

## Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2019  
*Previous Value* Summer 2017

## Course Change Information

### What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

We propose that the course be variable credits, with options of 1-3 credits.

### What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

We would like students to have flexibility in taking this course for 1-3 credits given their variable time constraints. More specifically, this applies to (1) graduate students who have heavy class loads and are unable to complete a 3-credit course and to (2) graduate students who are limited in the number of credits permitted and so restricting their ability to enroll in a 3-credit course.

### What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

None

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? Yes

Please identify the pending request and explain its relationship to the proposed changes(s) for this course (e.g. cross listed courses, new or revised program)

This course is cross-listed with Philosophy 5610 and so Philosophy is simultaneously completing the same request.

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Linguistics
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	Linguistics - D0566
College/Academic Group	Arts and Sciences
Level/Career	Graduate, Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	5410
Course Title	Natural Language Metaphysics
Transcript Abbreviation	Nat Lang Metaphys
Course Description	Natural languages seem to presuppose that the world is a certain way. In many cases, the presuppositions are philosophically (or scientifically) contentious. We will explore a variety of such cases noting the ramifications for both metaphysics and for semantics. Team-taught course with faculty member in Philosophy.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Variable: Min 1 Max 3
<i>Previous Value</i>	<i>Fixed: 3</i>

## Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	Yes
Allow Multiple Enrollments in Term	Yes

<b>Max Credit Hours/Units Allowed</b>	6
<b>Max Completions Allowed</b>	2
<b>Course Components</b>	Lecture
<b>Grade Roster Component</b>	Lecture
<b>Credit Available by Exam</b>	No
<b>Admission Condition Course</b>	No
<b>Off Campus</b>	Never
<b>Campus of Offering</b>	Columbus

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

<b>Prerequisites/Corequisites</b>	Prereq: 5001, or 5401; or Philos 2500 and 6 cr hrs in Philos at or above 3000-level; or Grad standing in Philos; or permission of instructor.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Ling 5410 and Philos 5610 repeatable to a maximum of 6 cr hrs.
<b>Electronically Enforced</b>	No

## Cross-Listings

<b>Cross-Listings</b>	Cross-listed in Philos 5610.
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## Subject/CIP Code

<b>Subject/CIP Code</b>	16.0102
<b>Subsidy Level</b>	Doctoral Course
<b>Intended Rank</b>	Senior, Masters, Doctoral

## Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## Course Details

<b>Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will become familiar with several themes in contemporary semantics, both in philosophy of language and in linguistics. They will explore the ramifications of successful semantic theories for traditional metaphysical issues.</li></ul>
<b>Content Topic List</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The nature of time, as reflected in metaphysical intuition, semantics, and science.</li><li>• The nature of necessity and possibility; the various kinds of necessity and possibility--as these are reflected in semantic proposals.</li><li>• The distinction between count terms and mass terms, both in semantics and in "reality".</li><li>• The source and resolution of vague terms.</li><li>• The nature and reality of events.</li></ul>
<b>Sought Concurrence</b>	No

## Attachments

- Ling5410 Phil 5610 AU18 (3 credits).pdf: current syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: McGory, Julia Tevis)*
- Ling5410 Phil 5610 AU18 (1-3 credits).pdf: proposed syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: McGory, Julia Tevis)*

**Comments**

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	McGory,Julia Tevis	12/14/2018 02:42 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	McGory,Julia Tevis	12/18/2018 02:42 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	12/20/2018 01:58 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Oldroyd,Shelby Quinn Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler	12/20/2018 01:58 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Linguistics 5410 — Philosophy 5610

# Modality and natural language metaphysics

Autumn 2018

Meetings: XXXX

Instructors: XXX (Linguistics) XXX(Philosophy)

Office:

Email:

Office hours:

**Credits: 3**

## Course Description:

Modality has to do with possibilities, obligations, and conditional claims, among many other matters. In order to develop systems with the expressive power necessary to capture the content of modal propositions, logicians have developed a variety of modal logics, adding operators for necessity and possibility to variants on the usual propositional and predicate calculus. Standard semantic models for these systems use “possible worlds” to capture how possibilities—‘the way things might be’—can vary from circumstance to circumstance.

English expressions of interest include modal auxiliaries (*would, could, should, might, can, shall, must* and their ilk), adjectives and adverbs (*possible/possibly, necessary/necessarily, plausible/plausibly* and many others), and lexical items with a modal component in their meanings: *purported, supposedly, reportedly, generally*; embedding predicates like *seem, know, believe, imagine, suppose, etc.*; and even superficially simple predicates like *come*. And when we extend our interest to other languages, we find even more challenging cases: languages in which modal statements make no distinction between necessity and possibility; languages with extensive evidential marking on all clauses, indicating the type of evidence on which the claim being proffered with the statement is based.

Linguists interested in formal semantics have borrowed the tools and techniques from modal logic and the use of semantic models with possible worlds to explore the meanings of utterances like the above. From the other direction, the study of how we talk about such matters, using expressions which have a modal component in their meanings, sometimes sheds new light back on classical arguments among logicians about the meanings of modal statements and conditionals, and about the ontological status and nature of possible worlds—and the semantic status of modal propositions.

In this class, we will first offer a brief introduction to modal logic and to the linguistic treatment of modal expressions. We will then concentrate on some puzzles and arguments concerning modal expressions. We do not assume that participants have either a background in philosophical logic or formal semantics, though they should have some background in either philosophy or linguistics, and at least some familiarity with basic symbolic logic.

The course has two major goals: First, we aim to tease out how assumptions about natural language modality are used—explicitly or implicitly—by logicians and philosophers to argue for particular positions in the relevant debates. Then, we plan to explore the extent to which supporting ontological claims by

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appeal to the use and interpretation of modality in natural language involves reasonable assumptions: To what extent does the way we *talk about* the way things are (or might be) reflect the way they really are? In any case, we expect that this exploration will help us learn to avoid the pitfalls of shallow assumptions concerning what language tells us about the world in which speakers (presumably!) exist.

Note that we'll be having an exciting workshop associated with the course on 3/23-24, the week after spring break. See: <http://u.osu.edu/modw2016/> for details.

## Tentative Schedule

Readings (full citations below) are to be read prior to the class on which they'll be discussed.

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Other
Week 1	1/12	Modal Logic I	Portner, Ch..2	
Week 2	1/19	Modal Logic II	Portner Ch. 2	
Week 3	1/26	Kratzer's Semantics I	Kratzer 1977 Portner §3.1	
Week 4	2/2	Kratzer's Semantics II	Kratzer 1981 Matthewson	Commentary on Matthewson
Week 5	2/9	Possible Worlds I	Lewis 1973, Ch. 4 Lewis 1986, Ch 1,3-4	Commentary on Lewis 1986, Ch.1
Week 6	2/16	Possible Worlds II	Kripke 1972 Stalnaker 2003: Intro, 1, 3	Commentary on Stalnaker, Ch.1
Week 7	2/23	Domain Restriction & Modal subordination	Roberts 1989 or 2015 § from Stalnaker 2014	suggested: Kratzer 1986
Week 8	3/1	Two Kinds of Modals I	Portner §4.1 Hacquard	Commentary on Hacquard
Week 9	3/8	Two Kinds of Modals II	von Fintel & Iatridou	Commentary on von Fintel & Iatridou
<b>SPRING BREAK: MON. 3/14–FRI. 3/18</b>				
Week 10	3/22	Circumstantial modality I: Mathematical construction & Potential Infinity	TBA	<b>Workshop on NLM &amp; Modality: W, R 3/23-24</b>
Week 11	3/29	Circumstantial modality II: Metaphysical modality	TBA	
Week 12	4/5	Epistemic modality I: Evidentiality & strength	Portner §4.2 von Fintel & Gillies	Commentary on von Fintel & Gillies
Week 13	4/12	Epistemic modality II: Subjectivity & Relativism	Egan et al. MacFarlane Roberts § on Egan	<b>Draft of term paper due</b> Commentary on Egan et al.
Week 14	4/19	Epistemic modality III: Belief & (dis)agreement	Yalcin Stalnaker 2014 ch.6 Roberts 2015b	Commentary on Yalcin
<b>Finals (Weds. 4/27 – Tues. 5/3)</b>				<b>Term paper due Mon. 5/2</b>

## Requirements

Requirements for the course include (1) daily comments/questions on assigned readings, to be posted on Carmen by 4pm the day of class; (2) one or two short essays, on topics to be assigned, (2) a commentary paper on some of the reading and/or a response to another student's commentary, and (3) a draft of a substantial term paper, (4) a substantial term paper.

Philosophy graduate students have the option to petition for this course to count as a seminar, upon completion of seminar-level work.

## Academic Misconduct

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## Readings

Additional references will be suggested throughout the course.

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- Worlds and Contexts*. de Gruyter, Berlin, pp.38-74. Revised in Kratzer (2012) *Modals and Conditionals*. Oxford University Press.
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- Moss, Sarah (2015) On the semantics and pragmatics of epistemic vocabulary. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 8.5:1-81.
- Portner, Paul (2009) *Modality*. Oxford Surveys in Semantics and Pragmatics. Oxford University Press.
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Linguistics 5410 — Philosophy 5610

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Term: XXX

Meetings: XXXX

Instructors: XXX (Linguistics) XXX(Philosophy)

Office:

Email:

Office hours:

**Credits: 1 - 3**

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## Requirements

All students are required to attend classes, read the relevant material, and participate in class discussion.

A. 1 credit. Students taking the course for one credit: Each will write a seminar paper on one of the topics, and lead a discussion of it in class. The paper is due 48 hours before the class where it will be presented.

B. 2 credits. Students taking the course for two credits: In addition to the above (A), each one will provide (and post) a commentary on another student's seminar paper.

C. 3 credits. Students taking the course for three credits: In addition to the above (A & B), each one will write a substantial term paper, after discussing a topic with the instructors.

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