Course Description

There are two approaches to modality: pragmatic and semantic.

The pragmatic approach defines modality as a volitive property, concerned with the opinion of the speaker, their attitude, wishes, desires, intentions, and the like.

The semantic approach of modality adopts the analysis proposed in modal logic, and thus suggests a more general definition for modality, showing volitives to be only a subcategory of modals. According to modal logic, modal sentences involve operator of necessity or possibility, analyzed in terms of possible worlds.

The pragmatic approach is not the aim of the course but it will be discussed briefly, to acquaint the students with the approach and enable them to read the literature. The goal of the course, however, is mainly the semantic (logical) approach of modality. Thus, students are expected to be familiar with basic notions of classical logic: set theory, propositional logic and predicate calculus.

Natural languages have different devices to express the different kinds of modality: lexicals (e.g., English uses modals such as “may,” “must” and “will”), verb morphology (e.g., French uses the subjunctive), clitics (as in Luiseño), etc. Since the course is meant to provide a semantic account for modality, regardless of how it is encoded in language, it will not deal with the different devices but only illustrate them.

The course will be divided into two parts. The first part will deal with the key notions of modality and discuss the state of the art. The second part will be conducted like a seminar. Students will choose an number of issues to discuss in depth.

Pre-requisites: LIN 4803 or LIN 6804, or a logics course, or permission of instructor.

Texts: See “List of readings.”

Course requirements and grading:

Undergraduates

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>2 x 5% = 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction papers:</td>
<td>2 x 10% = 20%</td>
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<td>In class Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take-home Exam</td>
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<td>Term paper OR:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting an article</td>
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Graduates

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<td>Take-home Exam</td>
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<td>Presenting an article</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>14%</td>
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Homework will not be graded but only given a pass/fail check. In order to pass, each assignment must be completed and its lower grade should be a D, i.e., at least 60% of the assignment should be good. For each failing or unsubmitted homework assignment, your grade will be lowered by 1%, up to 10%.

Homework exercises are to be typed and printed out neatly. Staple multiple sheets together and put your name on it. Please write in complete sentences and complete thoughts. H/W assignments are due in class on the date stated on the syllabus. We will typically discuss the homework in class, so late homework cannot be accepted. If you are not in class when homework assignments are handed back, it is your responsibility to get your work from the instructor.

You may discuss the problems with other members of this class section only. You must write up your solutions entirely on your own, without help, in accordance with the Honor Code: [http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html](http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html)

Reaction papers:
A ‘reaction paper’ on each reading assignment is due in class on Friday of its respective week; I will not grade late papers without a documented excuse. Please let me know ahead of time if there are extenuating circumstances that will force you to return in late work. The point of a reaction paper is to react, i.e., evaluate, criticize, support, or merely raise questions about the readings.

The exams are not cumulative except to the extent that the material builds on itself and you cannot control the more complex concepts without first getting the more basic ones. There is no final exam. There will be no make-up exams without a documented medical excuse.

A term paper is a conference-style paper, to be presented in class weeks 14, 15. The paper (10+ pages) and oral presentation (10-15 minutes, plus questions) will constitute 16% of the final grade (10% for the written part and 6% for the presentation). Topics must be approved by week 13. All papers due by December 10th.

Students may choose a theoretical topic to investigate or look into some local devices, e.g., analyzing modal expressions in English or the subjunctive in French.

Presenting an article
You can choose one of the articles listed in this syllabus or an article you find in the literature. Your presentation should be in such a way that the audience (the instructor and the students) will understand all of the issues the article discusses. Engage the students in your presentation, maybe by preparing questions or suggesting intriguing ideas. Students have to coordinate with instructor when they present their article.

Attendance and participation
Attendance and participation are essential. You are unlikely to succeed in this course without coming to class and paying attention. The material on the exams will come from the texts but also from what we do in class. Lecture notes and the texts will not always coincide. Each student will be allowed 3 absences without penalty. After that, one point will be deducted from the final grade for every non-excused absence. Showing up later or leaving earlier is considered ½ absences.

Note: There will be no extra credit work to help raise your grade; please do not ask. The best strategy is to do the best work you are capable of on the assigned work (exams, homework, presentation, etc.).

The course grading scale is below. Further information about UF’s grading policies can be found at: [http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html)

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<td>63-66.9</td>
<td>60-62.9</td>
<td>59.9 or below</td>
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Other Information:
Honor Code: [http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html](http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html)
Disabilities: [http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/disabilities.html](http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/disabilities.html)
Counseling: [http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/counseling.html](http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/counseling.html)
Schedule (subject to changes according to class progress):

**Week 1**: 8/25, 27, 29  
Course overview and introduction; Pragmatic vs. semantic definition of modality;  
**Read**: (1) Chapter 1.  
**Recommended**: de Swart Ch. 1&2; Gamut 1991, ch.1; Putnum 1975; Katz & Fodor 1963.

**Week 2**: 9/3, 5 (Note: 9/1 is Labor Day – no classes)  
Kinds of modality; the notion of possible worlds  
**Read**: (17)  
9/5 **HW1**

**Week 3**: 9/8, 10, 12  
Logical, Epistemic and Deontic Modality  
**Read**: (16), sections 5.1-5.2  
9/12 **HW2**

**Week 4**: 9/15, 17, 19  
9/17: Review 9/19 **In-Class Test**

**Week 5**: 9/22, 26 (Note: 9/24 is Rosh Ha-Shana Eve – class cancelled)  
Counterfactuals  
**Read**: (16), section 5.3

**Week 6**: 9/29, 10/1, 3  
Conditionals  
**Read**: (26)  
10/3 **HW3**

**Week 7**: 10/6, 8, 10  
The Future  
**Read**: (30)  
10/10 **HW4**

**Week 8**: 10/13, 15 (Note: 10/17: Homecoming - no classes)  
Generics and Habituals  
**Read**: (37)  
10/15 **HW5**

**Week 9**: 10/20, 22, 24  
10/22: Review 10/24: **Take-home Test**

**Week 10**: 10/27, 29, 31 **The second part of the course starting. Topics depend on class decision.**  
**Read**

**Week 11**: 11/3, 5, 7;  
**Read**

**Week 12**: 11/10, 12, 14;  
**Read**

**Week 13**: 11/17, 19, 21  
**Read**

**Week 14**: 11/24 (Note: 11/26, 28: Thanksgiving – no classes)  
**Read**

**Week 15**: 12/1, 3, 5  
**Read**

**Week 16**: 12/8, 10  
**Read**
LIST OF READINGS (the stars indicate obligatory reading)

I. General

A. Pragmatic Analysis

B. Logical Analysis
   4. *McCawley, James D. 1993 [1981]. Everything that linguists have always wanted to know about logic but were ashamed to ask. Chicago, university of Chicago press. Chapter 10.

C. Montogovian Analysis

II. Necessity, Possibility, Possible Worlds


III. Kinds of Modality

A. Logical (=Alethic), Epistemic Modality. Most items mentioned above. Obligatory:
   17. *McCawley, James D. 1993 [1981]. Everything that linguists have always wanted to know about logic but were ashamed to ask. Chicago, university of Chicago press. Chapter 10.

B. Deontic Modality. Most items mentioned above. Obligatory:
   25. *McCawley, James D. 1993 [1981]. Everything that linguists have always wanted to know about logic but were ashamed to ask. Chicago, university of Chicago press. Section 11.1.

C. Counterfactuals
   25. *McCawley, James D. 1993 [1981]. Everything that linguists have always wanted to know about logic but were ashamed to ask. Chicago, university of Chicago press. Section 11.1.

D. Conditionals


E. The Future

30. *McCawley, James D. 1993 [1981]. Everything that linguists have always wanted to know about logic but were ashamed to ask. Chicago, university of Chicago press. Section 11.3, mainly pp. 342-44.


F. Generics and Habituals


