The philosophy of language has seen a great deal of progress during the last century. The contributions of this branch of philosophy to the whole discipline have been numerous and substantial. In fact, it isn’t possible to study contemporary philosophy in any depth without some basic knowledge of philosophy of language. During this course we will study some of the main issues in this area of philosophy. For example, we will study notions like meaning, truth, reference, necessity, possibility, as well as some paradoxes and their solutions. We will do so, primarily, by studying some classics of philosophy language. Students should be aware that a good number of the readings are hard. However, one of the objectives of this course is to develop the skills required to approach those readings.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. All the readings will be posted on Sakai. But, if you want to buy a book, most of the readings are here:

*Martinich, The Philosophy of Language, 5th edn., New York: Oxford University Press*

Grading

First exam (short and take home) 20%
Second exam (short and take home) 30%
Paper (8-10 pp) 40%
Attendance 10%

Policy of Absences:

Students are required to attend all classes. If you have to miss one or two classes, please use this absence reporting website: [https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/)

If you cannot submit one of the papers on time and you want to do it later, you will need a Dean’s Note to excuse your absence. This is just the official University policy. Also, if you miss more than two classes and you want an excuse, you need a Dean’s note.
Academic Integrity:

We will strictly adhere to the University Policy on Academic Integrity:

http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Any violations of this policy will be reported immediately to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. Violations will, at the very least, result in an F on the assignment in questions, but they can result in much more severe penalties.

Here is a tentative list of topics and readings (I may change a few readings depending on how students react to the contents of the course):

Frege

Begriffsschrift (Extracts)

On Sense and Nominatum

On Concept and Object

The Thought: A Logical Inquiry

Russell and Descriptions

On Denoting (Russell)

On Referring (Strawson)

Mr. Strawson on Referring (Russell)

Reference and Definite Descriptions (Donnellan)

Naming and Necessity

Naming and Necessity (Kripke)

The Causal Theory of Names (Evans)

Externalism about Meaning

Meaning and Reference (Putnam)
Belief Attributions

Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes (Quine)

Puzzle about Belief (Kripke)

Indeterminacy and Translation

Speaking of Objects (Quine)

Meaning and Translation (Quine)

Two Dogmas of Empiricism (Quine)

On Rules and Private Language (Kripke)

Pragmatics

Logic and Conversation (Grice)

Language and Languages (Lewis)

Convention (Lewis)

Assertion (Stalnaker)