

**PHIL 103: Critical Reasoning**  
**Spring 2016**  
**MTWR 9:00-9:50**  
**Fenton 105**

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 158 Susan Campbell



**Course Description:**

This course introduces basic reasoning skills that are important not only for discussing philosophical questions but also for any field of study or situation in life where we need to argue, i.e. where we either wish to convince someone of something by giving them good reasons in favor of our belief or proposal, or where we want to dissuade somebody from something through reason or argue that they are wrong. In this course you will learn how to recognize, analyze, and criticize (evaluate) different kinds of arguments. You also will learn to construct your own arguments. We will first look at deductive reasoning, then at inductive reasoning, and then will begin to apply what we learned to current issues and debates. At the end of the course, you will be required to write a short final argumentative essay.

**Course Objectives:**

- Identifying, reconstructing, and evaluating Deductive and Inductive Arguments
- identifying and critique Fallacies in reasoning
- Thinking more holistically and critically about systematic, formal Critical Reasoning
- Reconstructing the arguments of other Philosophers and construct effective Critiques.

**Learning Outcomes**

- ✓ Understanding the components of critical reasoning in a way that will develop students' abilities to analyze arguments and develop argumentative essays. This will include an ability to determine proper secondary sources without falling into fallacies.
- ✓ Critically engaging with critical reasoning from a variety of perspectives, including from standpoints of gender, race, and general cultural contexts.
- ✓ Being able to compare, contrast, and critique various approaches to critical reasoning from several different philosophical traditions and historical periods.

**Accommodation for a Disability:**

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please inform me during week 1.

**Required Texts:**

- **Critical Thinking: An Introduction to the Basic Skills** by William Hughes, Jonathan Lavery, and Katheryn Doran (7th edition)

\* Any additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

**Requirements:**

- **Problem Sets** will consist of practice exercises that students will be required to complete outside of class hours. It will be the responsibility of students who miss class to catch up on the assigned homework and turn it in on the required date. Late Homework will not be accepted without a sound excuse. **Problem sets are due at the beginning of class each week on Thursday, unless otherwise specified in the schedule.**
- **Three Exams** will be based on material from the assigned readings and from class. These exams will be closed-book, and attendance is mandatory on the day of the test. Only documented proof of emergencies will be accepted for absences on test days, and you must notify the instructor as soon as possible. It is also the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of documented exam accommodations ahead of time.
- **The Final Argumentative Essay** will test the student's ability to construct their own philosophical argument in relation to the critical reasoning problems presented throughout the term. More specific directions and ideas for topics will be provided later in the term. The essay will be 4-5 pages in length, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, standard margins. Spelling and grammar will also affect the grade.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and ready to discuss it. This concerns participation in class, office hours and email, NOT attendance.
- **Attendance:** You are allowed four unexcused absences. Beyond that, documentation of valid excuses is required, or there will be a loss of 1/3 grade for each absence, deducted during the computation of final grades.

**Grade Breakdown:**

Participation	10%
Homework Exercises	20%
First Exam	15%
Second Exam	20%
Third Exam	20%
Final Argumentative Paper	15%

**Department of Philosophy Grading Standard: Scale:**

A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = OK. Some errors, but basic grasp of the material.

D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or complete lack of effort.

A 94-100 A- 90-93.9 B+ 87-89.9 B 83-86.9 B- 80-82.9 C+ 77-79.9 C 73-76.9 C- 70-72.9 D 60-69.9 F Below 60

P/NP Grading: A grade of 'P' requires a percentage score of 70% or higher.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes must be arranged for in advance in accordance with University policy: [http://registrar.uoregon.edu/incomplete\\_policy](http://registrar.uoregon.edu/incomplete_policy).

**Course Policies**

1. The use of electronic devices such as laptops, cellphones, tablets, etc., is prohibited in this class.
2. You are expected to follow the rules of academic honesty. Failure to do so will result in failure of the whole course ("F").
  - Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts. In order to find out how to avoid plagiarism, see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>
  - Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.
  - Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student's work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one's work in a test

situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

• **Assistance/Resources:**

- Accessible Education Center (AEC): coordinates services, provides advocacy and support to students with documented physical, learning, and psychological disabilities and provides assistance to the general campus community in responding appropriately to requests for accommodations based on disability. Location: 164 Oregon Hall Web page: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-1155. Email: [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu)
- Teaching & Learning Center (TLC): TLC provides numerous resources (including courses, workshops, and tutoring) to help UO students succeed. They work with a diverse student body with a wide range of needs. If you are unsure which resources would work best, they are happy to answer questions and share suggestions. Location: 68 PLC. Web page: <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-3226.
- University Counseling and Testing Center (UCTC): The UCTC provides comprehensive mental health care and testing services to the University of Oregon campus. The primary mission of the UCTC is to provide quality clinical/therapeutic services, psychological testing and assessment, psychoeducational workshops and outreach as well as emergency services. Location: 2nd floor, University Health, Counseling, and Testing Center Building Web site: <http://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/> 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 541-346-3227
- Discrimination and Sexual Harassment: The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu).

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments:****(This is a tentative schedule. Changes will be announced on Canvas.)**

	Lecture Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction to the Course; Reasoning and Critical Thinking	<i>Critical Thinking</i> (CT): 1.1-1.4 & 2.1-2.3	
Week 2	Meaning and Definition	CT 2.6-2.11 & 3.1-3.8	Thursday: Problem set #1 due
Week 3	Reconstructing Arguments	CT 4.1-4.8	<b>Thursday: Exam #1</b>
Week 4	Assessing Arguments	CT 5.1-5.3 & 6.1-6.7	Thursday: Problem set #2 due
Week 5	Truth Theories and Fallacies	CT 7.1-7.4 & 8.1-8.6	Thursday: Problem set #3 due
Week 6	Fallacies	CT 15.1-15.10	<b>Thursday: Exam #2</b>
Week 7	Deductive Reasoning	CT 9.1-9.5	Thursday: Problem set #4 due
Week 8	Inductive and Scientific Reasoning	CT 10.1-10.10.5 & 11.1-11.2	Thursday: Problem set #5 due
Week 9	Counter Arguments; Writing and Assessing Argumentative Essays	CT 14.1-14.14.4 & 17.1-17.17.4	<b>Thursday: Exam #3</b>
Week 10	Organizing Argumentative Essay	CT 18.1-18.18.3	Outline of Final Paper due Monday
Week 11			Final Paper Due Monday 6/6 by 5 pm on Canvas