

# **Philosophy of Language and Logic**

## **Syllabus – Academic year 2012/13**

### **Basic information**

*Credits:* 15

*Module Tutor:* Mark Textor

*Office:* Chesham 3c

*Consultation time:* TBA

*Semester:* 2

*Lecture time and venue:*

### **Module description (plus aims and objectives)**

This course will introduce fundamental concepts involved in all conceptual thought such truth, identity, sense, reference and necessity.

### **Assessment methods and deadlines**

- *Formative assessment:* two 1500 word essays.
- *Summative assessment:* one two hour exam.

## Outline of lecture topics (plus suggested readings)

### Miniterm 1: From Truth to Meaning

1: Aristotle and the Roots of the Semantic Conception of Truth

2: From Aristotle to Tarski

3: From Tarski to Davidson

4: Problems for Davidson

5: Roundup: Theories of Meaning and their Scope

### Readings Week 1-5:

Davidson, D.:

1967: Truth and Meaning. *Synthese*, 17. Reprinted in his 2001.

1973: Radical Interpretation. *Dialectica*, 27. Reprinted in his 2001.

1976: Reply to Foster. In Evans/McDowell (eds). Reprinted in his 2001.

2001. *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Foster, J.A. 1976: Meaning and Truth-Theory. In G. Evans and J. McDowell (eds) *Truth and Meaning. Essays in Semantics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Künne, W. 2003: *Conceptions of Truth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3.2 and 4.1.

McGinn, C. 2003. *Logical Properties*. Oxford, Clarendon. Chapter 5.

Sainsbury, M. Understanding and theories of meaning. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 80, 1979, 127–44. Reprinted in his *Departing from Frege*, London: Routledge 2002.

Segal G. 1999. How a Theory of Truth can do Duty as a Theory of Meaning. In U. Zeglen (ed) *Donald Davidson: Truth Meaning and Knowledge*, 1999.

Strawson, P.F. Meaning and Truth. In his *Logico-Linguistic Papers*.

Tarski, A.

1944: The Semantic Conception of Truth and the Foundations of Semantics. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 4, 341–376.

1969: Truth and Proof. *Scientific American* 220, 63-77.

1983: The Concept of Truth in Formalized Languages. Translation of Tarski 1935 by J.H. Woodger in *Logic, Semantics, Metamathematics*, second edition, ed. by J. Corcoran. Indianapolis: Hackett, 152–278.

Wiggins, David. 1997. Meaning and truth conditions: from Frege's grand design to Davidson's. In: Hale, Bob, Wright, Crispin (eds.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Language*, Blackwell, Oxford, 3-29.

## Outline of lecture topics (plus suggested readings) – continued if necessary

### Miniterm 2: 'Equality gives rise to challenging questions'

**6: Frege on Identity, Sense and Reference.**

**7: Identity and Necessity**

**8: The Modal Argument**

**9: Response to the Modal Argument**

**10: Roundup**

### **Week 6-10**

Frege, G, 1892. On Sense and Reference. In Frege, G. *Collected Papers*, Oxford 1984 or M. Beaney (ed) *The Frege Reader*, Oxford. 1997.

Kripke, S. Identity and Necessity. Reprinted in his *Philosophical Troubles*, Oxford 2011

Kripke, S. *Naming and Necessity*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press 1980.

McGinn, C. 2003. *Logical Properties*. Oxford, Clarendon. Chapter 1.

## Suggested essay questions

1. Does Tarski define the concept of truth? If not, what does he achieve in his 'definitions'?
2. Which notion is conceptually prior, truth or meaning? (Read: Strawson 's 'Meaning & Truth', and compare to Davidson 'Truth & Meaning'.)
3. Can a theory of truth serve as a theory of meaning? If not, why not?
4. How should a theory of meaning treat context-dependent expressions such as indexicals?
5. Is identity a relation?
6. What is Frege's argument for the sense/reference distinction?
8. What are Kripke's arguments against the Frege/Russell picture of reference? Are they successful?

## Suggested additional readings