

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **Form, Thought, Communication**

Course Number and Section:

PHILOSOP

1370B 550

Instructor Name(s): Dr. D. Conter

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This year, this course is intended to introduce students to the study of language and communication as characteristically human phenomena. The course will be oriented towards the philosophy and psychology of language, and to the concept of meaning in particular.

Learning Outcomes:

The course will enable students to intelligently grapple with the difficulties surrounding the following questions:

What's a word?

What are the smallest meaningful parts of words?

How are different forms of the same word related to each other?

How do new words enter a language?

What are the major classes of words?

How does word order contribute to the meaningfulness of sentences?

How is word order related to the structure of sentences?

How can a sentence be ambiguous when the words in the sentence are not ambiguous?

Why and how is it difficult to determine what the subject of the sentence is?

What are the different kinds of meaning?

Are meanings concepts or images?

Is knowing the meaning of a word just knowing how to use it?

How do the meanings of individual words contribute to the meanings of phrases and sentences?

Is speaking a way of encoding a message, and understanding a kind of decoding?

What's the difference between literal and non-literal meaning?

What is indirect communication?

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Paul Elbourne, *A Slim Guide to Semantics* (Oxford University Press, Oxford UK, 2011)

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
50-minute, in-class, multiple-choice tests	Monday, February 10 Monday, March 17	60%
two-hour final exam		40%

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Monday, January 27, 2025