

# Semantics 1, Spring 2021: Course information

Sam Alxatib

Instructors: Sam Al Khatib, Alaa Sharif  
Time/Place: R 11:45-1:45; Practicum: M 11:45-1:45  
Office hours: by appointment  
Textbook: Heim, Irene and Angelika Kratzer (1998). *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Blackwell.

**Description.** This course is about the interaction of meaning and grammar. We represent meaning as truth conditions, using basic propositional/predicate logic and set theory. We then work on developing a generalized mapping from structures of natural language to meaning-as-truth-conditions. The course focuses on issues of thematic selection, adjectival predication/modification, pronouns and binding, quantification, and ellipsis. Registered students are required to attend practicum *even if they are not officially enrolled in it.*

**Course goals.** To familiarize you with the basic methods and tools used in current research on formal semantics of natural language. By the end of the semester you will have learned:

- (i) where ‘interpretive’ semantics fits into generative linguistics,
- (ii) how argument structure and argument selection is formally represented, and
- (iii) how compositionality is implemented, with some detailed investigation of relative clauses, movement chains and related dependencies, and quantification.

**Course objectives.** To develop a concrete model of form-meaning interaction; practice use of mathematical tools in developing such models, including set theory, basic propositional/predicate logical language, functions,  $\lambda$ -calculus, role/place of extralinguistic reasoning in inference calculation.

**Expectations and grading.** You are absolutely *\*required\** to do all the assigned readings, attend all lectures, attend all practicum sessions, and submit all homework/exams. You are encouraged to discuss homework with your classmates, but you must submit your answers individually. When you work on your individual submission you have to write your own answers with your own words. **You may not discuss the take-home exams with each other. Please work on the exams separately.** The final grade breakdown is:

Homework	25%
Midterm (take-home)	25%
Final (take-home)	30%
Participation	20%

You will not receive any numeric scores on your homework, but you will receive detailed comments and you will be kept up to date on whether your overall performance is satisfactory. The midterm/final will be graded numerically. Regarding submissions, **\*please\* send your work to me in reasonably-sized PDFs (avoid all other formats), and not in separate files.** If you take individual shots of a handwritten sheets, compile them into a single PDF and send it to me.

**Course calendar.** See opposite page.

## Plan (subject to change)

WEEK (DATE)	TOPIC	READING
(M 02/01):	(PRACTICUM) Sets 1	
<b>1 (R 02/04):</b>	<b>Introduction and overview</b>	
(M 02/08):	(PRACTICUM) Sets/functions	
<b>2 (R 02/11):</b>	<b>Sets, functions, <math>\lambda</math>-notation</b>	H&K CH. 1, CH. 2.1-2.3
(M 03/29):	NO PRACTICUM	(PRESIDENT'S DAY)
<b>3 (R 02/18):</b>	<b>Types and type-driven interpretation Argument structure and saturation</b>	H&K CH. 2-3
(M 02/22):	(PRACTICUM) Practice with functions 1	
<b>4 (R 02/25):</b>	<b>Adjectives, Predicate Modification</b>	H&K CH. 4.1-4.3
(M 03/01):	(PRACTICUM) Practice with functions 2	
<b>5 (R 03/04):</b>	<b>The definite article, presuppositions</b>	H&K CH. 4.4-4.5
(M 03/08):	(PRACTICUM) FA/PM practice	
<b>6 (R 03/11):</b>	<b>Pronouns, Relative Clauses, Binding, Predicate Abstraction</b>	H&K CH. 5.1-5.2
(M 03/15):	(PRACTICUM) Lexical entries	
<b>7 (R 03/18):</b>	<b>Movement chains</b>	H&K CH. 5.3
(M 03/22):	(PRACTICUM) Logic 1	
<b>8 (R 03/25):</b>	<b>Quantification 1</b>	H&K CH. 6
(M 03/29):	NO PRACTICUM	(SPRING BREAK)
(R 04/01):	NO CLASS	(SPRING BREAK)
(M 04/05):	NO PRACTICUM	(SPRING BREAK)
<b>9 (R 04/08):</b>	<b>Quantification 2</b>	H&K CH. 7
(M 04/12):	(PRACTICUM) Logic 2	
<b>10 (R 04/15):</b>	<b>Quantification 3</b>	Matthewson 2001
(M 04/19):	(PRACTICUM) Logic 3	
<b>11 (R 04/22):</b>	<b>Implicature 1</b>	Gamut 1991 CH. 6.1-6.7, Noveck 2001
(M 04/26):	(PRACTICUM) TBA	
<b>12 (R 04/29):</b>	<b>Implicature 2</b>	TBA
(M 05/03):	(PRACTICUM) Prep for Hackl et al. 2012	
<b>13 (R 05/06):</b>	<b>Antecedent-Contained Deletion</b>	Hackl et al. 2012
(M 05/10):	(PRACTICUM) TBA	
<b>14 (R 05/13):</b>	<b>Outro: Intensional Semantics</b>	H&K CH. 12