



## SYLLABUS

### Logic, Reason and Persuasion

Phil 101

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**ATTENTION:** The policies and requirements on the version of this syllabus supersede the policies and requirements on any syllabus posted anywhere else, including a department webpage.

## VIRTUES

There are a number of scholarly and personal virtues necessary for success in this or any other class:

FIDELITY, or constancy of purpose in devotion to learning;

INDUSTRIOUSNESS, or always working when working is called for;

DILIGENCE, or always working well, both as the task requires and as one's abilities permit;

PERSPICACITY, or always learning the details of a matter instead of being merely 'vaguely familiar' with it;

HUMILITY, the proper understanding of one's own self-worth without claiming to be entitled to anything beyond that worth; and

GRATITUDE, the acknowledgement that something transcends oneself and provides appreciable natural gifts.

## SUMMARY

This is an asynchronous course. We will not be meeting online as a class. I will be uploading video and audio files, as well as occasional written comments on the reading, and will remain available for email communication.

This is a textbook-based online course. It is absolutely NECESSARY that you OWN and READ the textbook in order to succeed in this course. I have chosen our textbook very carefully. It has theoretically rich chapters that are very carefully written and should provide the diligent student with considerable insight into the nature of philosophy.

I am mainly interested in your learning of the substantial content of the course. This content includes main concepts. You cannot learn anything of substance by soaking up impressions and being vaguely familiar with topics. You must be able to define basic terminology, interpret it in terms of its pros and cons, and perhaps explain things in its terms. So, this term you will have a variety of questions to answer, ranging from defining basic terms, analyzing them rationally, comparing them critically, and explaining how they help us to understand other things. That is *real* learning.

So, if you wish to succeed in the course, you must (a) submit ALL assignments, (b) submit them on time, and (c) make sure they are of sufficient length, or longer than required.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

In this course we will learn about the basics of critical thinking. More specifically, students will be able to:

- (a) identify, formulate and analyze arguments;
- (b) be familiar with and able to use informal and some basic formal reasoning;
- (c) to be able to identify deductive, inductive and abductive reasoning;
- (d) to understand basic distinctions between sound and unsound reasoning, valid and invalid arguments, and cogent and non-cogent arguments; and

### REQUIRED BOOK

Lewis Vaughn, The Power of Critical Thinking (SIXTH EDITION), Oxford, 2019

ISBN 9780190852719

Make sure you buy the SIXTH EDITION, preferably a print copy. If you buy a digital copy, make sure it has the correct pagination.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Your final grade for the course will be the average of eight assignments:

- (1). Six Tests (100 points each)
- (2). One Final Paper (100 points)

Each of these assignments must be uploaded to CANVAS.

Your paper may be uploaded any time in the week prior to the deadline, which will be at the same time and date on each occasion there is an assignment (for example, 1 PM on Tuesday). I will not accept your paper at any other time or by any other means (NO EXCEPTIONS). In my experience, it is best if I do NOT violate this rule. So make sure you understand that there is a specific way you will submit your assignment, and no other.

Attention: Your work must be typed DOUBLE-SPACED.

Also, it is best to read and take notes before you type in your answers. You will receive a low grade if you simply look through the book for answers, since it will be obvious to me that you are doing so.

### UPLOADING

You will be uploading your files to CANVAS, where they will be scanned for plagiarism. Because cheating is now nearly epidemic, I WILL NOT accept papers by any other means. You must upload your papers by the deadline. They will not be accepted by hand or as an email attachment (no exceptions).

#### VIDEO AND AUDIO LECTURES

Normally, each week I will upload a video or audio lecture to CANVAS. It is necessary to access this lecture material in order to complete assignments. I will send everyone a message whenever such material is uploaded.

## **SCHEDULE**

Week 1, Introduction

Week 2

Read Chapter 1, The Power of Critical Thinking, and Chapter 2, Obstacles to Critical Thinking

Week 3

TEST on Chapters 1 and 2

Week 4

Read Chapter 3, Making Sense of Arguments

Week 5

Read Chapter 5, Fallacies and Persuaders

Week 6

TEST on Chapters 3 and 5

Week 7

Read Chapter 6, Deductive Reasoning: Proposal Logic

Week 8

TEST on Chapter 6

Week 9

Read Chapter 7, Deductive Reasoning: Categorical Logic

Week 10

TEST on Chapter 7

WEEK 11

Read Chapter 8, Inductive Reasoning

Week 12

TEST on Chapter 8

Week 13.

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14

Read Chapter 9, Inference to the Best Explanation and Chapter 10, Judging Scientific Theories

Week 15

TEST on chapters 9 and 10

Final Paper due at time of scheduled final examination (there is no final exam)

Academic Integrity Violations

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work. Intentionally committing plagiarism is a serious offense with severe consequences. Instructors are required to report students who intentionally violate this policy to the department chairperson and to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The most common forms of plagiarism are:

Quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source (this includes copying or paraphrasing material from a web site without providing a proper citation for the site)

Presenting the work of another as one's own

Plagiarizing major portions of a written assignment

Submitting purchased materials such as term papers

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy establishes levels of violations and recommends sanctions. Depending upon the severity of the case and the level of the violation, the sanctions for these violations include: a failing grade for the assignment, failure in the course, mandatory participation in a series of noncredit academic integrity workshops, academic probation, and/or suspension. (If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism or are concerned that you are misappropriating someone's words or ideas, speak immediately with your instructor. For more information, you can also consult the University Code of Student Conduct or the Student Judicial Affairs website <http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu>.)

#### Policy concerning Disabilities

Rutgers abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and the accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities.