

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- www.unine.ch/lettres

Seminar 1: Linguistics : Pragmatics (2AN1131)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier B A - langue et littérature anglaises	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	6
Pilier principal M A - sciences du langage et de la communication	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	6
Pilier secondaire M A - sciences du langage et de la communication	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	6

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Automne

Equipe enseignante

Dr. Samuel Bourgeois

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Course Description:

This course provides students with an introduction to the major areas of study in Pragmatics. Pragmatics is the systematic study of how people understand and communicate beyond the literal meaning of words and sentences used in communication. Therefore, Pragmatics is interested in the context of communication and how this works in different types of social interactions.

For example, Pragmatics allows us to answer the following questions:

- How is it that sentences like "It's dark in here" sometimes convey variable meanings, such as "Turn on the lights"?
- Why is it offensive to use swear words in some situations, while in other cases it is a sign of comradery?
- Why is impoliteness often used to generate humor in novels, television, and film?

In this seminar, we will address these and many other questions. Students will be introduced to a selection of theoretical approaches to the study of pragmatics that will be complemented with hands-on activities involving the analysis of a variety of linguistic data. At the end of the semester, students will be expected to apply this newly acquired knowledge to their own small-scale empirical research projects using real linguistic data of their own choosing.

In the event of a sanitary crisis the teaching will switch to distance learning with seminars held via WebEx.

Forme de l'évaluation

The grade for this course is centered around an empirical research project that students will conduct over the course of the semester. Students are expected to conduct a small-scale empirical study on a topic related to pragmatics of their own choosing. Students will develop their research topic and communicate it to the instructor by the seventh session of the seminar. Students must sign up (independently or as part of a group) for a presentation slot by the start this same session as well. The oral presentations will occur during the final sessions of the seminar. Precise details concerning this procedure will be given during the first session of the seminar.

The oral presentation accounts for (30%) of the final grade. The remaining 70% of the final grade comes from an individual term paper on this same project. The due date for the term paper is 19 January 2026. The required length is 3,000 words ($\pm 10\%$) for BA students and 5,000 words ($\pm 10\%$) for MA students. More details concerning the requirements for each assignment will be communicated during the first and seventh sessions of the seminar.

In the event of a sanitary crisis, the modalities for assessment remain the same, with one exception: the oral presentations will be given via WebEx instead of in person in the classroom.

Extensions and late submissions:

Extensions of the submission deadline may sometimes be granted when there are mitigating circumstances. Should a student need to request an extension, the instructor must be contacted prior to the submission deadline. Extensions will generally not be granted after the deadline has passed unless under exceptional circumstances.

Modalités de rattrapage

URLs	1) https://moodle.unine.ch/
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In the event that an average of 4.0 is not reached after the completion of the two assignments, students will be required to conduct a rewrite of their term paper following the instructions provided by the instructor. The grade of this second attempt will constitute 100% of the second attempt grade. The due date for the retake assignment will be the 27 February 2026.

In the event of a sanitary crisis, the modalities for assessment remain the same.

Documentation

All necessary readings will be distributed electronically via Moodle

Pré-requis

Students must have taken an introductory linguistics class. As this course is given in English, a minimum of a B2 level is required.

Forme de l'enseignement

This seminar will require active student participation during discussions and student presentations.

Objectifs d'apprentissage

Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Discuss different linguistic theories of pragmatics research
- Summarize the most important information from published research articles
- Carry out independent research
- Evaluate competing approaches to pragmatics
- Differentiate opposing theoretical frameworks within this field of study
- Interpret empirical data
- Present research findings
- Categorise empirical data
- Test hypotheses

Compétences transférables

- Work in professional English
- Observe real-life circumstances from a scientific viewpoint
- Generate new ideas
- Manage independent and group assignments
- Apply knowledge to new situations
- Communicate effectively and clearly
- Organise oneself to set priorities and meet deadlines