Philosophers often talk about the *logical form* of an ordinary sentence. Famously, one might think that the English sentences (1) and (2) have the logical forms (1a) and (2a), respectively.

1. Every number has a successor.  
2. The king is bald.  

(1a) \( \forall x[Nx \supset \exists y(Syx)] \)  
(2a) \( \exists x[Kx \& \forall y(Ky \supset y = x) \& Bx] \)

One might suspect that (3) and (4) have *different* logical forms, and likewise for (5) and (6),

3. That dog is a terrier.  
4. That dog is a father.  
5. That dog is your terrier.  
6. That dog is your father.

since (7) and (3) *imply* (5), but (7) and (4) do not imply (6).

7. That dog is yours.

Or one might think that (8) and (9) have the *same* logical form, since each implies the other.

8. Plum stabbed Green in the hall.  
9. There was a stab of Green by Plum in the hall.

Or one might think that (10) and (11) have the same logical form, since each *translates* the other.

10. Every cat is on a mat.  
11. Chaque chat est sur un tapis.

But what is it for an ordinary sentence to “have” a logical form, or for two sentences to have the “same” logical form, or for one sentence to “imply” or “translate” another?

In the seminar, I want to explore three historically important—and to some extent overlapping—conceptions of logical form: a “natural logic” conception, according to which spoken sentences imperfectly indicate *mental sentences* that actually exhibit logical forms; a “regimentation” conception, according to which logical forms are *invented* sentences that “translate” natural sentences (public or private) into a more scientific idiom; and a “semantic” conception, according to which logical forms are sentences of a meta-language used to specify the truth conditions of natural sentences. Each of these sketchy views can be filled out in various ways. Exactly how we proceed will depend on the interests and background of those enrolled.

But as time permits, I hope to develop a version of the “natural logic” approach that borrows a bit from the “semantic” approach.

I’ll post a syllabus for this course, and for LING 879 (Typology and Compositionality), on my website: www.terpconnect.umd.edu/~pietro