# C:\Users\DrShoaib\Desktop\Eman Abu-Suad\Final Course Specification Folder\Arts logo.bmp

# King Abdulaziz University

# Faculty of Arts and Humanities

# Department of European Languages and Literature

# **Fall 2011**

# **Course Syllabus – Semantics – LANE 438 – Section DA**

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| **Instructor:** | Afnan H. Fatani | **Classroom:** | Bldg. Rm. 418 |
| **Office:** | Al-Jawhara Bldg. Rm. 133 | **Website:** | ahfatani.kau.edu.sa |
| **Office Hours:** | S.T. 1-12:30 | **E-mail:** | ahfatani@ka.edu.sa |
| **Class Days & Time:** | S. T. 9:30-11 | **Telephone:** | +966 2 6400000 ext. 63531 |

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This three hour credit course introduces students to the basic principles of modern linguistic semantics and explains how languages organize and express meaning through words, parts of words, sentences, and discourse. It is meant for advanced undergraduate students in linguistics who are competent in syntax and syntactic analysis. The aim is to span the gap between semantic theory and practice by getting students to think for themselves and to develop strong practical skills with confidence and conviction. Students learn semantics by working with real data. Topics include: semantic field theory, lexical relations, mental representations, truth conditional semantics, thematic role theory, context and inference, speech act theory, situation types, and modality and evidentiality. Emphasis is on sentence semantics with extensive exercises on thematic roles and situation types using semantic categories such as situation types, tense, aspect, and voice.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

*Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

* Define the technical terms required to describe meaning.
* Apply modern semantic and pragmatic theories including lexical field theory, truth conditional semantics, referential theory, mental representations, linguistic relativity, relevance theory, speech act theory, situations types, thematic roles, conversational implicature and information structure.
* Identify lexical relations between sentences including paraphrase, entailment, implicature, and presupposition.
* Distinguish between semantics, pragmatics, semiotics and other sub-disciplines within the field of semantics.
* Identify truth tables of synonymy, entailment, contradiction and presupposition.
* Identify sense relations between words including hyponymy, polysemy, synonymy, antonymy, and derivational relations such as causative verbs and agentive nouns.
* Describe concepts by using sets of necessary and sufficient conditions, and prototypes.
* Classify situations into states, activities and accomplishments using semantic distinctions such as static/dynamic, durative/punctual and telic/atelic.
* Identify categories that interact with situation types such as tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality.
* Categorize types of speech acts including performatives, indirect speech acts and sentence types.

**COURSE OUTCOMES:**

**Description of the knowledge to be acquired:**

*This course will enable students to:*

* Demonstrate three kinds of skills/knowledge: knowledge of semantic facts; application of semantic rules; and accurate semantic-syntactic analyses of phrases and sentences.
* Apply modern semantic and pragmatic theories using real data.
* Identify lexical relations between sentences including paraphrase, entailment, implicature, and presupposition.
* Distinguish between semantics, pragmatics, semiotics and other sub-disciplines within the field of semantics.
* Fomulate truth tables of synonymy, entailment, contradiction and presupposition.
* Identify sense relations between words including hyponymy, polysemy, synonymy, antonymy, and derivational relations such as causative verbs and agentive nouns.
* Describe concepts by using sets of necessary and sufficient conditions, and prototypes.
* To classify situations into states, activities and accomplishments using semantic distinctions such as static/dynamic, durative/punctual and telic/atelic.
* Identify categories that interact with situation types such as tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality.
* Categorize types of speech acts including performatives, indirect speech acts and sentence types.
* Distinguish between Lexical Field Theory, Truth Conditional Theory and Relevance Theory..

**Description of cognitive skills to be developed:**

*This course will enable students to:*

* Develop critical thinking skills to analyse and synthesize the different semantic characteristics within one's own language and other languages.
* Demonstrate the skill of recognition and distinction of the different terms of modern semantics.
* Develop maturity and self-growth in learning about one's own language and other languages.
* Solve entailment problems by applying the basic rules of entailment and presupposition.
* Demonstrate the skill of independent critical thinking.
* Solve thematic role exercises.
* Identify types of antonyms.
* Identify lexical relations between words and sentences.
* Formulate truth tables.
* Identify situation types.
* Identify logical inferences such as implicature, presupposition and entailments.
* Distinguish between spatial and social deixis.
* Identify speech acts; interactivity and context dependence.
* Evaluate performative utterances.

**COURSE CONTENT**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topics to be covered** | | |
| **List of Topics** | **No. of Weeks** | **Contact Hours** |
| Introduction to semantics, semiotics & pragmatics | 1 | 3 |
| Types of reference & mental representations; necessary & sufficient conditions, prototypes, linguistic relativity | 1 | 3 |
| Lexical relations: polysemy, hyponymy, antonymy, derivations relations, lexical universals. | 2 | 6 |
| Lexical relations & truth; logic, entailment and presupposition | 2 | 6 |
| Sentence relations; situation types, modality and evidentiality | 2 | 6 |
| Thematic roles; classifying participants, voice, classifiers and noun classes. | 2 | 6 |
| Context and inference; deixis, knowledge as context, information structure. | 2 | 6 |
| Functions of language; speech act theory, performatives, sentence types | 2 | 6 |

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:**

Saeed, John I. (2009). Semantics. Third Edition. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

**SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTBOOK(S):**

Kreidler, C. (2002). Introducing English semantics. London: Routledge

Hurford, J. R., Heasley, B., & Smith, M. B. (2007). *Semantics: A coursebook*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## **COURSE ASSESSMENT:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Schedule of assessment tasks for students during the semester** | | | |
| **Assessment** | **Assessment Task** | **Week Due** | **Proportion of Final Assessment** |
| 1 | Quiz I | 4 | 20% |
| 2 | Quiz II | 8 | 20% |
| 3 | Performance tasks &  3-exercises (+ in-class presentations) . 5 points for each exercise | Throughout the Semester | 20% |
| 4 | Final Examination | 14 | 40% |
| Total | | | 100% |

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

* Students are expected to be punctual and attend all classes
* Being absent for more than 20% of allocated course time means that the student will receive a DN (denied from final exam) grade which is equivalent to an F
* No questions will be allowed during quizzes and final exam.
* Students are expected to be able to follow exam instructions without the help of instructors.
* Students who do not answer short essay questions of exams will receive a grade of F regardless of their performance in the multiple choice and application sections of exams.

**GENERAL POLICIES:**

* There will be NO make-up exams
* Medical reports cannot be received in class. To present a medical report, come to the instructor’s office during office hours
* During classes and exams, mobile phones should be turned off or set to silent mode
* Students are expected to know and abide by university policies governing student conduct
* Students are expected to exhibit a high level of personal and academic integrity and honesty

# **Fall 2011- Course Timeline – Semantics – LANE 438 (Tentative)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Day** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Notes** |
| 0 | Sun | 11 Sept | Add-and-Drop Period |  |
| Tues | 13 Sept |
| 1 | Sun | 18 Sept | Semantics & Semiotics; word meaning & sentence meaning | Chapter One |
| Tues | 20 Sept | Semantics & Pragmatics; reference, sense, utterances, propositions | Chapter One |
| 2 | Sun | 25 Sept | Reference; mental representations | Chapter Two |
| Tues | 27 Sept | Linguistic relativity; in-class exercises & general discussion | Chapter Two |
| 3 | Sun | 2 Oct | Word meaning; grammatical categories; lexical relations | Chapter Three |
| Tues | 4 Oct | Lexical relations; derivational relations; lexical universals | Chapter Three |
| 4 | Sun | 9 Oct | Sense relations & truth; logic & truth | Chapter Four |
| Tues | 11 Oct | Entailment; presupposition | Chapter Four |
| 5 | Sun | 16 Oct | Entailment; presupposition | Chapter Four |
| **Tues** | **18 Oct** | **Quiz One** | **Chapters 3 & 4** |
| 6 | Sun | 23 Oct | Sentence semantics 1; classifying situations; tense; aspect; aspect across languages: | Chapter Five |
| Tues | 25 Oct | Modality; mood; evidentiality; exercises; general discussion | Chapter Five |
| 7 | Sun | 30 Oct | Sentence semantics 2; thematic roles; verbs & thematic grids | Chapter 6 |
| **Hajj Break** | | | | |
| 8 | Sun | 13 Nov | Voice; passive voice; middle voice | Chapter Six |
| Tues | 15 Nov | Classifiers & Noun classes | Chapter 6 |
| 9 | **Sun** | **20 Nov** | **Quiz Two** | **Chapter 5 & 6** |
| Tues | 22 Nov | Context & Inference; Deixis | Chapter 7 |
| 10 | Sun | 27 Nov | Knowledge as context; information structure | Chapter 7 |
| Tues | 29 Nov | Inference; conversational implicature; exercises & general discussion | Chapter 7 |
| 11 | Sun | 4 Dec | Inference; conversational implicature; exercises & general discussion | Chapter 7 |
| Tues | 6 Dec | Functions of Language; Speech act theory | Chapter 8 |
| 12 | Sun | 11 Dec | Functions of Language; Speech act theory | Chapter 8 |
| Tues | 13 Dec | Indirect speech acts | Chapter 8 |
| 13 | Sun | 18 Dec | Indirect speech acts | Chapter 8 |
| Tues | 20 Dec | Sentence types; exercises; general discussion | Chapters 7 & 8 |
| 14 | Sun | 25 Dec | exercises; general discussion | Chapters 7 & 8 |
| Tues | 27 Dec | exercises; general discussion | Chapters 7 & 8 |
| **Final Examinations: Chapters 7 & 8** | | | | |