

## Pragmatics

Prof. Chris Kennedy ([kennedy@northwestern.edu](mailto:kennedy@northwestern.edu))  
Linguistics Department (2016 Sheridan Rd.), Rm. 19  
491-8054 (t), 491-3779 (f)  
Office hours after class or by appointment.

### Course Description

This course is an introduction to core issues in Pragmatics: the study of non-truth conditional aspects of linguistic meaning. We will be particularly concerned this quarter with the relation between pragmatics and semantics, exploring empirical domains in which contextual and truth conditional contributions to meaning interact in complex but regular and well-defined ways.

*Prerequisites:* For undergraduates, Linguistics 205 or permission of the instructor; for graduate students, the equivalent of Linguistics 205 or permission of the instructor.

### Evaluation

Take home midterm (30%), final paper or take-home final (40%), two reaction papers (20%), class participation (10%)

- The reaction papers should be 2-3 page critical discussions of two assigned readings of your choice. You should summarize the primary claims of the reading, and provide a critical assessment of the arguments, proposals, claims, etc.

You should tell me in advance what readings you are planning to write assessments of, and you should hand in your reaction paper prior to discussing the material in class.

- Graduate students are required to write a final research paper on any topic in pragmatics or the pragmatics/semantics interface; the topic must be approved by me no later than the end of the eighth week of class.

Undergraduates have the option of doing a paper or a take-home final; the latter will be handed out on the last day of class.

- The paper/final will both be due in my office by the end of the day, Thursday, June 13.

**NB:** Class participation is part of the grade. In order to fully participate in the discussion, you will need to keep up with the readings.

### Readings

Required readings are collected into a course reader which is available at Quartet Copies (818 Clark St., Evanston). Optional readings not included in the reader are available for copying in the Linguistics Department office.

## Syllabus

The following is a general plan for the course, though we may diverge slightly if class interest focuses on one topic or another. Some of the readings are fairly difficult, so be sure to give yourself time to get through them. Italicized readings are optional but highly recommended.

### Part 1: Contextual contributions to meaning

#### *Week 1: Implicature*

Pragmatics and semantics  
Conversational implicature

Bach 1999 *Levinson 1983* (ch. 1)  
Grice 1975; *Green 1990*

#### *Week 2: Pragmatic scales*

Scalar implicature

Hirschberg 1985 (chs. 2,3,5); *Matsumoto 1995*

#### *Week 3: Explicature*

What is said vs. what is meant  
Context and logical form

Carston 1988; Horn 1992  
Stanley 2000

#### *Weeks 4-5: Varieties of domain restriction*

Quantifier domain restriction  
Modal domains  
Comparison classes

von Stechow 1994 (ch. 2); Stanley 2002  
*Kratzer 1977, 1991*  
TBD, *Graff 2000*

### Part 2: Meaningful contributions to context

#### *Week 6: Presupposition*

Semantic vs. pragmatic presupposition  
Presupposition accommodation

Stalnaker 1974, *1979*; Karttunen 1974  
Lewis 1979

#### *Week 7: Presuppositions of complex sentences*

The projection problem

Karttunen 1973; Heim 1983b

#### *Week 8: Constructing a discourse representation*

Discourse referents  
Context change potential

Karttunen 1976  
Heim 1982 (ch. 1), 1983a; *Kamp 1981*

#### *Week 9: The dynamics of vagueness*

Shifting standards

Kyburg and Morreau 2000; Barker 2002

## References

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