

# 5AANB011 Philosophy of Logic and Language

## Syllabus – Academic year 2013/14

### Basic information

*Credits:* 15

*Module Tutor:* Mark Textor

*Office:* Chesham 3 C

*Consultation time:*

*Semester:* 2

*Lecture time and venue\*:* TBA

*\*Please note that tutorial times and venues will be organised independently with your teaching tutor*

### Module description (plus aims and objectives)

This course will introduce students to the central topics in the Philosophy of Logic and Language. Topics to be studied will be drawn from the following: names, descriptions, sense and reference, necessity, truth, meaning, conditionals.

This module aims to acquaint students with the chief ideas of some leading philosophers of logic and language including Frege, Russell, Strawson, Davidson, Grice and Kripke.

By the end of the module, the students will be able to demonstrate intellectual, transferable and practicable skills appropriate to a Level 5 module and in particular will have become familiar with some of the central concepts in philosophy of logic and language. They will also have learned how to relate some of the issues studied in the course to issues in other courses, such as metaphysics and philosophy of mind.

### Assessment methods and deadlines

- *Formative assessment:*

- *Summative assessment:*

NB Please note that for semester I-only Study Abroad students, assessment requirements may vary. In particular, May exams will be replaced by summative essays to be submitted by the end of term (date TBC)

## 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.

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.

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

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

**7: Identity and Necessity**

**8: The Modal Argument**

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

**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

What is Tarski's view of truth? Is it an adequate explanation of truth?

Can a theory of truth serve as a theory of meaning for a natural language? If not, why not?

Does Frege make a good case for the sense/reference distinction?

Is identity a relation? If identity is not a relation, what is it?