

Semantics

Technical specs

Time: M.W. 2:30-3:50PM

Place: TH 110

Office Hours: WED. 12-1:00PM (or by appointment)

Office: Hammond Hall 132E

Email: suwon.yoon@uta.edu

Faculty profile: <https://www.uta.edu/profiles/suwon-yoon>

TA: Carly Sommerlot

Office Hours: TBA

Office: TBA

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Course description

This course introduces the fundamental goals and techniques of current semantic theory and the empirical facts it is based on. It also has the goal of preparing you to pursue more advanced study of the meaning of human languages and to provide a foundation for your own research. After reviewing the basic tools of current semantic theory, the course moves on to the various core topics concerning the meaning in English and also from a crosslinguistic perspective.

Student Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will gain basic understanding of theoretical concepts and tools in Semantics. Students will know how to make coherent argumentation and empirical justification for semantic claims, as well as overall understanding of the theoretical issues in Semantics. Students should be able to:

- navigate journal databases at the UT Arlington library in order to find additional journal articles on semantic issues
- identify and explain basic questions investigated in semantics in order to situate the core issues of meaning
- describe and illustrate theoretical issues of semantics with the core tools
- produce a novel work based on an independent research on the semantic questions regarding the relevant topics, or interface issues with other subfield of linguistics.

Textbook: (available at online stores or the Campus Bookstore)

Semantics, Second Edition (Palgrave Modern Linguistics), 2011. by Kate Kearns, Palgrave Macmillan.

Further readings will be uploaded on blackboard, or available at online library catalog.

→Lecture notes and other supplemental articles will be provided during the class or on the course website.

Course Schedule: (subject to change)

| | Content | Reading | Notes |
|------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| Week 1: Jan. 14, 16 | Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics | Kearns: Ch.1 | |
| Week 2: Jan. 23 | <i>Part I: Lexical Semantics</i> (Jan. 21. MLK day) | | |
| Week 3: Jan. 28, 30 | 1. Meaning variation: polysemy, homonymy | Murphy Ch. 6 (available on blackboard) | HW 1 (due in one week) |
| Week 4: Feb. 4, 6 | 2. Vagueness and ambiguity | Murphy Ch. 5 (available on blackboard) | HW2 |
| Week 5: | 3. Argument Structure; Semantic roles | Kearns: Ch.10 | HW3 |

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|-------------------------|--|---------------|------|
| Feb. 11, 13 | | | |
| Week 6: Feb. 18, 20 | 4. Event Structure | Kearns Ch. 8 | HW4 |
| Week 7: Feb. 25, 27 | <i>Part II: Propositional Semantics</i> 5. Logic in Linguistics | | |
| Week 8: Mar. 4, 6 | Midterm (March 6) | | |
| Week 9 Mar. 18, 20 | 6. Logical connectives | Kearns: Ch.2 | HW 5 |
| Week 10: Mar. 25, 27 | 7. Logical quantifiers | Kearns: Ch. 3 | HW 6 |
| Week 11: Apr. 1, 3 | 8. Modality | Kearns Ch. 5 | HW 7 |
| Week 12: Apr. 8, 10 | Modality cont. | | |
| Week 13: Apr. 15, 17 | 9. Generalized quantifiers | Kearns Ch. 6 | HW 8 |
| Week 14: Apr. 22, 24 | TBA | | |
| Week 15: May 7, 9 | Review | | |
| Week 16: May 6 | Final Exam | | |

“As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs the students of enrolled in this course. –S. Yoon.”

Additional Dates of Note:

Census Date: Jan. 30 (last day to add or swap classes)

Last Date to Drop: March 29

Course requirements and Grading: The requirements for the course will include textbook reading (pop quizzes), 8 homeworks, a midterm and a final exam. **Late homework will NOT be accepted. No makeup exams** will be given without documented medical or family emergency. You must notify me before the exam if either of these events occurs. Further, a formal hard copy request for makeup must be submitted along with supporting documents. The decision on the makeup exam will be made after review of such documents. Makeups will be under the conditions set by the instructor. **Exams missed for any other reason will result in a score of zero.** Grading policy will be given on the first day of class.

Attendance (10%) I have established following attendance policy: students are expected to come to class on time and must **behave in a professional manner** during class. **More than three unexcused absence** will automatically bump **your grade to one lower level.** Only formal support for the reasons of absence will be accepted.

Preparation and participation in class (20%) Preparation for class (reading), and active participation in classroom discussion are required. (i) The content of the lecture will be challenging and difficult to follow without textbook reading, hence the preparation may be tested by **pop quizzes (10%).**

(ii) After the lecture, there will be **group discussion** of the exercises and then the whole-class discussion (10%).

Assignments (30%) The assignments for the course will consist of problems in semantic analysis, with data that challenges or extends the basic assumptions that are covered in class. The assignments are designed to familiarize you with the descriptive or formal aspects of linguistic analysis. The solution to the problems will be open-ended, so your work will be evaluated based on empirical justification for claims, strength of argumentation, and form and clarity. The problem sets will be somewhat challenging. You are strongly encouraged to collaborate with your classmates, and/or consult with me on all of these assignments, but you should submit your own writing. **Late assignment will NOT be accepted.** *Assignments must be typed and handed in at class.*

Midterm exam (15%)

Final exam (25%)

COURSE POLICIES

- 1) Students are responsible for **checking the course Blackboard** regularly for the update.
- 2) **Electronic devices:** Please turn off and keep off all pagers, electronic games, MP3 and CD players, and cell-phones. If you are using a lap-top, please use it only for course related matters—failure to do so will negatively affect your participation grade.

Librarian to Contact: Jody Bailey (jbailey@uta.edu)

OTHER POLICIES

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

Disability Accommodations: UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. **Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

Non-Discrimination Policy: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

Title IX Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.*

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Campus Carry: Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory

examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.