

Queens College – City University of New York  
*Department of Linguistics and Communication Disorders*  
LCD 306: Semantics and Pragmatics

*This syllabus and schedule is subject to change*

## 1 Course Information

**Course Title:** Semantics and Pragmatics  
**Course Number:** LCD 306  
**Credit Hours:** 3.0  
**Course Website:** Blackboard  
**Meeting Day/Time:** Tuesdays & Thursdays 15:10-16:25  
**Location:** Queens Hall 335G  
**Prerequisite:** LCD 220

## 2 Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Christen N. Serrano Madsen II, M.A.  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
**Mailbox Location:** Queens Hall 300A  
**e-mail:** CSerranoMadsen@gmail.com -or- cmadsen@gradcenter.cuny.edu

## 3 Course Description

This class will cover “meaning” in language by looking at meaning in words, and utterances and discussing ways to investigate this in a rigorous and scientific way. We will explore experimental design, analysis, and presentation of experimental results in the context of investigating semantic and pragmatic phenomena.

### 3.1 From the Bulletin

A survey of properties of meaning in language (semantics) and communication strategies people use when they talk to each other (pragmatics). There is a substantial writing commitment in this course.

## 4 Materials

Gregory, Howard (2000). *Semantics*. London: Routledge. [required]

Stilwell Peccei, Jean (1999). *Pragmatics*. Milton Park, UK: Routledge. [required]

## 5 Evaluation

### Grade Distribution:

Group Experiments	30%
Assignments	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%

### Letter Grade Distribution:

		87–89.99	B+	77–79.9	C+	67–69.9	D+
≥94.00	A	84–86.9	B	74–76.9	C	60–66.9	D
90–93.9	A-	80–83.9	B-	70–73.9	C-	≤59.99	F

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit will be given at the discretion of the instructor. Owing to the large amount of extra credit available, this class will not be curved, and grades will not be inflated. The grade you earn is the grade you will be assigned. To ensure the highest grade possible, I strongly recommend you always do the extra credit.

The grade of INCOMPLETE will only be given in a situation of severe accident or illness with the appropriate medical documentation and with the approval of the program director. Do not plan on getting an incomplete if you are too busy or unable to complete all the assignments.

You can help yourself get a good grade in this class by (i) studying the assigned readings carefully and re-reading as needed; (ii) attending lectures regularly; (iii) working carefully through the assigned homework and turning it in on-time; (iv) asking questions when you are unsure; (v) coming to office hours; and (vi) doing extra credit.

**CUNY Grading Policy:** Students, if they wish, may repeat one time only courses in which they have earned F grades. The F grade will stand, and the new grade will be averaged in the cumulative index, but the course will be credited only once. Undergraduate students may remove up to 16 credits worth of F penalty grades from any CUNY institution from their Grade Point Average by repeating the course in which the penalty grade was received and earning a grade of C or better as long as the original penalty grade was earned in the Fall 1984 or thereafter and the course was repeated in the Fall 1990 or thereafter. The original F penalty grade remains on the transcript. Students should consult with the Office of Academic Standards and Evaluation regarding University guidelines affecting the repetition of courses in which a penalty grade has been received. If students repeat courses in which they have received grades other than F, WU, WF, or FIN grades, the repeated courses will neither be credited nor counted either in the students' semester or cumulative indices.

## 6 Expectations

**Reading:** Please do the readings from the sections to be covered before coming to class each day. Your instructor will be planning class activities assuming you have done the reading. You are responsible for all the assigned readings though they may not be discussed in class lecture.

**Hours:** For every credit hour, you are expected to spend up to 3 hours outside of class. You should be using this time for homework, reading, drilling, and studying. The only way to understand linguistics is to drill and spend a lot of time working on the problem sets. You cannot cram.

**Attention in Class:** You are responsible for everything said in class. I will not always post things on Blackboard or send a follow-up email. If I mention something in class, you need to do it. Oral instructions/directions are the same as written ones.

**Lecture:** You should come prepared for the lectures by reading the assigned text in advance, actively working in groups/pairs when assigned, and bringing a personal copy of your homework to class. You should be taking notes and not waiting to print out the slides.

**Office Hours:** Office hours are a great time to get individual help and clarification. You can best use this time by coming prepared with specific problems.

**Group Project:** You will be given one group project, We will work on these group presentations throughout the

semester. I will be giving out details later in the semester. You will also be given one term paper which we will work on throughout the course.

**Syllabus:** It is the responsibility of the student to know and follow all written guidelines given by the instructor in this syllabus.

## 7 Language

For assignments and projects grammar, spelling, and prescriptive conventions are not evaluated. For assignments you do not need to edit, revise a number of times, or attend in any special way to form or language; however, for projects you would edit and revise, but the language you use is up to you. The focus of assignments is critical thinking and learning, and no weight will be placed on pedantic prescriptive rules.

You are strongly encouraged to use any language you feel most comfortable in when giving presentations, participating in class, and doing assignments. This can be the language you first learned or a language you would like to improve. I highly suggest you avail yourself of this opportunity as there is frequently no place for any variety of language other than an esoteric and abstruse "Standard English" in the Academy. Multilingualism is not only a reality of this city, but also will be a great benefit to you in your future careers. For exams, you are asked to restrict the language used to one the instructor is proficient in (i.e. English, French, Spanish, German, Arabic; Other Romance or Germanic languages may be acceptable).

## 8 Attendance and Participation

### 8.1 Participation and Behavior

All students are expected to fully participate in class activities and discussions through: (a) comments and (b) asking and answering questions and answer questions when asked. Please be considerate of your fellow students and try not to monopolize the classroom. If you feel like you are always talking in class, you probably are. Take a breath and try to let someone else answer/comment. A good learning environment is also one in which everyone feels welcome and comfortable; so, please be respectful of the diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles of the students in our class. Additionally, please be respectful of the instructor and your fellow students when in class by refraining from distracting and disruptive behavior.

### 8.2 Attendance Policy

From the Faculty Handbook: *Note that only the student can take the steps to drop a course officially. You cannot have a student who stops attending your course dropped. You should make this clear to your students at the beginning of the semester. If a student believes he/she cannot complete the course for some reason, the burden is on him/her to file the necessary form. When a student withdraws officially from the course, the grade W or WF will appear on the final grade sheet. If you do not see that grade, you cannot add it yourself; you must choose either F or WU as described below*

This class is on the smaller side, therefore it is imperative that you show up *on time*. I will begin the lectures promptly at 15h10. There are 28 class sessions and you are expected to attend all of them, except in the case of excused medical absence. While attendance at every class is expected, you are allowed to miss up to two (2) class sessions without supplying the necessary documentation. Use these absences wisely since missing the equivalent of one week of lecture can put you significantly behind.

If you are late, or do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and get up to speed. You should not email the instructor asking what you missed. Instead email a fellow student and ask if they might share their lecture notes. You should also come into office hours to clarify anything you missed.

## 9 Experiments and Assignments

Details of the experiments will be announced in class and posted the course website. There will be two projects, first a group experiment and a individual experiment that you will design, run, write-up as a poster, and orally present.

Details of the assignments will be announced in class and posted the course website 30 hours after class (Saturday evening). All assignments will be collected in class on the exam days.

You will have small assignments after every lecture. The assigned exercises should be worked after each lecture period, and before the next class meeting. This is extremely important as we will be going over the assigned exercises in class.

Homework will not be graded for correct answers. We will go over the homework and solve as a class every exercise the day that it is due.

### 9.1 Partial Credit

You are encouraged to always submit the projects and assignments, regardless of whether you were able to complete the project/assignments or not. Even if you do not complete the project/assignment, partial credit is given for attempted projects/assignments so you are encouraged to send in partial work.

### 9.2 Late Policy

No late projects or assignments will be accepted without previous notice (a minimum of 24 hours) and a legitimate documented excuse. Requests for extensions after the deadline will not be considered. If an extension is given, then a lateness penalty will be applied to the final grade. This penalty should be discussed prior to submitting the project or assignment packets.

### 9.3 Format

Projects will be written up as a poster using either PowerPoint or  $\text{\LaTeX}$ . Details will be discussed in class. Projects must also include your name, class, date, and assignment. You should use an appropriate font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial) and characters must be correctly formatted. No handwriting on the projects is allowed. Semantics assignments will often require special symbols and these must be typed. You are encourage to use  $\text{\LaTeX}$  to properly typeset your homework projects. This will be discussed at length in class.

All written assignments must be typed using 12 pt Times New Roman or 11 pt Arial font with 1 margins (please see me if there is a problem with computer access). Please review all work to make sure that it is readable. All assignments must be send in one of the following formats: .doc, .docx, .txt, .tex, .pdf, .rtf, .odt, .dot. Remember to cite all sources and use APA guidelines (you are responsible for being familiar with APA guidelines; review the link on the course website).

Homework must also include your name, class, date, and assignment. You should use an appropriate font (e.g. Times New Roman) and characters must be correctly formatted. No handwriting on the assignments is allowed. Semantics assignments will often require special fonts and these must be typed. For homework that is turned in in class, written assignments must be on 8.5x11 paper (no scratch paper) and if there are more than 1 page, they must be stapled. Homework that is not typed, not stapled, and/or difficult to read will not be accepted

## 10 Exams and Quizzes

On days where exams are going to be administered, you must show up on-time. No hats are to be worn (religious head covering are exempted) and using cellphones and electronic devices to access the internet is not permitted. You are able to use electronic devises to listen to music at a reasonable level. A good rule of thumb is "subway rules" in that the people next to you should not have be subjected to your music taste. No makeup exams will be given without a verifiable excuse and at the discretion of the instructor.

There will be two exams. The exams will be administered in class. The exams will last one and a quarter hours. The exams will be cumulative and cover the lectures, assigned readings and anything additional as indicated by the instructor.

## 11 Technology Policy

### 11.1 Computer Programs

We will make use of special software for quantitative investigation of linguistic phenomena. The software will all be freeware and you are expected to download and install this on your personal computers (if this presents a problem, please see me). You are encouraged to use  $\LaTeX$  and will need to install and use R.

### 11.2 Cellphones

Generally speaking cellphones and electronic devices are not permitted. You may use your cellphone to check things on the internet or for other classroom related purposes, but do not be surprised if you are asked what you are doing. You may not use your cellphone to make/receive calls, send/read emails, send/receive text messages. Your phone must be on silent. If you need to have your phone on for exceptional reasons, you must email the instructor first or talk to the instructor prior to class, in addition to sitting by the door so you may slip out unnoticed.

### 11.3 Laptops, Tablets, and Computers

No laptops may be used in class for anything other than note taking. If I feel that you are using a laptop for anything other than taking notes, you will be asked to discontinue its use for the remainder of the semester.

It is expected that you will have access to a computer. If you do not have a computer at home, you can use the ones in the Queens College library, or NYPL. I highly recommend that you download and install  $\LaTeX$  or get an account on one of the online services that will allow you to use  $\LaTeX$  on any computer in order to complete the homework.

### 11.4 Course Website

The course website (<http://cmadsen.common.gc.cuny.edu/teaching/lcd306/>) will be used to share course documents and resources with students. You are responsible for checking the course website regularly.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are able to access the course website and your email. Not having access to the internet/a computer is not an acceptable excuse for not knowing about an assignment or not completing an assignment. If you are unfamiliar with the system, please take some time to familiarize yourself with it as soon as possible.

Please remember that electronics and the internet are not perfect. Do not wait until the last minute to do something only to find out there is a problem.

### 11.5 Email Policy

This is a professional communication. You should follow the same practices and etiquette that is appropriate for a business environment.

It is expected that all students will have access to, and regularly check, email. The best/only way to get in contact with me is through email [*i.e. do not call me or text me*]. Please only use the email provided above. I will respond to all emails within 3 business days. If I do not respond within 3 business days, please forward me the email as it may have been sent to my spam box.

## 11.6 Email Format

Your email should include the course number in the subject line with one or two words describing what the email is about (e.g. Re: LCD 306 homework question). The subject line should be: appropriate, descriptive, concise, include the course number. Remember to include your full name in the valediction and include a professional, formal and courteous salutation. The body of the email should also be concise, use an appropriate register (this is not a text message or Facebook), and avoid SMS language (e.g. lol, K, U) and emoticons. If there is an attachment, make sure you reference the attachment in the email (e.g. "...you will find XXX attached...") and have a clear and appropriate filename (e.g. LCD306-HW1-Madsen.pdf).

I will not respond to emails lacking this information. If you submit something that doesn't follow these guidelines, you will be referred to the syllabus.

## 12 Collaboration

It is expected (even encouraged) that students will collaborate with each other on assignments, but is unacceptable on the exams. If you collaborate, then you must write both students' names on the paper and individually submit the assignment. Remember that collaboration means you are working on solving the assignment together and not writing the answer together. You may work together, but then individually write up your answers in turn individually and uniquely justifying your answers. You will be turning in two distinct and unique assignments, not the same homework with different names on the top. If identical or near identical assignments are turned in, then it will be considered a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy and both assignments will receive zero points.

## 13 Academic Integrity

Integrity is a core component of academic inquiry. Academic integrity involves acknowledging whose mind is responsible for what knowledge. Students are expected to be familiar with, and adhere to, University policies on Academic Dishonesty.

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course, is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades and expulsion. According to the University, *cheating* is the unauthorized use or attempted use of materials, information, notes, study aides or communication during an academic exercise. *Plagiarism* is the act of presenting another persons ideas, research or writings as your own.

If you violate this policy then you will automatically be given a failing grade for that assignment and the incident will be reported to the department and University. If a student is found being dishonest a second time, then the student will be failed for the course. The instructor reserves the right to fail a student on the first violation and to recommend the student to the University for Disciplinary Action, up to and including expulsion.

## 14 Accommodations

Queens College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to register with the Office of Special Services for Students with Disabilities. Please also approach the instructor during the first week of class if there are any accommodations needed to carry out written assignments, class in general or when taking examinations. For more information, please contact the Office of Special Services for Students with Disabilities, Frese Hall Room 111, phone number: 718-997-5870, email: QC\_SPSV@qc.cuny.edu.

## 15 The Content Tutoring Center

The Academic Support Center offers a variety of services for enrolled students through its Content Tutoring Center, College English as a Second Language (CESL) program, Writing Center, and Testing Center, which are

conveniently located in Kiely Hall, as is the Math Lab, which is coordinated by the Mathematics Department. Content Tutoring services (individual and group tutoring) is available to help students in courses ranging from Accounting to Psychology. In addition, students can get help with specific science courses at the Science Tutoring Center located in Remsen Hall 214. Please avail yourself of these resources if you need help in any aspect of the course.

## 16 Schedule

### Course Outline:

### Important Dates:

First Lecture .....	29 Jan
Add/Drop Deadline without WD .....	3 Feb
Lincoln's Birthday .....	12 Feb
President's Birthday .....	16 Feb
Add/Drop Deadline without W .....	17 Feb
CUNY Monday .....	18 Feb
First Exam .....	24 Feb
Group Work (Jil Jadid Travel) .....	26 Feb
Group Presentations of Experiment 1 .....	17 Mar & 19 Mar
Second Exam .....	31 Mar
Withdrawl Deadline .....	2 Apr
Spring Recess .....	3-11 Apr
Third Exam .....	12 May
Last Lecture .....	14 May
Group Presentations of Experiment 2 .....	14 May & 19 May
Grades Due .....	29 May