

## Processing discourse coherence

Description: The nature of a coherent discourse is that the utterances within it do not appear together arbitrarily but, rather, relate to each other in meaningful ways. The establishment of intersentential coherence relations is hence fundamental to language use and language understanding. This course will introduce students to ongoing research in experimental pragmatics that analyzes the reasoning and inferences that are brought to bear in the establishment of intersentential coherence relations. The course will consider a targeted set of questions about the processing of these relations: When do speakers opt to signal a coherence relation overtly as part of their message? What cues do comprehenders use to understand and even anticipate the coherence relation that holds between adjacent sentences? How do coherence-driven biases influence other linguistic phenomena? Discussion will center around a set of assigned readings and will be aimed at the development of new research proposals relevant to the material. No specific background in or familiarity with particular experimental methods or theoretical approaches is required.

### Schedule

Day1 (Monday July 20th): Coherence relations

Day2 (Thursday July 23rd): Coherence-driven predictions

Day3 (Monday July 27th): Signaling discourse relations

Day4 (Thursday July 30th): Questions (under discussion + open questions)