

PHIL 4.04, Critical Thinking  
Department of Philosophy  
Sacramento State University  
Fall 2017  
Section 04 - Thursday 5:30pm - 8:20pm DH 110

Instructor: Daniel Gluch  
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Office Hours: Thursday 4:30pm - 5:30pm  
Office: MND 3032

### ABOUT THE COURSE

Study of the basic skills of good reasoning needed for the intelligent and responsible conduct of life. Topics include: argument structure and identification, validity and strength of arguments, common fallacies of reasoning, use and abuse of language in reasoning, principles of fair play in argumentation.

**Graded:** Graded Student. **Units:** 3.0

This course meets the A3 General Education Requirement which are:

1. Students study about and consciously develop skills in critical thinking.
  2. Knowledge through logical analysis and argument construction is pursued throughout the course.
  3. Instruction develops understanding of logical relationships between premises and conclusions.
  4. Instruction develops ability to recognize more common formal and informal fallacies.
  5. Grading reflects emphasis on logical processes.
  6. Develops basic skills, applicable to a variety of academic subjects and to the fulfillment of such roles as citizen, consumer, leader and moral agent.
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- 1 Skill in evaluating the validity, strength and relevance of arguments.
  - 2 A sense of logical structure of both inductive and deductive forms.
  - 3 Awareness of uses and abuses of argument language, including connotation, ambiguity and definition.
  - 4 Skill in handling a variety of arguments in variety of contexts.
  - 5 Ability to argue fairly and to handle bias, emotion, and propaganda.

Students will:

1. Locate the argument in a passage
2. Detect errors of reasoning and explain how the reasoning is in error.

3. Evaluate evidence and make appropriate inferences from that evidence.
4. Construct and defend an argument in support of or in opposition to a proposition

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Describe, explain and distinguish key concepts in critical thinking.
2. Identify an argument in a passage of ordinary text, including identifying the premises and conclusions and distinguishing them from extraneous information.
3. Identify errors of reasoning and explain what the error in reasoning is.
4. Engage with peers in cogent and respectful discussion.
5. Analyze specific arguments for consistency and credibility.
6. Apply good reasoning to issues and problems in professional and personal contexts.
7. Evaluate evidence and draw inferences from that evidence.

<http://csus.edu/acaf/Portfolios/GE/geareaA3.stm>

## TEXTS

*Logical Reasoning*, by Bradley Dowden which is available free online at:  
<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/4/Logical-Reasoning.pdf>

## GRADING SCALE

90 - 93... A- ... 94-100... A	Homework..... 40 points
80 - 83... B- ... 84-86... B ... 87-89 ..... B+	Quizzes..... 40 points
70 - 73....C- ... 74-76.... C... 77-79 ..... C+	Paper..... 40 points
60 - 63... D- ... 64-66.... D... 67-69 ..... D+	In-Class Projects..... 40 points
0 - 59 ..... F	Presentation ..... 40 points

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Homework

All homework will be turned in online before the next scheduled class. There will be 5 short assignments for a total of 40 points. Any extra points earned will be counted as extra credit.

### In-Class Projects

There are weekly in-class group assignments. Each individual member is responsible for turning in their portion of the assignment online every week. The total of projects will be 40 points.

### Quizzes

There will be 5 online quizzes for a total of 40 points. Any extra points earned will be counted as extra credit.

### Paper

A 2 page paper analyzing and critiquing an assigned article will be due 10/19 and is worth 40 points.

### Presentation

The final project of the semester will be a 10 minute presentation of a scholarly article that includes your analysis and critique of the argument. This will be worth 40 points.

## LATE POLICY

There will be no extensions for any assignments. If an assignment or quiz is to be missed it must be scheduled to be completed before the original due date.

## ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

### RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students who must be absent from class in order to observe religious a holiday must inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays during the first two weeks of the class each semester. If such holidays occur during the first two weeks of the semester, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. Students who meet these conditions will not be penalized for their absence, and will be able to make up the work missed.

### PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses which will not be tolerated in this class. Assignments in which plagiarism or other forms of cheating are found will at the least be graded at 0 (not just an F). Repeated or egregious (>20% of course grade value) violations of the university policy will result in an F in the course. ALL incidents of cheating and plagiarism will be reported both to the Department Chair and to the Student Conduct Officer in the Office of Student Affairs for possible further administrative sanction. *It is your responsibility to know and comply with the University's Academic Honesty Policy* <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/STU-0100.htm>.

### UNIVERSAL ACCOMMODATIONS

This course and all material have been designed for universal access. If you have difficulty accessing any of the material, please let me know at your earliest experience of difficulty.

Also, this course has been designed to facilitate accommodation for specific disability needs. If you have a documented disability (visible or invisible) and require accommodation for assignments, tests, course material, etc., please let me know **the end of the FIRST week of semester** so that arrangements can be made. Failure to notify and consult with me by this date may impede my ability to offer you the necessary accommodation and assistance in a timely fashion. Also be sure to consult with the Services to Students with Disabilities (Lassen Hall 1008, or <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>) to learn what other campus services and accommodation options are available for you.

Students with other types of accommodation requirements, such as English as a second language, are invited to discuss accommodations with the instructor to facilitate understanding and the best learning experience for all. All information will remain confidential. ESL students are advised to make use of the University Writing Center (Calaveras Hall 128, <http://www.csus.edu/writingcenter/>).

#### TECHNOLOGY COMPONENT

This course uses SacCT for turning in all assignments. It is your responsibility to ensure you have regular access to computing facilities sufficient to the needs of this course. Technical problems must be reported to me at your earliest encounter of the problem. Do not leave assignments to the last moment. If the problem is more complex than instructor skills allow, you must address your problem to the SacLink Help Line @ 916-278-7337.

## **Class Schedule (Subject to Change)**

### **Week 1 - 8/31**

Independence vs Interdependence

Quiz 1 - Syllabus Quiz due before class 9/7

### **Week 2 - 9/7**

Emotions, Evidence, and the Web of Beliefs

HW 1 - WITIT due before class 9/14

### **Week 3 - 9/14**

Critical Thinking Basics: Claims and Arguments

HW 2 - WITIT due before class 9/21

### **Week 4 - 9/21**

Arguments and Disagreements

Quiz 2 - Critical Thinking Basics Quiz due before class 9/28

### **Week 5 - 9/28**

Inductive Arguments

HW 3 - WITIT due before class 10/5

### **Week 6 - 10/5**

Deductive Arguments

Quiz 3 - Inductive and Deductive Arguments due before class 10/12

### **Week 7 - 10/12**

Fallacies

Paper - Article Analysis due before class 10/19

### **Week 8 - 10/19**

Biases and Rhetorical Devices

HW 4 - WITIT due before class 10/26

### **Week 9 - 10/26**

Biases and Rhetorical Devices

Quiz 4 - Biases and Rhetorical Devices due before class 10/26

**Week 10 - 11/2**

Moral and Ethical Reasoning

HW 5 - WITIT due before class 11/9

**Week 11 - 11/9**

Moral and Ethical Reasoning

Quiz 5 - Moral and Ethical Reasoning due before class 11/16

**Week 12 - 11/16**

Debates

**Week 13 - 11/23 - No Class****Week 14 - 11/30**

Presentation Workshop

**Week 15 - 12/7**

Presentations

**Finals Week**

**12/14 5:15pm**

Presentations