

# LING 260

## Meaning in Language

Winter 2024  
M,W 8:35am–9:55am  
MCMED 1027

### Instructor

Mathieu Paillé  
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Office: (location TBA)

Office hours: W 12:00pm–1:00pm

### Teaching Assistant

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## 1 Course content

### Overview

This course is a hands-on introduction to the strategies that natural languages use to convey meaning. Requiring no previous background in linguistics, the course surveys fundamental properties of word and sentence meaning and their interdependence with context. It provides an overview of the grammatical mechanisms that languages employ to construct the literal meanings of sentences from word meanings, explores how meanings are anchored to real life situations, and analyzes how meanings are routinely enriched in context by language users to convey more than what is literally expressed.

### Goals

You should expect to learn about: (i) what *sorts of questions* linguists ask about language, and about meaning, in particular; (ii) what *sorts of answers* linguists have given to questions about meaning-related phenomena; (iii) some of the *concepts and tools*

class and presented in class handouts. Assignments will often force you to go beyond what was presented in class. You can be asked to explore consequences

there is a documented medical excuse and the TA has been notified **within 24 hours** of when the assignment was due. Any problem with grading on an assignment or exam must be reported within one week of when the assignment or exam was returned.

### **Collaboration**

Assignments may be discussed in groups. However, a group may contain a maximum of three students. Also, each student must turn in a separate assignment **written up individually** and independently. If you worked in a group, **you must provide the names of the students who you worked with** on the first page of your assignment.

## **4 Communicating**

### **Communication method**

E-mail is the preferred method of communication with the instructor and the TA. You can expect the instructor and TA to respond to your e-mail questions and comments. However, please do not expect instant responses. We will try to respond within four workdays (though we will be more vigilant closer to assignment due dates).

### **Office hours**

The instructor will be available during his office hours. These can be held virtually over Zoom if scheduled beforehand via email. Appointments with the instructor outside office hours should be booked by email. The TA will hold office hours (three one-hour sessions) at the end of the semester, in preparation for the final (time and place TBD).

## **5 Other course rules**

### **Final exam**

According to Senate regulations, instructors are not permitted to make special arrangements for final

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity>).

### **Right to submit in French**

In accord with McGill University's [Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

### **Extraordinary circumstances**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

## **6 Getting additional help**

### **Tutors**

If you need more individual attention than the instructor or TA are able to provide, we encourage you to contact either the Student Tutorial Service (<https://www.mcgill.ca/tutoring/>) or [SLUM](#) (the Society of Linguistics Undergraduates at McGill; [slum.linguistics@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:slum.linguistics@mail.mcgill.ca)). It is understood that tutors help with the content of the course but do not help directly with assignments. Make sure that your tutor is knowledgeable about the course content, which can change from term to term.

### **Inclusiveness**

Instructors endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with us and [the Office for Students with Disabilities](#) ((514) 398-6009).

