Questions and Answers

Schedule (01.20.2025)

**Week 1:  02.12**              *Introduction*

[Interrogative sentences and the speech act of asking a question. Extension, intension, hyper-intension. Propositions.]

Reading (15 pages):

* [von Fintel & Heim, *Intensional Semantics*](http://web.mit.edu/fintel/fintel-heim-intensional.pdf)Chapter 1

Part 1: The semantics of interrogatives

**Week 2:  02.19**              *Classic views on questions*

[Some older views on the semantics of interrogatives. Sentential calculus with unembedded interrogatives. Predicate calculus with unembedded interrogatives.]

Readings (22 pages):

* Frege, ‘Thoughts’ pp. 292-95
* Lewis, ‘General Semantics’ Section 8. (pp. 54-61)
* Davidson, ‘Moods and Performances’

**Week 3:  02.26** *Modern views on questions*

[Questions as sets of answers. Questions as true complete answers. Some syntax.]

Readings: (24 pages)

* Hamblin, ‘Questions’
* Groenendijk and Stokhoff, ‘Questions’ Sections 6.1.-6.3. (pp. 1108-23)

**Week 4:  03.05**            *Question-embedding*

[Responsive predicates. Mention-some vs. mention all. Exhaustivity. Veridicality nd factivity.]

Reading: (25 pages)

* Spector and Egré, ‘A uniform semantics for embedded interrogatives: An answer, not necessarily the answer’ Sections 1-4. (pp. 1033-58)

Part 2: Knowledge and questions

**Week 5:  03.12** *Epistemic contrastivism*

[Epistemic contextualism and contrastivism. Linguistic arguments pro and con.]

Readings: (27 pages)

* Scheffer, ‘Knowing the answer’
* George, ‘Knowing-‘wh’, mention-some readings, and non-reducibility’

**Week 6:  03.19** *Knowing how/1*

[The distinction between knowledge-that and knowledge-how. Intellectualism about know-how.]

Reading: (34 pages)

* Stanley and Williamson, “Knowing how”

**Week 7:   03.26** *Knowing how/2*

[Critique of the linguistic case for intellectualism]

Readings: (32 pages)

* Abbott, ‘Linguistic solutions to philosophical problems: The case of knowing how’
* Hornsby, ‘Intending, knowing how, infinitives’

**Week 8: 04.02** *Knowing why/1*

[Explanation and why questions]

Readings: (35 pages)

* Van Fraassen, *The Scientific Image.* Chapters 5.4. and 5.5. (pp.134-53)
* Bard Skow, *Reasons Why.* Chapter 2.

**Week 9: 04.09** *Knowing why/2*

[Reasons, causes, grounds: a theory of explanation]

Reading: (29 pages)

* Bard Skow, *Reasons Why.* Chapters 3.1.- 3.3. (pp. 23-52)

**Easter Break**

Part 3: Questions in context

**Week 10: 04.23** *Context-change/1*

[The Stalnakerian model of context change. Question under discussion and relevance.]

Reading: (42 pages)

* Roberts, ‘Information structure in discourse: Towards an integrated formal theory of pragmatics’

**Week 11: 04.30** *Context-change/2*

[The concept of the “table”. Assertion and polar query.]

Reading: (35 pages)

* Farkas and Bruce, ‘On reacting to assertions and polar questions’

Part 4: Inquisitive semantics

**Week 12: 05.07** *Inquisitive semantics/1*

[An integrated theory for the semantics of declaratives and interrogatives. Logical operators. Projections.]

Reading: (45 pages)

* Cardelli, Groenendijk and Roelofsen, *Inquisitive Semantics*,Chapters 2-3.

**Week 13: 05.14** *Inquisitive semantics/2*

[First-order inquisitive logic and its application to questions]

Reading: (33 pages)

* Cardelli, Groenendijk and Roelofsen, *Inquisitive Semantics*,Chapters 4-5.