

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

Meaning and cognition (2LN2318)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Master en sciences cognitives	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 Printemps

Equipe enseignante

Louis de Saussure

Contenu

This MA seminar focuses on how humans process linguistic (and otherwise communicative) stimuli so as to achieve a meaningful communication; as such this class is about the cognition of communicative inputs.

The main approaches of how intentional meanings are reconstructed will be discussed, from formal semantic approaches to cognitive pragmatics, with interdisciplinary connections with philosophy of mind, psycholinguistics, and the neighbouring domains of the sciences of language.

The seminar will dedicate a particular attention to a few specific themes, which will be chosen together with the students during the first sessions; typical themes are those which lie at the core of the interface between semantics and pragmatics such as connectives, tense and aspect, modality and evidentiality, presupposition and implicature, figurative meaning, expressivity and emotion, literary language, epistemic / persuasive effects, etc.

Forme de l'évaluation

The course is assessed on the basis of in-class presentation(s) (30 minutes) of a paper and adequate class participation. The presentation(s) needs to effectively communicate, and critically discuss, the main ideas of the paper in order to discuss its empirical validity and theoretical contribution. Papers will be assigned by the professor in agreement with the students. Adequate class participation is assessed by reading the assigned papers and prepare questions about them for the presenter. Students who fail three times to prepare a question or comment without excuse will be failed.

AI is permitted in the preparation of the presentation.

Finally, students who would like to pursue a research project in a related domain for their mémoire are encouraged to contact the instructor individually.

Modalités de rattrapage

Written essay with short oral defense (20 minutes). Help with an AI is permitted only to improve the quality of language and must be so mentioned. The oral defense enables the instructor(s) to check that the concepts and the arguments are mastered.

Documentation

All documents are on the Moodle page of the class.

Pré-requis

None

Forme de l'enseignement

The seminar is offered in the form of on-site lectures, in which students are expected to actively participate through in-group discussions, formative assignments, and student presentations. All course materials, including lecture slides, readings, and assignments, will be shared through Moodle. The aim is to create an inclusive and stimulating learning environment, a community of learners. Finally, it also our intention to host guest lecturers who will lecture on specific topics related to meaning and cognition.

Objectifs d'apprentissage

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

- Present a scientific paper in a pedagogical way
- Evaluate the methods and contributions of scientific papers
- Criticise the methods and theoretical assumptions of papers
- Analyse facts of language and communication
- Synthesise approaches to semantic and pragmatic meaning
- Compare scientific perspectives
- Discuss issues in natural language and communicative behaviour
- Interpret experimental results and theoretical conclusions

Compétences transférables

- Explain the science behind language and communication
- Discuss practical facts of communication
- Analyse communicative aspects
- Communicate
- Synthesise problems in communication