

**UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
Winter 2018**

**PHIL\*2100 Critical Thinking (0.5cr)**

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr Yussif Yakubu	<b>Email:</b> yyakubu@uoguelph.ca	<b>Telephone:</b> 289-683-1136
<b>Grader:</b> Lucelle Schmitz	<b>Office:</b> McKinnon 352	<b>Office Hours: Friday</b> 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Classes:

Type	Day	Time	Location
Lecture	Mon Wed and Fri	4:30pm – 5:20pm	MCKN 117

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**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Learning Outcomes/Objectives/Goals/Expectations:** I have developed the course to address several learning outcomes. By the end of the course a successful student 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.

**Prerequisites:**

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

**Recommended:**

**Method of Presentation:**

We shall use PowerPoint presentations to illustrate principles, concepts, analysis and methods. However, a great deal of the learning will also be achieved through participatory activities such as paired or group discussions and also through exercises and assignments.

Method of Evaluation:

Type of Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
1. Attendance and Participation	10%	Weekly
2. Weekly Exercises	10%	Weekly

3. Midterm Exam	20%	February 28
4. Dialectical Essay	20%	November 2
5. Final Exam	40%	To be scheduled during final examination period

**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.

**Final Exam: TBA**

**Syllabus:**

**Week-by-week schedule:**

**Week 1: January 09**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of course and assessments.</li> <li>• Introduction</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapters 1 &amp; 2 of course text</li> </ul>

**Week 2: January 15**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argument Basics</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns of arguments</li> <li>• Diagraming argument.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3 of course text</li> </ul>

**Week 3: January 22**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for belief and doubt</li> <li>• Experts and evidence</li> <li>• Personal experience</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4 of course text</li> </ul>

**Week 4: January 29**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faulty reasoning</li> <li>• Irrelevant premises</li> <li>• Unacceptable premises</li> <li>• Faulty analogy</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5 of course text</li> </ul>
<b>Due:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

**Week 5: February 05**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive reasoning I</li> <li>• Categorical logic</li> <li>• Translations and standard form</li> <li>• Diagraming categorical statements</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6 of course text</li> </ul>

**Week 6: February 12**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive reasoning II</li> <li>• Propositional logic</li> <li>• Connectives and truth values</li> <li>• Checking for validity</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7 of course text</li> <li>• <b>Dialectical Essay Topics are posted</b></li> </ul>

**Week 7: February 19**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Winter Break</b></li> </ul>
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**Week 8: February 26**

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inductive arguments</li> <li>• Sampling and populations</li> <li>• Statistical syllogisms</li> </ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 8 of course text</li> <li>• <b>Midterm Exam – Wednesday February 28</b></li> </ul>

### Week 9: March 05

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Judging scientific Theories</li><li>• Science and non-science</li><li>• The scientific method</li></ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 10 of course text</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dialectical Essay Due</b></li></ul>

### Week 10: March 12

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explanations and inference</li><li>• Theories and consistency</li><li>• Theories and criteria</li></ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 9 of course text</li></ul>

### Week 11: March 19

<b>Topics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thinking critically about:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health</li><li>• Law</li><li>• Ethics</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Readings Completed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 11 of course text</li></ul>

### Week 12: March 26

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reasoning by analogy</li><li>• Inductive analogies</li></ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 8 of course text</li></ul>

### Week 13: April 02

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review</li></ul>
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## College of Arts Standard Statement of Expectations

### E-mail Communication

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

### 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. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

## Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day (**Friday, 9 March 2018**); 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.](#)

## 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.

## 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. [For more information see the SAS web site.](#)

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. [The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

## 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.](#)

## **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.

## **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.