

**City University of Hong Kong**  
**Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation**  
**with effect from Semester B 2018/19**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Semantics

**Course Code:** LT3211

**Course Duration:** One Semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** B3

Arts and Humanities

**Proposed Area:**  Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations  
(for GE courses only)  Science and Technology

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:** LT2201 Introduction to Linguistics or LT2229 Linguistics I or  
(Course Code and Title) LT2290 Introduction to Language Studies

**Precursors:** Nil  
(Course Code and Title)

**Equivalent Courses:** CTL3211 Semantics  
(Course Code and Title)

**Exclusive Courses:** Nil  
(Course Code and Title)

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

The aim of this course is to examine aspects of linguistic meaning and language use.

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- Recognize the relation between linguistic expressions and objects in the world;
- Describe and analyze sense properties and sense relations; and
- Analyze language data from the semantic aspect and discover and formulate generalizations that are observationally, descriptively and explanatorily adequate.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick ✓ where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Construe reference in accordance with a theory of meaning.		✓	✓	
2.	Identify word meaning and how smaller units are combined to give sentence meaning.		✓	✓	
3.	Find out sentence relations and truth values of sentences.		✓	✓	
4.	Represent meaning of sentences in terms of predicates and arguments.		✓	✓	
5.	Identify tense and time reference.		✓	✓	
6.	Analyze and classify different situation types and aspect and discover and formulate hypotheses that are observationally, descriptively and explanatorily adequate.			✓	✓
7.	Describe different types of modal meaning.			✓	✓
8.	Capture different participants of sentences and relevant grammatical relations.		✓	✓	
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

<sup>#</sup> Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.								Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	<b>Lectures</b> – Theoretical foundations and concepts related to the above learning outcomes are presented in lectures. Emphasis is put on how these theories can be applied to language data, particularly English, and examples are used to make abstract concepts easier to be absorbed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2 hours
2	<b>Tutorials</b> – Practice in data analysis is provided to familiarize students with theoretical concepts acquired in lectures.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1 hour
3	<b>Assignments</b> – Students are required to complete three assignments based on what they have learnt in lectures and tutorials. Emphasis is placed on both theoretical aspects and how theoretical concepts can be applied to analyze English data.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.								Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Continuous Assessment: 65%										
<b>Participation</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5%	
<b>Assignments</b> Three assignments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	40%	
<b>Midterm Quiz</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	20%	
<b>Examination: 35%</b> (duration: 2 hours) An examination will be given to evaluate how well students have achieved the CILOs. Format and style of the questions will be similar to those of the assignments and tutorial exercises. (CILO No. 1-8)										

\* The weightings should add up to 100%.

100%
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## 5. Assessment Rubrics

*(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)*

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Participation	In-class tutorial exercises will be given to enhance students' understanding of the class materials.	Demonstrates high level of initiative in discussion	Demonstrates initiative in discussion	Demonstrates control in discussion.	Demonstrates control in discussion;	Few signs of preparation and participation;
2. Assignments	Students are required to complete three assignments during the semester.	Properly documented assignments; Precise, clear writing	Properly documented assignments; Precise, clear writing	Properly documented assignments; Precise, clear writing, with few grammatical errors.	Properly documented assignments; Work is adequately written, with some grammatical errors.	Plagiarism; Irrelevance of content; Unreadability (including major grammatical or structural problems)
3. Tests	A midterm quiz and a final exam will be given to evaluate how well students have achieved the CILOs. Format and style of the questions will be similar to those of the assignments and tutorial exercises.	Excellent understanding of concepts, terminology and findings in Semantics	Clear understanding of concepts, terminology and findings in semantics	Good understanding of concepts, terminology and findings in semantics.	Satisfactory understanding of concepts, terminology and findings in semantics.	Failure to demonstrate understanding of content; Academic Dishonesty

### Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

*(An indication of the key topics of the course.)*

Basic concepts in semantics, reference, sense, logic, predicates and arguments, word meaning, English tense and aspect, situation types, modality, thematic roles.

#### 2. Reading List

##### 2.1 Compulsory Readings

*(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)*

1	Kearns, Kate. (2011) <u>Semantics</u> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
2	Lecture notes and tutorial exercises.

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

*(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)*

1	Cann, Ronnie. (1993) <u>Formal Semantics</u> . Cambridge: CUP.
2	Cann, Ronnie, Ruth Kempson and Eleni Gregoromichelaki. (2009) <u>Semantics: an introduction to meaning in language</u> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3	Chierchia, Chierchia and Sally McConnell-Ginet. (2000) <u>Meaning and Grammar</u> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. London: MIT Press.
4	Heim, Irene and Angelika Kratzer. (1998) <u>Semantics in Generative Grammar</u> . Oxford: Blackwell.
5	Hurford, James R., Brendan Heasley and Michael B. Smith. (2007) <u>Semantics: A coursebook</u> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Cambridge UP.
6	Kempson, Ruth M. (1977) <u>Semantic Theory</u> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7	Portner, Paul H. (2005) <u>What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics</u> . Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
8	Saeed, John I. (2003) <u>Semantics</u> . Oxford: Blackwell.
9	de Swart, Henriëtte. (1998) <u>Introduction to Natural Language Semantics</u> . Stanford: CSLI Publications.