

## PHILOSOPHY 409: PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:40–4:00, in Angell Hall 2271

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Office hours: Tuesdays 4–6 and by appointment

### FOCUS OF THE COURSE

How can a sentence, a belief, or a picture represent something? This problem—the problem of intentionality—is of fundamental importance in analytic philosophy. We will discuss a special case: the problem of intentionality in language, focusing in particular on reference. In so doing we will compare the semantics of proper names ('Fido'), quantifier phrases ('most dogs'), definite descriptions ('the dog in the corner'), and demonstratives ('this'). We will then discuss some ways in which Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* influenced the work on reference and intentionality that we have read.

### INTENDED AUDIENCE

This course is intended for students who have some experience in philosophy and have had one formal logic class from any department. Please talk to me if you have questions or concerns.

### COURSE WEB SITE

Available at <http://ctools.umich.edu>

### BOOKS

A. P. Martinich, *Philosophy of Language*, 5th ed. or any other edition that includes the readings on the syllabus  
Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*  
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*

### GRADING

- Attendance and active, engaged in-class participation: 20%
- Three problem sets: 10% each
- In class exam: 25%
- Final paper (5 pages): 25%

About a week before the exam, I will distribute four essay questions to you. The exam will have exactly three of those four questions on it. On the exam you will answer exactly two of those three questions. (Thus you can easily prepare for enough of the questions on the exam.) You won't be able to bring notes to the exam; you'll have to internalize the important points of your argument so that you can reproduce them persuasively on the exam. Bring your own blue books for the exams. You get credit for late work only if you give a really good explanation for its being late. I do give extensions when appropriate, but if you think you might need an extension, please ask early. The paper must be emailed as a .pdf file to me and also posted to your CTools dropbox. This way if one doesn't work, there's a backup.

I encourage you to discuss the material with your classmates, but all work you turn in must be your own: see <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity>.

Any student who may need an accommodation for any sort of disability should talk with me during office hours as soon as possible.

9/4	Introduction
9/6	Kate Kearns, "Introduction" and "Basic Logical Tools" (on CTools)
9/11	Kate Kearns, "The Logical Quantifiers" (on CTools)
9/12	<b>Problem set 1 due by 12 pm</b>
9/13	Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Nominatum"
9/18	<b>No class—I'll be out of town</b>
9/20	A special guest (!): Professor Sarah Moss Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting," "Descriptions," "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description" (this last paper on CTools)
9/25	Russell continued John Searle, "Proper Names" (on CTools)
9/26	<b>Problem set 2 due by 12 pm</b>
9/27	Peter Strawson, "On Referring"
10/2	Keith Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions"
10/4	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture I
10/9	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture II
10/11	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Introduction Hilary Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"
10/16	<b>Fall study break; no class</b>
10/18	<b>In class exam</b>
10/23	Gareth Evans, "The Causal Theory of Names"
10/25	Robert Stalnaker, "Reference and Necessity" (on CTools)
10/30	Jason Stanley, "Names and Rigid Designators" (on CTools)
11/1	Barbara Partee, "Possible Worlds in Model-Theoretic Semantics" (on CTools)
11/6	Robert Stalnaker, "Semantics for Belief"
11/8	Stalnaker continued
11/9	<b>Problem set 3 due by 5 pm</b>
11/13	John Locke, "Of Words" Tyler Burge, "Individualism and the Mental" (this last paper on CTools)
11/15	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §1–§64
11/20	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §65–§133
11/22	<b>Thanksgiving break; no class</b>
11/27	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §134–§242
11/29	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §243–§268
12/4	David Lewis, "Languages and Language"
12/6	David Lewis, "Putnam's Paradox" (on CTools)
12/11	Catching up (if necessary) and discussing the final paper
12/19	<b>Final paper due by 3:30 pm</b>