Philosophy 247r
Topics in the Philosophy of Language: Vagueness

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Requirements for those enrolled: Seminar paper, 20-25 pages. Possibly a presentation, but I’ve not decided about that yet.

Syllabus
(Definitely subject to change)

September 18 Introductory meeting

September 25 The Problem

October 2 Some Options

October 16 Some Remarks on the Nature of Semantic Theory
I intend during this session to sketch a conception of semantic theory which will inform my criticisms of various of the options discussed. My own views are deeply informed by the writings of Michael Dummett. For those who do not know his work, some useful first papers are “What is a Theory of Meaning?”, “Language and Truth”, and “Truth and Meaning”, all reprinted in his Seas of Language (Oxford University Press, 1993). His own conception can be illuminated by comparison with that of Donald Davidson, for which see his “Truth and Meaning”, in his Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation (Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 17-36.

October 23 Degrees of Truth

October 30 Degrees of Truth: Objections


Timothy Williamson, Vagueness, Ch. 4.


November 6 Supervaluations


November 13 Supervaluations: Some Objections

Timothy Williamson, Vagueness, Ch. 5.


November 20 Digression: Vague Objects

November 27 Supervaluations: Higher-order Vagueness


December 4 The Epistemic View

Timothy Williamson, Vagueness, Chs. 7-8.

December 11 The Epistemic View: Objections


More papers will be inserted here.

December 18 Toward a Reasonable View
