

COGSCIL 725/2726:
The cognitive science of language lecture series
Fall 2015 & Winter 2016 Syllabus

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COURSE WEBSITE: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

COURSE CONTENT:

The course is comprised of a series of one-hour lectures by established researchers in areas encompassed by the Cognitive Science of Language program. Talks are accompanied by a discussion with the instructor scheduled in the weeks in which there is no talk scheduled.

The idea is to make you better prepared for the talks and by doing so, make you better in reading scientific papers, discussing other scholar's ideas and figuring out how they might inform and inspire your own research. Each topic will have a designated discussion leader: a student responsible for the discussion in class. We will also use the time to explore some other academic skills such as writing conference abstracts, and reviews. Note that even though there is a designated leader everyone is expected to read the assigned readings and participate in the discussion.

The current schedule can be found here:

<http://linguistics.humanities.mcmaster.ca/about-us/lecture-series/>

NOTE ON THE MEETING SCHEDULE:

In general, the class meets on Thursdays on those weeks when there is no talk scheduled. If there is a talk, the class attends the talk on Wednesday and there is no class meeting on Thursday. Since this is a 3-credit class, we won't meet every week. In general, we will meet the week before a talk is scheduled. If there are two consecutive talks, then we will meet for two weeks before the talks. See the schedule below for the exact dates. This being said, if the students would like to hold an additional class to address general graduate issues, such as abstract writing or paper writing, this can be agreed upon during the academic year.

Note also that the first meeting (September 17) will have no reading assigned. Instead, we will use the time to talk about students' research interests and outline the schedule for the academic year.

METHOD:

The course is a combination of lectures and discussions of assigned readings. The discussion in the class will be accompanied by online discussion forums. The assigned readings will be distributed via avenue, typically two weeks before the class meets.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

This is a pass/fail course.

In order to pass the course students are required to:

MSC + PHD STUDENTS:

- attend the lectures
- read provided background readings prior the talk
- attend the class meetings between the lectures and actively participate in the discussion
- the class may involve some online discussion component as well: if it turns out to be the case, the students are expected to participate in the online discussion as well

PHD STUDENTS ONLY:

- deliver a presentation on their own research at the departmental Research day in the spring 2016 (the exact date to be announced)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION:

It is the policy of the Faculty of Humanities that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors, and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/policy/Academ>
The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.

2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

Meeting	Date	Topic
Meeting 1	Sept. 17	basic info & presentation of research interests
Meeting 2	Oct. 8	prep for Stockall
Meeting 3	Oct. 15	prep for Pylkkanen
Meeting 4	Oct. 21	Stockall's talk
Meeting 5	Oct. 28	Pylkkanen's talk
Meeting 6	Nov. 19	prep for Mohanan
Meeting 6	Nov. 25	Mohanan's talk
Meeting 7	Jan. 7	prep for Grant
Meeting 8	Jan. 14	prep for Libben
Meeting 9	Jan. 20	Grant's talk
Meeting 10	Jan. 27	Libben's talk
Meeting 11	tbd	prep for Thomas' talk
Meeting 12	tbd	Thomas' talk
Meeting 13	March 17	prep for Steinhauer
Meeting 14	March 24	prep for Poeppel
Meeting 15	March 30	Steinhauer's talk
Meeting 16	April 6	Poeppel's talk