PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

WINTER 2000

PROFESSOR:  Chris Latiolais
Philosophy Department
Kalamazoo College
Humphrey House #202
Telephone # 337-7076
Offices Hours:
  1) Mon. 2:00 - 3:30
  2) Tues. 10:30 - 11:30
  3) By Appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Examination of some basic issues in the philosophy of language, with an emphasis upon speech-act theory. We will first review selected issues in traditional semantics: the study of meaning, reference, truth and translation. We will then turn to pragmatics or speech-act theory, the study of what we do with words. We close with a discussion of the significance of the philosophy of language for sociology, political science, psychology and literary analysis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to (1) take bi-weekly vocabulary quizzes (30%), (2) write two midterm assignments (2 @ 15% = 30%) and (3) a final essay (25%). Students will also be responsible for in-class presentations and discussion (15%). Faithful attendance is expected, and active contribution to class discussion is required. Three absences will result in the grade being lowered one full mark. All assignments must be completed for a passing grade, and late assignments will be marked down a half a grade per day.
REQUIRED TEXTS:


3. Habermas, Juergen:

4. Bakhtin, M. M. Speech Genre and Other Late Essays (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1986).

READING SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

TUESDAY: WEEK ONE


2. Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics: Three levels of abstraction.

1. THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF SPEECH ACTS:

THURSDAY:

1. "What is a Speech Act" (John Searle, 1965).


TUESDAY: WEEK TWO

1. Reading of Amelia Bedelia (Cecilia Latiolais).


4. Quiz #1.
THURSDAY:

1. Review.

2. **SPEAKER MEANING AND SPEAKER REFERENCE:**

TUESDAY:  WEEK THREE

1. "Reference and Definite Descriptions" (Keith Donnellan, 1966).
   

THURSDAY:

   
2. Quiz #2.

3. **INDEXICALS**

TUESDAY:  WEEK FOUR

1. "Frege on Demonstratives" (John Perry, 1977).
   
2. "How to Bridge the Gap Between Meaning and Reference" (Howard Wettstein, 1984).

THURSDAY:

1. Review
   
2. Midterm Assignment #1.

4. **INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS:**

TUESDAY:  WEEK FIVE

   

5. **CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE AND RELEVANCE.**

THURSDAY:


6. THE CLASSIFICATION, FUNCTIONS AND VALIDITY DIMENSIONS OF SPEECH-ACTS: COMMUNICATIVE VERSUS STRATEGIC ACTION:

TUESDAY: WEEK SIX


WEDNESDAY:

   Evening Movie: Glen Gary, Glen Ross (8:00 PM, Recital Hall FA).

THURSDAY:


2. Quiz #3.

TUESDAY: WEEK SEVEN


WEDNESDAY:

   Evening Movie: Twelfth Night (8:00 PM, Recital Hall FA).

THURSDAY:


2. Quiz # 4.

7. THE PROBLEM OF SPEECH GENRES AND EMPIRICAL PRAGMATICS:

TUESDAY: WEEK EIGHT


THURSDAY:

1. "The Problem of Speech Genres" (Continued).
2. Midterm Examination #2.

8. THE EXTENSION OF SPEECH-ACT THEORY TO LITERARY DISCOURSE:

TUESDAY: WEEK NINE


THURSDAY:

1. Review:

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATIONS:

TUESDAY: WEEK TEN

1. Review:

THURSDAY:

1. Review for Final Assignment.

2. Student Evaluations.

FINALS WEEK