PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

FALL 2005

PROFESSOR: Chris Latiolais
Philosophy Department
Kalamazoo College
Humphrey House #201
Telephone # 337-7076
Offices Hours:
1) Mon. 8:30 - 10:30
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 will be evaluated on the basis of class participation, vocabulary quizzes, midterm examinations and a final paper.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF EVALUATION</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation: Seminar presentations, classroom discussion and email correspondence</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Examinations</td>
<td>2 @ 15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>5 @ 6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (10-15 pages)</td>
<td>1 @ 25%</td>
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REQUIRED TEXTS:


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

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCE TEXTS:**


**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).
3. First Midterm Assignment #1.

Wednesday Evening Movie: Twelfth Night (8:00 PM, Dewing 103).

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. Quiz #3.

4. INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS:

TUESDAY: WEEK FIVE


5. CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE AND RELEVANCE.

THURSDAY:

3. Quiz #4.
6. THE CLASSIFICATION, FUNCTIONS AND VALIDITY DIMENSIONS OF SPEECH-ACTS: COMMUNICATIVE VERSUS STRATEGIC ACTION:

TUESDAY: WEEK SIX

1. "Intermediate Reflections: Social Action, Purposive Activity, and Communication" (Habermas)

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

THURSDAY:

1. "Intermediate Reflections: Social Action, Purposive Activity, and Communication" (Habermas)
2. Quiz #5.

TUESDAY: WEEK SEVEN

1. "Toward a Critique of a Theory of Meaning" (Habermas)
2. "Actions, Speech Acts, Linguistically Mediated Interactions, and the Lifeworld" (Habermas)

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

THURSDAY:

3. Quiz # 4.

7. THE PROBLEM OF SPEECH GENRES AND EMPIRICAL PRAGMATICS:

TUESDAY: WEEK EIGHT


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

THURSDAY:

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

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


2. "On the Distinction between Poetic and Communicative Uses of Language"

THURSDAY:

1. Review.

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATIONS:

TUESDAY:

1. Review for Final Assignment.

2. Student Evaluations.

FINALS WEEK