

LT3211: SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Semantics and Pragmatics

Subject Code

LT - Linguistics and Translation

Course Number

3211

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

LT2201 Introduction to Linguistics or LT2229 Fundamentals of Linguistics or LT2290 Introduction to Language Studies

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

CTL3211 Semantics

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The aim of this course is to examine aspects of linguistic meaning and language use. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to: recognize the relation between linguistic expressions and objects in the world; describe and

analyze sense properties and sense relations; analyze language data from the semantic and pragmatic aspects, and discover and formulate generalizations that are observationally, descriptively, and explanatorily adequate.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Students will identify basic issues in contemporary semantics and pragmatics.		x	x	
2	Students will analyze semantic composition with a basic formal toolkit.		x	x	
3	Students will apply learnt concepts to solve novel semantic and pragmatic problems.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will engage with theoretical foundations and concepts related to the above learning outcomes. Emphasis is put on how these theories can be applied to language data, particularly English, and examples are used to make abstract concepts easier to be absorbed.	1, 2, 3	3 hours
2	Readings	Students will read the materials assigned to them to have a better understanding of the topics covered in lectures.	1, 2, 3	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Assignments Students will complete two assignments.	1, 2, 3	30	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the content from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the assignment and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes
2	Mid-term quiz Students will demonstrate their understanding of the material discussed in the first half of the semester and apply semantic and pragmatic concepts in solving meaning-related problems.	1, 2, 3	30	-	No
3	End-of-term test Students will demonstrate how well they have achieved the learning and teaching outcomes.	1, 2, 3	40	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Assignments

Criterion

Demonstration of understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of excellent understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to apply solutions for old problems to new ones.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to apply solutions for old problems to new ones.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of fair understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to apply solutions for old problems to new ones.

Marginal (D)

Demonstration of basic understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to apply solutions for old problems to new ones.

Failure (F)

Little to no demonstration of understanding of the nature of the problems and ability to apply solutions for old problems to new ones.

Assessment Task

2. Mid-term quiz

Criterion

Demonstration of understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of excellent understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of fair understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Marginal (D)

Demonstration of basic understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Failure (F)

Little to no demonstration of understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the first half of the course and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems.

Assessment Task
3. End-of-term test**Criterion**

Demonstration of understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of excellent understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of fair understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Marginal (D)

Demonstration of basic understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Failure (F)

Little or no demonstration of understanding of the key concepts in semantics and pragmatics introduced in the entire class and ability to solve novel semantics and pragmatics problems

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Basic concepts in semantics: reference, sense, logic, predicates and arguments, word meaning, English tense, situation types, Function Application, Predicate Modification

Basic concepts in pragmatics: Cooperative Principle, Gricean theory of implicatures, speech acts, politeness

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Kearns, Kate. (2011) Semantics. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
2	Chapman, Siobhan. (2011) Pragmatics. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
3	Lecture notes and in-class exercises.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Cann, Ronnie. (1993) Formal Semantics. Cambridge: CUP.
2	Cann, Ronnie, Ruth Kempson and Eleni Gregoromichelaki. (2009) Semantics: an introduction to meaning in language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3	Chierchia, Chierchia and Sally McConnell-Ginet. (2000) Meaning and Grammar. 2nd edition. London: MIT Press.
4	Heim, Irene and Angelika Kratzer. (1998) Semantics in Generative Grammar. Oxford: Blackwell.

5	Hurford, James R., Brendan Heasley and Michael B. Smith. (2007) Semantics: A coursebook. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge UP.
6	Kempson, Ruth M. (1977) Semantic Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7	Portner, Paul H. (2005) What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
8	Saeed, John I. (2003) Semantics. Oxford: Blackwell.
9	de Swart, Henriëtte. (1998) Introduction to Natural Language Semantics. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
10	Huang, Yan. (2014). Pragmatics. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.