

**Introduction to Philosophy of Language**  
Philosophy 3600, Fall 2012

***General information***

Instructor: Ben Caplan  
Time: W F 12:45 PM – 2:05 PM  
Location: 353 Journalism Building  
Office: 372 University Hall  
Office hours: W F 2:30 PM – 3:15 PM or by appointment  
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***Description***

We'll look at names and definite descriptions as they occur in several linguistic constructions, including identity sentences, belief ascriptions, and modal sentences. And we'll see what rival semantic theories have to say about these phenomena. We'll start by reading classic papers by Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell, and we'll read Saul Kripke's masterpiece, *Naming and Necessity*.

***Course requirements***

Short assignment 1	30%
Short assignment 2	30%
Final paper	40%
Beginning-of-the-semester survey	0%
End-of-the-semester survey	0%
Quiz	0%

Each short assignment will be either a problem set or a short paper (3-5 pages). The final paper should be about 5-10 pages.

There will be surveys at the beginning and end of the semester. (The beginning-of-the-semester survey needs to be completed by the beginning of class on Wednesday, 29 August 2012. The end-of-the-semester survey needs to be completed after the end of class on Friday, 30 November 2012 and before 12:45 PM on Friday, 7 December 2012.) They will be ungraded and anonymous, but you still need to take them to pass the course. You will also be required to get a perfect score on a quiz. You may take it as many times as you like during the semester, provided that you get a perfect score at least once by the end of the semester.

The surveys and the quiz are on Carmen.

### ***Readings***

Readings are available on Carmen, with the exception of Saul Kripke's *Naming and Necessity*, which is available in the bookstore.

### ***Schedule***

A detailed schedule will be updated on Carmen. There will be no class on 21 and 23 November 2012 (Thanksgiving and, technically, the observance of Columbus Day). In addition, I will be out of town 14 and 16 November 2012. Details about what will happen on those days will be provided later.

### ***Disabilities***

Students who might need accommodations are encouraged to contact me and the Office for Disability Services (<http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>).

### ***Academic misconduct***

Academic misconduct is a serious offense. You are responsible for knowing what counts as academic misconduct. In accordance with Faculty Rule 3335-5-487, all suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the university's Committee on Academic Misconduct. For further details, see the Code of Student Conduct at [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

### ***Tentative outline***

As we all get used to the semester system, adjustments might need to be made.

#### **1. Frege and Russell**

Gottlob Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung," *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik* 100 (1892): 25-50; trans. as "Sense and Reference" by Max Black in *Philosophical Review* 57.3 (May 1948): 209-230.

Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting," *Mind* 14.56 (Oct. 1905): 479-493.

#### **2. Definite Descriptions**

Keith S. Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions," *Philosophical Review* 75.3 (July 1966): 281-304.

Saul A. Kripke, "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 2 (1977): 255-276.

Adam Sennet, "An Ambiguity Test for Definite Descriptions," *Philosophical Studies* 111.1 (Oct. 2002): 89-95.

### 3. Names

Ruth Barcan Marcus, "Modalities and Intensional Languages," *Synthese* 13.4 (Dec. 1961): 303-322.

Keith S. Donnellan, "Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions," *Synthese* 21.3-4 (1970): 335-358.

Saul A. Kripke, "Naming and Necessity," in *Semantics of Natural Language*, ed. Donald Davidson and Gilbert Harman, Synthese Library 40 (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1972), 253-355, 763-769; reprinted as *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).

Alvin Plantinga, "The Boethian Compromise," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 15.2 (April 1978): 129-138.

Scott Soames, "The Modal Argument: Wide Scope and Rigidified Descriptions," *Noûs* 32.1 (March 1998): 1-22.

### 4. Belief Ascriptions

Paul Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Syntax and Semantics* 3 (1975): 41-58; reprinted in Paul Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 22-40.

Tom McKay, "On Proper Names in Belief Ascriptions," *Philosophical Studies* 39.3 (April 1981): 287-303.

Scott Soames, *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 204-240.

David Braun, "Cognitive Significance, Attitude Ascriptions, and Ways of Believing Propositions," *Philosophical Studies* 108.1-2 (March 2002): 65-81.

### 5. Experimental Philosophy

Edouard Machery, Ron Mallon, Shaun Nichols, and Stephen P. Stich, "Semantics, Cross-Cultural Style," *Cognition* 92.3 (July 2004): B1-B12.

Max Deutsch, "Experimental Philosophy and the Theory of Reference," *Mind and Language* 24.4 (Sept. 2009): 445-466.

Genoveva Martí, "Against Semantic Multi-Culturalism," *Analysis* 69.1 (Jan. 2009): 42-48.

Edouard Machery, Christopher Y. Olivola, and Molly De Blanc, "Linguistic and Metalinguistic Intuitions in the Philosophy of Language," *Analysis* 69.4 (Oct. 2009): 689-694.