"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.
"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone: "so I can't take more."
"You mean you can't take less," said the Hatter: "it's very easy to take more than nothing."

Introduction:

What's wrong with the Mad Hatter? This and other crucial questions will be raised (and some even answered!) in this course on language meaning in context. We'll be exploring how sentences are put together into texts and conversations, how speakers and hearers exploit each other's expectations and cooperate (or fail to cooperate) in the process of communication, and how speakers of different languages manage their conversations.

The course has Ling 100 as a prerequisite and satisfies the Oral Communication requirement.

The learning goals in this course are to:

- develop an understanding of basic concepts in the study of contextual or non-literal linguistic meaning, such as conversational implicature, presupposition, conventional implicature, deixis, direct and indirect speech acts.
- apply this understanding to analysis of naturally-occurring linguistic data (text or speech)
- learn to effectively communicate orally, including presenting prepared remarks, extracting relevant examples from prepared material, and impromptu discussion
- develop research and academic writing skills

Course Information

Webpage:  [www.cs.brandeis.edu/~ling140](http://www.cs.brandeis.edu/~ling140)
Time:  T,Th 3:30 -- 4:50 PM
Reader:  A collection of papers in pragmatics will be available on LATTE.
Professor:  Sophia A. Malamud
Email:  smalamud AT brandeis DOT edu
Office:  Volen 215
Office Hours:  TBD

Requirements and grading

- Students are required to read textbook chapters and assigned papers before class.
- There will be a homework assignment every one to two weeks, whereby you will be required to apply the concepts we are covering to analysis of language data.
  - I will call on you at least twice in the course of the semester to present your homework in class.
  - Other students are expected to participate in the discussion during such presentations.
- In addition, there will be a guided term research project, consisting of data collection, data analysis, and bibliographic research.
  - The project will involve several intermediate milestones: selecting a topic and research question, selecting a data set, submitting a proposal, a bibliographic summary, the abstract and slides for the presentation.
  - The project will culminate in a presentation at a mini-conference at the end of the term, and in short paper “a squib” (about 5 and no more than 7 single-spaced pages long). The term project will involve collection (and for some of you, automatic processing) of naturally-occurring linguistic data to explore a topic in linguistic pragmatics.
I will assign course grades according to the following weights:

- 10% (obligatory to qualify for a grade) course participation, including attendance, communicating with me, timely completion of assignments, and discussion participation.
- 15% reading the assigned papers, presentation of homework for class discussions.
- 35% Homework assignments
- 40% A research project, specifically
  - 15% bibliographic research, including understanding of papers, writing of background portion of the squib
  - 15% empirical research, including data collection, data analysis, conclusions, and writing of empirical portion of the squib
    - writing (both bibliographic and empirical) includes responding to comments and improvement from one version to the next
  - 10% end-of-term presentation of the project

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, homework exercises, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

**Honour code**

You're supposed to work independently on all assignments in this class, though you’re encouraged to discuss homework data analysis with other students. Of course, you're encouraged to talk to me or the TA about the assignments. Cheating is a very serious business and will not be tolerated at all. We will make every attempt to be reasonable about assignments, due dates, etc., but infractions of the honour code will be dealt with severely.

**Additional information**

Throughout the semester, deadlines, assignments, etc. will be announced through the LATTE page for this course that you can access by logging in here. You must be officially registered for the course in order to access the LATTE page.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see the professor immediately. Retroactive accommodation cannot be provided.