

# Syllabus: LING3410Q Semantics

UConn, Fall 2019

Syllabus is subject to change; up to date as of November 12, 2019

## Course

Mondays and Wednesdays, 5–6:15PM  
Koons 201

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Office hours: Tuesday 1:30–3:00PM and by appointment (Oak Hall 355)

## Organization

This course has a site on Google Classroom, on which homeworks and readings will be posted. To join it, go to [classroom.google.com](https://classroom.google.com) and sign in with your UConn G Suite credentials. At the top right, click **+**, then **Join class**. Enter the code **rqnoa5w**.

## Reading material

All readings will be made available on Google Classroom. Many of these will be taken from:

What is meaning, 3rd edition, by Paul Portner, ISBN: 978-1405109185

We will also read some sections of the draft textbook *Semantics boot camp* by Elizabeth Coppock and Lucas Champollion, available at <http://eecoppock.info/semantics-boot-camp.pdf>.

## Course description

Focuses on the compositional semantics of sentences. Introduces basic set theory and logic. Investigates the empirical linguistic issues of presuppositions, implicatures, predicates, modifiers, tense, aspect, reference, quantifiers, intensionality, and modality.

## Prerequisites

The Science of Linguistics (LING 2010Q), or permission of the instructor.

## Workload and grade calculation

**50% Homework.** There will be a small homework assignment due almost every week. The homeworks will be posted and returned electronically via Google Classroom. Homework assignments will be posted at least 7 days before they are due. How the homework gets graded: with each homework, you'll earn 50 percentage points just by completing the homework. The remaining 50 percentage points depend on how many answers you get correct. The lowest homework grade will be dropped.

**20% Midterm.** In-class and closed-book. The dates for both the midterm and the final are fixed (see below). Please schedule your other obligations around these dates, because **there will be no make-up tests** except if necessitated by religious holidays (see below) or medical reasons.

**20% Final.** See "Midterm" above. Tests the material covered after the midterm.

**10% Participation.** (i) Asking questions is always welcome! (ii) There will be in-class exercises and discussions at every meeting, providing ample opportunity for you to contribute to the lecture.

**Your letter grade** for the class will be assigned on the following scale.

A	95–100%	B	83–86%	C	73–76%	D	63–66%
A–	90–94%	B–	80–82%	C–	70–72%	F	0–62%
B+	87–89%	C+	77–79%	D+	67–69%		

Fractional grades will be truncated down to the nearest integer (e.g. 94.7 is truncated to 94). Percentage points will be converted to letter grades only for the purpose of giving midterm and final grades.

## Policies and other remarks

**Policies.** Attending class is expected of everyone. I will distribute printed handouts at every lecture, and it is a very good idea to take notes on these handouts and/or on other paper. **Any use of cellphones, laptops, or other electronic devices during the lecture is not acceptable, also not for purposes related to the class.**

**Extra credit.** Midterm and final may or may not include some extra credit questions, worth up to an additional 5% of each test grade. Homework assignments may or may not occasionally have extra credit questions. There may or may not be an entire homework towards the end of the course that is more challenging than the others and that counts as extra credit in its entirety. Extra credit is an equal opportunity for everyone in the class to improve their grades, so it will

not be issued to individual students upon request. If you want some grade security, I suggest doing all the homework assignments and not missing class.

**How to contact me.** The best way is by e-mail (see above for my e-mail address), or talk to me right before or right after class. Take advantage of my office hours if you can.

**Personal situations.** If anything arises during the semester that may affect your classroom performance, please come talk to me. If you wait until the end of the semester, I won't be able to help you. I'm more likely to be able to address the situation if you speak to me when it happens. If something catastrophic happens in your life that prevents you from continuing your studies for an extended period of time, you should talk to the Dean of Students Office, located at Wilbur Cross Building, 2nd Floor, Room 203 ((860) 486-3426, dos@uconn.edu).

**Special needs.** If you have a diagnosed disability that requires special accommodations, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). CSD is located at Wilbur Cross Building, Room 224. I am also available to discuss disability-related needs during my office hours.

**Religious observance.** Whenever feasible, I will avoid scheduling exams on religious holidays (please let me know if I have overlooked one). If you anticipate being absent because of any religious observance, you should tell me in advance whenever possible. If you are unable to attend class because of your documented religious beliefs, you will not be penalized for any class, recitation, exam, or assignment deadline missed on that day or days, and you will be given a make-up exam or an assignment deadline extension.

**Academic Honesty Policy.** Cheating will not be tolerated and may cost you your grade and have repercussions in your career (for example, having a cheating record will all but negate your chances of getting into a decent law school). Discussing homework assignments with fellow students is allowed and encouraged, but we expect that the work you turn in is your own and that you understand the answers you are giving. If you use any resource other than the textbook and lecture notes as you prepare your homework assignment, you must provide a scholarly citation for the resource and explain the extent to which you have used it. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of what counts as cheating in this course: (i) copying a homework or exam from another student, with or without the student's knowledge; (ii) plagiarism, that is: reproducing data or ideas from a scholarly source, website, or other resource (other than the textbook and lecture handouts) without attributing authorship where it is due; (iii) including solutions obtained from answer keys or similar sources into one's homework submission. Please read the University policies on Academic Integrity, which are described on <https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/>.

You will fail any homework on which you have cheated, even if you have only cheated on a part of it. You will fail the course and be reported to the University if you cheat repeatedly or if you cheat on a test.

This schedule is subject to change! Always check the Google Classroom site for the most up-to-date schedule.

Dates		Topics	Reading	Homeworks released	due
<b>1 Introduction</b>					
Mo	Aug 26	Organizational issues, introduction			
We	Aug 28	Truth-conditional compositional semantics	Portner 1-2	HW1	
Mo	Sep 2	Labor Day (no class)			
We	Sep 4	Truth-conditional compositional semantics			
<b>2 Inferences</b>					
Mo	Sep 9	Presupposition	C&C 1.1.2	HW2	
We	Sep 11	Implicature	C&C 1.1.1		HW1
<b>3 Basic concepts</b>					
Mo	Sep 16	Set theory	C&C 2.1-2	HW3	
We	Sep 18	Extension and intension			HW2
<b>4 Logic</b>					
Mo	Sep 23	Propositional logic	C&C 4.1	HW4	HW3
We	Sep 25	Propositional logic			
Mo	Sep 30	Predicate logic	C&C 4.2-4.3.1		
<b>5 Modification</b>					
We	Oct 2	Nominal modifiers	Portner 4.1-3	HW5	HW4
Mo	Oct 7	Verbal modifiers and events	Portner 3.5, 4.4		
We	Oct 9	Review for midterm			HW5
Mo	Oct 14	Midterm			
<b>6 Time</b>					
We	Oct 16	Tense	Portner 8.1	HW6	
Mo	Oct 21	Aspect	Portner 8.2		
<b>7 Reference</b>					
We	Oct 23	Definite and indefinite NPs	Portner 5.1-3	HW7	HW6
Mo	Oct 28	Plurals, pronouns	Portner 5.5, 5.7		
<b>8 Quantifiers</b>					
We	Oct 30	Generalized quantifiers	Portner, Ch. 6.1-2	HW8	HW7
Mo	Nov 4	Quantifiers in object position	Portner 6.4		
We	Nov 6	NPIs	Portner 6.3		
<b>9 Intensionality</b>					
Mo	Nov 11	Intensional constructions	Portner 7	HW9	HW8
We	Nov 13	Modality	Portner 8.3		
Mo	Nov 18	Attitude predicates	Portner 9.1-2		
We	Nov 20	Review		HW10 (bonus)	HW9
Mo	Nov 25	Thanksgiving Break (no class)			
We	Nov 27				
Mo	Dec 2	Review of practice exam			HW10
We	Dec 4	Final exam			