

## Philosophy of Language, Fall 2008

### Philosophy 395: Philosophy of Language

(Co-listed as Phl 498: Senior Seminar)

**Professor: Dr. Heather Salazar**

**Class: MW 2:45-4pm**

**Office:** Academic Building 306, (251) 380-4183

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Email:** [hsalazar@shc.edu](mailto:hsalazar@shc.edu)

**Class Website:** <http://faculty.shc.edu/hsalazar>

### **Class Description:**

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Language and communication is a hallmark of humanity. It is necessary in our oral and written communication, and understanding the meaning of what we say is essential in understanding our histories, our theories and arguments, our laws, our literature, and even each other in daily contexts. In this class, we will examine competing theories about what we and our sentences mean and how we assess the truth of what we say. This course will survey the contemporary philosophy of language in the analytic tradition. (Notes: passing Phl 101: Logic and two other philosophy courses is a prerequisite for entering this class. This class fulfils a writing requirement.)

### **Objectives:**

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The goals of this class are to provide the material and methods to understand and engage with the major issues and theories in the philosophy of language; to show how and in what ways the issues and theories are related; to practice the philosophical method of extracting, analyzing, evaluating, and revising arguments and views with an eye towards charitable interpretation; to develop philosophical writing skills at the advanced undergraduate level; and to promote philosophical discussion among students and between the students and the professor in an exploration of the issues involved.

### **Required Texts:**

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*Philosophy of Language*, William Lycan (Lycan)  
*The Philosophy of Language*, A. P. Martinich (ed)  
Selected Readings (Xeroxed for class)

### **Coursework:**

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The coursework will include: graded in-class essays (25%); two essays (25% each, 50% total); presentations on some readings on a rotating basis and co-leading class discussion with the professor (in-class presentations) and in-class participation (25% together).

In-Class Essays: There will be short in-class essays that will ask you to explore and analyze a specific topic that was highlighted in the readings for the week or so prior. (You will be able to use your notes and books for these.) You will be asked to choose four of your best to be graded, two for mid-semester and two for the end of the semester. You may look over them and choose your best during my office hours of the week they are due. The others will count towards your participation in class.

Essays: You have two choices: (1) You may write two essays on topics given by the professor: one of 5 pages due before the middle of the semester and one of 7 pages due at the end of the semester. You will have

one week to write each. Or, (2) you may write a 12 page paper on a topic from the readings of your choice with the professor's approval on the topic, discussion of the topic and progress throughout the quarter, and a preliminary draft due two weeks before the end of the semester. You must choose which option you would like to pursue by the end of the second week of classes and a meeting at that time is required of all those who choose option (2). Essays must be submitted via hard-copy and email attachment in MS Word unless otherwise stated.

Presentations: You will be asked to present on a reading or two to the class on a rotating basis with other students in the class. You should prepare handouts for the class on these readings and co-lead class discussion with the professor on the topic, as well.

## **Grades**

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The college describes grade designations in the Bulletin. Briefly, an A constitutes "excellent...truly outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative"; a B "truly superior or well above average attainment"; a C "average or satisfactory work as is done by a majority of students"; and a D "deficient, but passed."

## **Academic Integrity**

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Academic honesty is expected in this class, as in all other classes, and the penalties for transgressing will be severe and may include failing the class and being reported to the Provost. This means that you must write your own papers; merely summarizing someone else's views in your papers is unacceptable. Your papers do not require outside research and most, if not all, of each paper should be your own ideas together with the ideas presented in lecture and in the class readings. All references in your papers to another person's views must be cited sufficiently. Always err on the side of being too careful in citations rather than being careless and ask me if you are in doubt about whether something is permitted.

## **Other Policies:**

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Attendance and Participation: This class relies very heavily on attendance and participation. Missing more than three classes, per college policy, may result in dismissal from class. Note: students will not be dropped from the class by the professor; students must withdraw themselves by the drop deadline to avoid receiving a WP or WF in the class. All special events outside of the class time that the class is required to attend may be made-up, but regular classes may not.

Late and Missing Assignments: In-class exercises may not be made up, but missing one will not impact your grade as long as there are four over the semester that are graded (two for the mid-semester and two for the end of the semester). If you miss a meditation, please make sure that you consult a classmate and make it up. Late reading logs will count for half of the original credit. Late papers will be considered under exceptional circumstances and may be marked down one third of a letter grade for each day that they are late. Contact the professor asap (preferably at least 24 hours in advance of the due date) if you think you may need a paper extension with the request and reason for the request. Documentation and college approval may be necessary in certain cases. Completion of either of the essay options and at least four in-class essays are required for passing the class. Essays that are not submitted via hard-copy and email by the due date will be considered late unless otherwise stated or other arrangements are made with the professor.

Special Accommodations: Students who want to receive disabilities accommodations should contact Mrs. Dunklin, Coordinator for Student Support Services at 380-3470 as soon as possible so that warranted accommodations can be arranged. Her office is located in Student Academic Services, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Administration Building.

## **Reading Schedule (Subject to Change):**

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### Part I: Truth and Meaning:

Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Grice, "Meaning"

MUT chs. 1, 5; TM ch 3?; Lycan sh 5-9

### Part II: Speech Acts:

J.L. Austin, "Performative Utterances"

Searle, "The Structure of Illocutionary Acts"

Searle, "Indirect Speech Acts"

Stalnaker, "Assertion"

MUT ch 8, 9; TM ch 6; Lycan ch 12, 13

### Part III: Reference and Descriptions:

Russell, "Descriptions"

Strawson, "On Referring"

TM ch 2; Lycan ch 1 and 2

### Part IV: Names and Demonstratives:

Kripke, "Naming and Necessity"

Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"

Kaplan, "Dthat"

Perry, "The Problem of the Essential Indexical"

Kripke, "A Puzzle about Belief"

MUT ch 3; TM ch 1, 5; Lycan ch 3, 4, 11

### Part VII: Interpretation and Translation:

Quine, "Translation and Meaning"

Davidson, "Belief and the Basis of Meaning"

Searle, "Indeterminacy, Empiricism, and the First Person"

MUT ch 10

\* Other readings may be added at the professor's discretion.

## Reading Schedule (Subject to Change):

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### Part I: Truth and Meaning: 2-4

\*Frege, "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry"

**Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"**

**Grice, "Meaning"**

\*Davidson, "Truth and Meaning"

### Part II: Speech Acts: 3-6

**J.L. Austin, "Performative Utterances"**

\*?Searle, "The Structure of Illocutionary Acts"

\*Searle, "The Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts"

\*Searle, "Logic and Conversation"

**Searle, "Indirect Speech Acts"**

**Stalnaker, "Assertion"**

### Part III: Reference and Descriptions: 2-7

\*?Frege, "On Sense and Nominatum"

\*?Russell, "On Denoting"

**Russell, "Descriptions"**

**Strawson, "On Referring"**

\*Donnellan, "On Referring"

\*Russell, "Mr. Strawson and Referring"

\*?Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions"

### Part IV: Names and Demonstratives: 4-7

**Kripke, "Naming and Necessity"**

**Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"**

\*Evans, "The Causal Theory of Names"

\*Searle, "Proper Names and Intentionality"

**Kaplan, "Dthat"**

\*Kaplan, "The Logic of Demonstratives"

**Perry, "The Problem of the Essential Indexical"**

### Part V: Propositional Attitudes 1-6

\*?Quine, "Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes"

\*Davidson, "On Saying That"

\*?Kaplan "Quantifying In"

\*Barwise and Perry, "Semantic Innocence and Uncompromising Situations"

**Kripke, "A Puzzle about Belief"**

\*?Stalnaker, "Semantics for Belief"

### Part VII: Interpretation and Translation: 3-4

**Quine, "Translation and Meaning"**

**Davidson, "Belief and the Basis of Meaning"**

\*Davidson, "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs"

**Searle, "Indeterminacy, Empiricism, and the First Person"**

Lycan or MUT looks the best so far

MUT chs. 1, 5; TM ch 3?; Lycan sh 5-9

MUT ch 8, 9; TM ch 6; Lycan ch 12, 13

TM ch 2; Lycan ch 1 and 2

MUT ch 3; TM ch 1, 5; Lycan ch 3, 4, 11

MUT ch 7; TM ch 4

MUT ch 10