

LING 230
Introduction to Logic and Semantics

Syllabus

Fall 2009
MR 1:10–2:25pm, Griffin 7

instructor: Prof. Nathan Sanders	office: NAB 255
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Course Description

From the course catalog: *This course is an introduction to both formal logic and the study of linguistic meaning. Throughout the course, a formal system of logic will be developed, and its adequacy for describing linguistic meaning will be tested. Topics to be covered include the meaning of words and sentences, first-order predicate logic, logical deduction, interpretation and understanding, and pragmatics. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: participation in discussions, weekly homework, a midterm exam, and a final exam. No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 40 (expected: 40). Preference given to students using the course to fulfill requirements for a major or concentration; such students should contact the instructor in advance to guarantee placement in the course.*

The course website is located at: <http://wso.williams.edu/~nsanders/LING230/>

This course satisfies the QFR requirement and is cross-listed as Philosophy 131.

Readings

L. T. F. Gamut. 1991. *Logic, Language, and Meaning. Volume 1: Introduction to Logic*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN #0226280853.

Occasional supplemental readings will also be available from the course website.

Grading

Your grade for the course is calculated as a weighted combination of your class attendance (5%), homework average (25%), midterm exam score (25%), and final exam score (45%).

Homework

Homework is generally assigned on a Monday and due the following Monday, so you should usually have a full week to work on it. Homework is available from the course website, so missing lecture is not an excuse for skipping homework. Homework is due at the beginning of class since solutions are often discussed in lecture. For this reason, late homework cannot be accepted. To compensate for this strict policy, your lowest homework grade is dropped when computing your final grade.

You are encouraged to work together in groups, but in accordance with the Williams College Honor Code, you must write up your own solutions, in your own words, listing the names of all students you consulted with. Suspected violations will be pursued to the full extent of College policy!

Your homework should be either neatly written or typed in a reasonable font with reasonable spacing and margins for writing comments (e.g., 10–12pt font, double-spaced prose, 1–1.5” margins, using only one side of the page). Please, do not submit spiral-bound paper with ragged edges! Staple (rather than paper clip or fold) multiple pages together. Be sure to put your name on every page in case they get separated.

Exams

There are two exams: a midterm and a final. The midterm covers material from the first half of the course. It is an in-class exam, designed to take the full class time to complete. The final exam is longer (two to three hours) and more comprehensive, covering material from the entire course, with a focus on material covered after the midterm. Both exams are open-book, open-note, and in accordance with the Honor Code, you must do your own work on these exams without the help of any other student. Suspected violations will be pursued to the full extent of College policy!

Tentative Schedule

		readings:		
Sept. 10	R			meaning, truth, propositions
14	M	2.1–2.3		propositional logic, HW#1 assigned
17	R	2.4–2.5		equivalence, consistency
21	M	3.1	HW#1 due	predicate logic, HW#2 assigned
24	R			predicate logic (cont'd)
28	M	3.2–3.4	HW#2 due	quantification, HW#3 assigned
Oct. 1	R	3.5–3.6.5		quantification (cont'd)
5	M	4.1	HW#3 due	natural deduction, HW#4 assigned
8	R	4.3.1–4.3.5		natural deduction (cont'd)
— <i>reading period, no class</i> —				
15	R			natural deduction (cont'd)
19	M		HW#4 due	subarguments, HW#5 assigned
22	R			subarguments (cont'd)
26	M		HW#5 due	review for midterm
29	R			IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM
Nov. 2	M	4.3.6		quantification rules, HW#6 assigned
5	R			quantification rules (cont'd)
9	M		HW#6 due	discourse representation, HW#7 assigned
12	R			discourse representation (cont'd)
16	M	6.1–6.5	HW#7 due	pragmatics, HW#8 assigned
19	R	6.6, Grice		pragmatics (cont'd)
23	M	6.7–6.8		pragmatics (cont'd)
— <i>Thanksgiving break, no class</i> —				
30	M	6.9–6.10		pragmatics (cont'd)
Dec. 3	R		HW#8 due	tense logic, HW#9 assigned
7	M			tense logic (cont'd)
10	R		HW#9 due	review for final
TBA				FINAL EXAM

Readings are chapter sections from Gamut (e.g., 2.1–2.3) or an assigned article by author's last name (Grice). Readings from the book can be done before or after the lecture in which they are discussed, whichever suits your learning style the best. It is recommended that you at least skim the book readings prior to class so that you know what sort of material will be covered that day. The Grice article should be read prior to the class in which it will be discussed.