LING3510Q: Syntax and semantics

Spring 2013
Tu/Th 11:00-12:15, Oak 401

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Office hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30 or by appointment

Course description

The analysis of form and meaning in natural languages in a Chomskyan framework: surface structures, deep structures, transformational rules, and principles of semantic interpretation.

Q course: Definition and criteria [http://geoc.uconn.edu/QCompetency.htm]

Q courses require the knowledge and use of mathematics and/or statistics at or above the basic algebra level as an integral part of the course. These courses might include comprehensive analysis and interpretation of data. The mathematical and/or statistical methods and skills required are those specific to the particular course and discipline. […]

1. Courses must include use of basic algebraic concepts such as: formulas and functions, linear and quadratic equations and their graphs, systems of equations, polynomials, fractional expressions, exponents, powers and roots, problem solving and word problems. Formal abstract structures used in symbolic logic and other algebraic analyses are acceptable;
2. Courses should require the student to understand and carry out actual mathematical and/or statistical manipulations, and relate them to whatever data might be provided in order to draw conclusions. […]

Science and Technology: Definition and criteria [http://geoc.uconn.edu/geocguidelines.htm]

These courses acquaint students with scientific thought, observation, experimentation, and formal hypothesis testing, and enable students to consider the impact that developments in science and technology have on the nature and quality of life. Knowledge of the basic vocabulary of science and technology is a prerequisite for informed assessments of the physical universe and of technological developments.

Courses appropriate to this category should:

1. Explore an area of science or technology by introducing students to a broad, coherent body of knowledge and contemporary scientific or technical methods;
2. Promote an understanding of the nature of modern scientific inquiry, the process of investigation, and the interplay of data, hypotheses, and principles in the development and application of scientific knowledge;
3. Introduce students to unresolved questions in some area of science or technology and discuss how progress might be made in answering these questions; and
4. Promote interest, competence, and commitment to continued learning about contemporary science and technology and their impact upon the world and human society.

Grading Policy

Course requirements	
2 Midterms	40%
Final exam	25%
5 Homeworks	25%
5 In-class projects	10%

Numerical score/letter grade conversion					
93-100	A	80-82	B-	67-69	D+
90-92	A-	77-79	C+	63-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	60-62	D-
83-86	B	70-72	C-	0-59	F

Homeworks

You may discuss your homework with a student in this course. In fact, a study group can be a good supplementary learning mechanism, and it is encouraged. HOWEVER: You may NOT simply copy another student's answers, nor may a group turn in one common set of answers (whether or not they are written on multiple pages with different names on the top). The first defeats the learning purpose; the second defeats the assessment purpose.

Homeworks are posted as .pdf files on HuskyCT the week before they are due. It is your responsibility to download and print the homeworks (to read the files you need a pdf viewer).

Homeworks are due in class on Thursdays. Late homeworks received any time after the end of class (12:15PM) on the Thursday on which they are due and before the beginning of class (11:00AM) on the following Tuesday will be accepted and scored with a deduction of 20% for lateness. Late homeworks received any time after the beginning of the Tuesday class following their due date will not receive any credit anymore.

In-class projects

There will be 5 in-class projects, each worth 2% of the semester grade. The projects are not scheduled ahead of time—regular attendance is thus necessary to receive these points. The primary purpose of the in-class projects is learning. Most of the projects will involve group exercises, and students will learn via trial and error and discovery. There will be no deductions for incorrect answers—full 2% will be credited for the participation in each project.

Exams

Please note the scheduled dates for the exams and avoid any conflicts. Make-up exams (for the midterm exams) are available only to students who have a legitimate and documented excuse for missing an exam.

The preliminary date for the final exam is Tuesday, May 7, 2013, 10:30 – 12:30. Please check the registrar's web page (http://www.registrar.uconn.edu) for updates. University rules require that you take the final exam at the time published (there is no make-up exam for the final exam).

The primary purpose of exams is my assessment of your learning. You may ask the instructor clarification questions during an exam. However, you may NOT seek or obtain answers from another student, nor may you provide answers to another student, during an exam. You may not consult notes or unauthorized material during the exams.

Academic Integrity — "The Student Code"

Academic dishonesty or misconduct of any type will not be tolerated in this class. Please refer to the Student Code (http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html) for specific guidelines.

Course material

All readings are available as downloadable files in the folder *Readings* on HuskyCT. You are responsible for reading the assigned pages prior to the lecture for which they are assigned. Unless otherwise noted, material in the readings is examinable. The books from which the readings are chosen are also available in the UConn library.

Note: Additional materials will be distributed in class. Regular attendance is therefore important since the class will cover material not discussed in the readings.

Schedule (subject to change)

L: *Grammar as Science*. 2010. R. K. Larson & K. Ryokai. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. [The book is available as an eBook in the UConn Library.]

P: *What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics*. 2004. P. Portner. Oxford: Blackwell. [The book is also on hard copy reserve in the UConn Library.]

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Important dates
1	Jan 22 Jan 24	Overview and foundational issues PS-rules and grammars	L: 9-32 L: 41-71	
2	Jan 29 Jan 31	Basic clause structure; constituency tests	L: 83-113 L: 135-140	HW1 due
3	Feb 5 Feb 7	Syntactic relations	L: 115-126 L: 146-149	
4	Feb 12 Feb 14	Subcategorization, selection	L: 201-212 L: 213-231	HW2 due
5	Feb 19	Review and exercises		
	Feb 21	First Exam		
6	Feb 26 Feb 28	Complement clauses Non-finite complement clauses	L: 283-295 L: 297-308	
7	Mar 5 Mar 7	Control	L: 309-325	HW3 due
8	Mar 12 Mar 14	What is meaning?	P: 1-27	
		SPRING BREAK		
9	Mar 26 Mar 28	Compositionality	P: 28-39	HW4 due
10	Apr 2	Review and exercises		
	Apr 4	Second Exam		
11	Apr 9 Apr 11	Predicates, Set Theory	P: 40-60	
12	Apr 16 Apr 18	Quantifiers	P: 112-122	
13	Apr 23 Apr 25	Negative Polarity items	P: 122-127	HW5 due
14	Apr 30 May 2	Review and exercises		