



PHIL*2100 Critical Thinking

Fall 2020

Section(s): 01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - September 04, 2020

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-Requisites: 2.00 credits or (1 of PHIL*1000, PHIL*1010, PHIL*1050)

1.2 Course Description

An argument is a set of statements (the premises of the argument) that is intended to provide rational support for some further statement (the conclusion of the argument). We use arguments to convince ourselves and others that some view or position is rationally supported. By "rationally supported" we mean "based on good reasons." The purpose of a critical thinking class is to make you better at identifying, analyzing, criticizing, writing about, and constructing arguments. The core text for this course is *How to Reason*. It provides the basic tools for recognizing, analyzing, and criticizing arguments. Other course texts are available through Courselink, the platform for delivering this course in Fall 2020. The course discusses a number of important philosophical topics: truth, knowledge, possibility, bad and good reasoning. It also introduces important and useful concepts in the psychological study of reasoning as well as basic logical concepts. The course, in Fall 2020, will be delivered asynchronously via short videos, PP slides with audio commentary, and textual commentaries written by the instructor. There will be "tutorials," though they will involve short written assignments on assigned texts, graded by a tutor. Online evaluation (midterm and final exam) will also be used, as are online quizzes. The ultimate objective of the course is practical: to help the student develop useful tools for reasoning in any context.

1.3 Timetable

This course, in F20, is delivered online through courselink. It is an asynchronous course, without any set lecture times. There are, however, due-dates students must meet for quizzes,

tutorial papers as well as the midterm and the final exam. Information on due dates is given in the description of each course unit.

1.4 Final Exam

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

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: Don Dedrick
Email: ddedrick@uoguelph.ca
Telephone: +1-519-824-4120 x53203 (but please email me)
Office Hours: Students may send the instructor questions by email. The instructor will endeavour to respond within 24 hours. The instructor may or may not respond on weekends. Students may post questions to a general discussion forum, which the instructor will monitor and sometimes respond if appropriate.

Critical Thinking TAs	Section
Lukas Nicholson lnicho03@uoguelph.ca	T01
Lukas Nicholson "	T02
Meisam Mirzaee Ataabadi mmirzaee@uoguelph.ca	T03
Meisam Mirzaee Ataabadi "	T04
Kyle Novak knovak@uoguelph.ca	T05

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

How to Reason (Textbook)

<http://www.advancedreasoningforum.org/how-to-reason>

How to Reason: A practical Guide

Paperback \$19.95 ISBN13: 978-1-938421-38-9
 Ebook: \$12.99
 Paperback available from bookstore

Tutorial and other material (Readings)

Available from courselink website.

4 Learning Outcomes

This is a course about argumentation. It aims to make you better at recognizing, constructing and assessing arguments, a skill useful in any context.

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Distinguish arguments from non-arguments.
2. Identify different argument types.
3. Understand and apply basic logical concepts.
4. Utilize strategies appropriate to different argument types in order to evaluate arguments.
5. Understand basic issues and concepts in the psychological study of reasoning.
6. Recognize a range of mistakes in reasoning – the “fallacies.”

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

The course is, with the exception of the textbook *How to reason*, available online, in its entirety. Students should click on the **Content** Tab on the courselink page to access course materials for each Unit of the course. Below is an example of the sort of information each Unit sets out as a guide to completing that unit:

Unit 1 deals in various ways with Claims. Claims are sentences that are the components of arguments, and that is ultimately why we are interested in them. Material for this unit:

- Read** *HR* (textbook) Chapters 1-5.
- Review** PP slides for *HR* 1-5 [these include audio commentary by the instructor].
- Read** Textual commentary for *HR* Ch. 1-5 [instructors notes]
- Complete** Quizzes 1 & 2 [they can be accessed from the Textual commentary or from the Quiz link on the Nav bar]
- Complete** Tutorial #1 and submit through Dropbox.

[If you are interested in whether morality is subjective, I've written a doc for you, the last file below.]

OTHER THAN THE TEXBOOK, ALL NECESSARY FILES CAN BE ACCESSED BELOW. IN ORDER TO ACCESS THE AUDIO IN THE PP SLIDES YOU NEED TO DOWNLOAD THE PP.

Due Dates for this Unit:

Quizzes 1 & 2 close at 11:59pm on Sunday Sept. 20.

Tutorial #1 accepted until 11:59 on Friday Sept 18.

6 Assessments

6.1 Assessment Details

Online quizzes (20%)

Date: Online. Access through Courselink.

See courselink for more details,

Midterm (20%)

Date: See below for details.

You can take the midterm between the following dates and times: **Tuesday Oct. 20, 8am until Wed Oct 21 at 11pm**. You have one hour to complete the midterm, and you can start at any time in the window. If you star later than 11pm on Wed., you will not have a full hour to complete the midterm. Midterm information (study guide) is posted in the Announcements for the course, on the Homepage. The Midterm will use a lockdown Respondus Browser (without video monitoring of students).

Weekly Tutorial Assignments (30%)

Date: , See Webadvisor for your tutorial section.

There are 7 tutorial assignments, and we will count the best 6 of 7. Each tutorial assignment is worth 5 %. Each student is assigned to a specific TA, who will grade all their tutorial assignments and provide feedback. **Students must complete the first two tutorials, in the allotted time-frame.**

Final Exam (30%)

Date: TBA

During Exam period. The final exam will use a lockdown respondus browser, without video monitoring. Check WebAdvisor for details.

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 grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

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.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website
<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

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 encourages academic integrity. 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.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, 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 that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

7.10 Illness

The University will not normally require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for fall 2020 or winter 2021 semester courses. However, requests for Academic Consideration may still require medical documentation as appropriate.
