Logic, Reason, and Persuasion

Course Info

Instructor  Justin Sharber

Office Hours  1-2 pm, Monday
Philosophy Dept.
106 Somerset (the Rutgers-clock building), 5th floor, room 544

Core Curriculum Learning Goal: This course meets goal ‘o’: ‘Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.’ Assessment will be by an SAS generic rubric embedded in the evaluation criteria laid out in this syllabus.

Core Curriculum assessment is not a part of your GPA. Performance is assessed by the following labels: Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory, Poor. For more information, see http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/academics/requirements/core.

The Course

This course addresses logic and reason as broadly as possible. We will cover deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, analyzing arguments, argument structure, common fallacies, and more.

Texts

Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict.

Website on http://sakai.rutgers.edu.

Coursework

There is not much. This course has a midterm and a final, which will roughly be weighted 50 - 50. Participation can potentially help your grade. I may assign several response essays, but they would be short.
Contacting Me

Email  
jsharber@philosophy.rutgers.edu

If you have a concern, it is much easier if you come talk to me, either at the end of class or in office hours. Email me only if you’ve been abducted by aliens.

Schedule

Day 1.  Types of Argument, Syllabus

Day 2.  Arguments, Deduction
        Ch. 2: 14-23

Day 3.  Induction
        Ch. 2: 23-25

Day 4.  Ad Hominem Arguments
        Ch. 3

Day 5.  Strawman Arguments
        Ch. 4

Day 6.  Determining the right question
        Ch. 5

Day 7.  Determining relevance for reasons
        Ch. 6

Day 8.  Convergent vs. Linked Arguments
        Ch. 7: 92-96

Day 9.  Complex Arguments, Assumptions
        Ch. 7: 96-113

Day 10. Burden of Proof
        Ch. 8

Day 11. Appeal to Authority
        Ch. 10
Day 12. Figurative Analogy, Deductive Analogy  
Ch. 11: 164-184

Day 13. Inductive Analogy  
Ch. 11: 184-201

Day 14. Slippery Slope  
Ch. 12: 204-211

Day 15. Dilemmas  
Ch. 12: 211-220

Day 16. Golden Mean  
Ch. 12: 220-224

Day 17. Begging the Question  
Ch. 13

Day 18. **Exam 1**  
(Near Nov. 1)

Day 19. Language and its Pitfalls  
Ch. 9

Day 20. More issues with language  
Sakai

Ch. 16

Day 22. Necessary & Sufficient Conditions  
Ch. 14: 253-258

Day 23. Conditional Statements and inferences  
Ch. 14: 258-277

Day 24. Causation and Correlation, Scientific Method  
Ch. 15: 278-293

Day 25. Confirmation Bias  
Ch. 15: 293-297
Sakai
| Day 26. | Interpreting statistical claims  
| Ch. 17: 343-346  
| Sakai |
| Day 27. | Statistics: Apples & oranges  
| Ch. 17: 348-356  
| Sakai |
| Day 28. | Truth Tables  
| Ch. 18 |
| Day 29. | Consider the Verdict  
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| Exam 2  
( Dec. 15-22 ) |