I. Administrative

A. No class next Thursday, 3/21.

B. Working on the reading essays and should have them graded by tomorrow or Thursday before class at the latest.

C. Schedule for the next few weeks.

D. General questions?

II. Semantics and Pragmatics

A. Semantics is understood, roughly, to be the study of what sentences (or utterances) mean

1. That is, semantics is the study of what linguistic items contribute to the significance of an utterance episode in which they appear

2. This can be abstract, but can also be embedded in contexts that help to resolve the meanings of linguistic items

3. The unit of analysis here is the semantic content

   a. This is often taken to be a proposition when we are dealing with sentences or sentential utterances

   b. Related terms: ‘what is said’, ‘proposition expressed’

B. Pragmatics is understood, roughly, to be the study of what speakers mean with (or by) their utterances

1. That is, pragmatics is the study of what speakers contribute to the significance of an utterance episode that they have produced

2. The linguistic items involved are tools used by speakers in contexts to
convey meaning, and they needn’t be the only tools used for this purpose

3. The unit of analysis is *pragmatic content*
   
   a. This can be propositional but need not be
   

C. An important current debate in philosophy of language and linguistics concerns the nature of the semantics/pragmatics distinction—where should we draw the line between these? Should we be semantic minimalists, trying to leave as much speaker contribution out of the semantics as possible, or should we take the interface between the two to be more permeable, allowing more pragmatic content into the semantics?

III. Three Views of the Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction

A. The Traditional View (Grice, Kaplan, Kripke, Perry, Wettstein, many other philosophers of language)

1. “One who assertively utters S (speaking literally, and without conversational implicatures canceling the normal force of the remark) in a context C says, or asserts, the *semantic content of S in C*, also known as the *proposition semantically expressed by S in C*. Any additional propositions asserted are obvious and relevant consequences of this proposition plus the propositions presupposed in C (excluding those that are consequences of the presupposed propositions by themselves)” (147)

2. *Analysis*:
   
   a. **Semantics**: If S is nonindexical, then its meaning is the proposition it expresses; if it has indexical elements, then its meaning is “a rule for determining the different propositions it expresses in different contexts of utterance” (145)
      
      i. Semantics studies the meaning, which is in effect a “function from contexts C to propositions expressed by S in C” (145)

      ii. In the latter case, the contextually supplemented proposition is the one expressed by S in C
b. **Pragmatics:** relying on Grice’s account, we can generate more content with an utterance by flouting or otherwise relying on the cooperative principle and its associated maxims. This allows us to cleave to a minimalistic semantics and layer pragmatic content over that by taking advantage of assumption and expectation

i. These are *conversational implicatures*

ii. There are also, on Grice’s view, *conventional implicatures*, which are understood as “non-asserted suggestions generated by non-truth-conditional aspects of the meaning of the sentence uttered” (147). These are associated in some theories with *presuppositions* or *suppositions*

B. The “Hidden Variable” View (Stanley)

1. This is a friendly extension of the Traditional Approach meant to enable it to deal with certain problems that arise from the data. (See below)

2. The basic idea is that the semantics of our utterances is more than meets the eye—there are “hidden variables” in logical form that support semantic analysis which accommodates restrictions and supplementations that are not strictly speaking part of the sentence

   a. For example, consider “Every student in this class answered every question”

   b. Stanley would argue that the logical form of this would be:

   \[
   [\text{Every } x : \text{Student in this class } x][\text{Every } y : \text{Question } y \& f(x) y \text{]} x \text{ answered } y
   \]

   c. Here \( f(x) \) is *being on x’s exam.*

   d. This is general, and would apply across all data

C. The “Pragmatic Enrichment” View (Sperber & Wilson, Bach, Recanati, Soames)

1. “The meaning of \( M \) of a sentence \( S \) is (or imposes) a set of constraints on what normal, literal uses of \( S \) (without conversational implicatures that force reinterpretation) assert, or express. When \( S \) contains indexicals, or is otherwise semantically incomplete …, \( M \) will not determine a complete proposition by itself, and so much be pragmatically supplemented in order for a use of \( S \) to express a complete thought, or
result in a truth-evaluable assertion. When M does determine a complete proposition p, normal, literal uses of S express thoughts, or result in assertions, the contents of which are proper pragmatic enrichments of p. In such cases, p itself counts as asserted … only if p is an obvious, relevant, and apriori consequence of the enriched proposition(s) asserted in uttering S …, together with background presuppositions at the time of use…” (163)

2. **Semantics:**
   a. This is the study in this case of the constraints
   b. Rarely will what is specified by the semantics be what is asserted

3. **Pragmatics:**
   a. This involves supplementation from the context, as well as from common knowledge among conversational participants
   b. Often what is asserted will be pragmatically supplemented to some extent

IV. **Arguments from the Data**
   A. **Demonstratives**
   B. **Incomplete descriptions**
   C. **Quantifiers**
   D. **Possessives**
   E. **Compound nominal**
   F. **Temporal modification**
   G. **Logically complex indicatives** (“Scope Argument” data)

V. **Assumptions and Reflections**
   A. Linguistic meaning as the “lowest common denominator” (172)
   B. Intuitions as not sensitive enough to track theoretical differences between
C. Semantics and pragmatics as “rational reconstructions” of linguistic (and cognitive) phenomena