 12 critical questions submitted: 6% (0.5% each)
• Other class participation: 4%
• Final exam: 42%

Course materials
Readings, class handouts, and assignments will be available via myCourses.

A note on class handouts
Handouts might be revised and modified from meeting to meeting, so you should always check myCourses for the latest version before coming to class.
Course Policies

Class participation
You are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Please contact me by email, if you have questions that you would like me to answer outside class.

Homework
Homework assignments will be made available via MyCourses on the dates marked in the calendar below. Answers are due in a week. All assignments must be typed and printed.

Students are encouraged to discuss homework assignments with their classmates, but every student must submit his or her own write-up. Homework assignments must clearly list the students that collaborated in the assignment.

No late assignments will be accepted (in the absence of proper justification for extraordinary circumstances that could prevent the assignment from being completed on time.)

Critical questions
After the first week of classes, students should submit one or more specific questions about the readings or the materials discussed in class in preparation for the Thursday class. Questions must be submitted by MyCourses email and are due on the previous Wednesday, at midnight.

Academic integrity
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (for more information, see http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest).

Students are advised to declare all sources in their homework assignments and final papers, following the citation conventions that are standard in the field.

Right to submit written work in English or French
In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit any written work either in English or in French.

Inclusive learning environment
As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities (514-398-6009).
## Roadmap

The following is a preliminary and approximate list of topics and readings in chronological order. The list will most probably be adjusted and fine-tuned during the semester, in response to the needs of the class. Significant changes will be announced in class and kept track of in a course log, available in myCourses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>READINGS (approximate schedule)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jan 5</td>
<td>Grice (1975), <em>Logic and Conversation</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Jan 17, <strong>H+19</strong></td>
<td>Geurts (2011), ch. 3: <em>Scalar Implicatures</em></td>
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<td>4. Jan 24, <strong>H+25</strong></td>
<td>Katzir (2007), <em>Structurally-defined alternatives</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Feb 7, <strong>H+9</strong></td>
<td>Alonso-Ovalle and Menéndez-Benito (2010), <em>Modal Indefinites</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Feb 14, <strong>H+16</strong></td>
<td>Alonso-Ovalle and Menéndez-Benito (2011), <em>Domain Restrictions, Modal Implicatures and Plurality: Spanish Algunos</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Mar 7, <strong>H+9</strong></td>
<td>Karttunen (1973), <em>Presuppositions of compound sentences</em></td>
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<td>10. Mar 14, <strong>H+Mar 16</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>11. Mar 21, *23</td>
<td>* = Critical questions due the previous Wednesday at midnight, via MyCourses</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Mar 28, *30</td>
<td><strong>H</strong> = Homework assignment handed out (due in a week)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Apr 4, <strong>H+Mar 6</strong></td>
<td><strong>H</strong> = Homework assignment due</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. <strong>H+Apr 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>H+</strong> = Homework assignment due</td>
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Some resources


Semantics textbooks

De Swart, Henriëtte: 1998. Introduction to Natural Language Semantics. CSLI.

Informal introductions to formal semantics written for a general audience


Formal background

McCawley, James D. : 1981. Everything that Linguists have Always Wanted to Know about Logic but Were Ashamed to Ask. The University of Chicago Press.