

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 and Thursdays 4–5 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 discussed.

PREREQUISITES

Phil 345 or Phil 383, and one course in formal logic, including quantifiers. If you haven't satisfied the logic prerequisite you're likely to find this course very challenging and frustrating. 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

- Two in class exams: 25% each
- Final paper (5 pages): 25%
- Three short problem sets, with the lowest grade dropped: 5% each
- Attendance and in-class participation: 15%

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. All assignments must be emailed to me in the .pdf format. I encourage you to discuss the material with your classmates, but all work you turn in must be your own.

SCHEDULE

1/7	Introduction
1/12	A. P. Martinich, "Introduction"
1/14	Gennaro Chierchia and Sally McConnell-Ginet, "The Empirical Domain of Semantics" (on CTools)
1/18	Problem set 1 due by 12 pm
1/19	Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Nominatum"
1/21	Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting," "Descriptions," "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description" (this last paper on CTools)
1/26	Russell continued
1/28	John Searle, "Proper Names" (on CTools)
2/2	In class exam
2/4	Gennaro Chierchia and Sally McConnell-Ginet, "Denotation, Truth, and Meaning," sections 1–3 (on CTools)
2/9	Peter Strawson, "On Referring"
2/11	Keith Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions"
2/15	Problem set 2 due by 12 pm
2/16	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture I
2/18	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture II
2/23	Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Introduction Hilary Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"
2/25	Gareth Evans, "The Causal Theory of Names"
3/2	Winter break; no class
3/4	Winter break; no class
3/9	Robert Stalnaker, "Reference and Necessity" (on CTools)
3/11	Jason Stanley, "Names and Rigid Designators" (on CTools)
3/16	In class exam
3/18	Barbara Partee, "Possible Worlds in Model-Theoretic Semantics" (on CTools)
3/23	Robert Stalnaker, "Semantics for Belief"
3/25	Stalnaker continued
3/29	Problem set 3 due by 12 pm
3/30	John Locke, "Of Words" Tyler Burge, "Individualism and the Mental" (this last paper on CTools)
4/1	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §1–§64
4/6	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §65–§133
4/8	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §134–§242
4/13	Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> §243–§268
4/15	David Lewis, "Languages and Language"
4/20	David Lewis, "Putnam's Paradox" (on CTools)
4/29	Final paper due by 12 pm