



PHIL*2100 Critical Thinking

Fall 2018

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - August 29, 2018

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This course is designed to develop clarity of thought and method in the analysis and construction of arguments. By contrast to PHIL*2110, the emphasis here is upon informal principles of critical thinking and arguments stated in terms of ordinary language. Topics include the nature and methods of arguing, classification, definition and fallacies.

Pre-Requisite(s): 2.00 credits or (1 of PHIL*1000, PHIL*1010, PHIL*1050)

1.2 Course Description

Critical Thinking is intended to enhance the student's reasoning and analytical skills, and to help the student develop a critical mind for both his/her academic and non-academic life. This is not a discipline-specific course. Students from all academic disciplines stand to

benefit equally from the skills developed in this course. Students will be introduced to

the variety of modes by which people try to persuade others to accept any particular

position or point of view. We shall study the criteria for effective and legitimate modes of

persuasion. We shall study arguments and, very importantly, how to make good ones and

avoid bad ones.

1.3 Timetable

Class Meet Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30am – 11:20am

This schedule is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

1.4 Final Exam

December 08, 2018

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructor(s)

Dr. Yussif Yakubu

Email: yyakubu@uoguelph.ca
Telephone: 289-683-1136 (Cell)
Office: MCK 339
Office Hours: Wednesday, 11:30am – 12:30pm

Teaching Assistants

Gordon Trenbeth: T01: Wed 12:30 - 1:20; T02: Wed 1:30 - 2:20

Greg Corey: T03: THU 1:30: 2:20; T04: THU 2:30: 3:20

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resource(s)

Required Text: MacDonald, C. and Vaughn, L. (2016) The Power of Critical Thinking. 4th Canadian Edition Oxford University Press, Canada. (Textbook)

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Distinguish between an argument and other forms of locution in everyday discourse.
2. Distinguish between a good and a bad argument using the tools for argument analysis

3. Assess the effectiveness of any mode of persuasion using the criteria for cogency analysis.
 4. Identify fallacies in political speech and media articles.
 5. Write a persuasive dialectical essay in favour of any view point they may hold on any issue
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

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|---------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| 1. Attendance and Participation | 10% | |
| 2. Weekly Exercises | 10% | |
| 3 Midterm Exam | 20% | Wednesday October 17 |
| 4. Dialectical Essay | 20% | Friday November 02 |
| 5. Final Exam | 40% | |

Description of Assessment #1 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

This assessment is aimed at encouraging student participation in class discussions and other learning activities.

Description of Assessment #2 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

In this assessment, students are given selected exercises from the course textbook to complete. This is aimed at encouraging students to stay on top of the course material.

Description of Assessment #3 and their Evaluation Criteria:

The mid-term exam is aimed at evaluating students' grasp of the core concepts, principles and

methods taught in the course. The assessment will also evaluate students' ability to apply the skills to different circumstances. It will be a 60-minute exam conducted during our regular class meeting

Description of Assessment #4 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

The dialectical essay is aimed at evaluating the extent to which students grasp the techniques of persuasion as well as their ability to apply them in their own arguments. Students will be given topics on some contentious contemporary issues and asked to take a stand and effectively argue for that position. The dialectical part of the assignment consists in the student attempting to persuade us as to why the best argument for the opposing side is not good enough. Essay topics will be posted during week 7 and students are to hand in their essays during week 10.

Description of Assessment #5 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

The Final Exam will attempt to assess as many of the competencies as possible that the student acquired during the course. It will be a three-hour exam in which students will give short answers (a few to about 100 words) to questions that test their grasp of key concepts and their ability to apply them in matters of ordinary life.

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#) are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

7.3 Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day.

More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

7.6 Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.
