

Logic, Reasoning, and Persuasion

730.101.01 Fall 2020

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Blog: <https://lrp18su.edublogs.org/> passcode: lrp19

Office Hours by appointment (email me): Webex, Zoom, or Phone

Course Description: An argument is a series of statements, one set of which (the premises) is intended to provide either logically conclusive or strong support for another statement (the conclusion). In this course, we will study of the logical structure of argumentation in ordinary language, with an emphasis on the relation of logic to practical (and controversial) affairs in politics, criminal justice, religion and ethics. We will also examine and learn to spot traditional informal fallacies — e.g., “begging the question”— which although formally valid, are still instances of bad reasoning. Discussions explore the nature of validity, truth, meaning, and evidence in relation to the evaluation of arguments.

Required Text: *A Concise Guide to Critical Thinking*, by Lewis Vaughn ISBN: 9780190692896

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

As a result of fully participating in this class, students will be able to:

- Recognize differences between deductive and inductive arguments
- Recognize differences between Valid and Invalid arguments
- Recognize differences between Sound and Unsound arguments
- Recognize differences between Cogent and non-cogent arguments
- Be adept at spotting 20 Informal Fallacies
- Know how to translate ordinary language sentences into statements that can serve as premises in an inductive or deductive argument
- Be able to construct/charitably reconstruct valid and sound arguments for their own or anyone’s reasoned beliefs or claims.
- Be able to construct/charitably reconstruct strong inductive arguments for their own or anyone’s reasoned beliefs or claims.

Expectations for All Students

- 1) Commit to checking the blog, Sakai announcements and Lesson Plans regularly: failure to check in and participate on blog regularly will affect your final grade.
- 2) Be prepared to engage positively in online discussions & actively complete online requests;
- 3) Be respectful of perspectives offered by classmates and professor;
- 4) Complete all assignments and VSAs;
- 5) Attend online meetings (or view recordings thereof), usually twice a week on Webex: <https://rutgers.webex.com/meet/ceridwen>. Recordings of the lectures will typically be available within 24 to 48 hours after the live one, and links will be posted in the lesson plan of the day the lecture was given.
- 6) Complete an anonymous evaluation of my teaching, given on Sakai last 2 wks of class.

General Schedule of Topics and Readings: The class is (roughly speaking) composed of a series of approximately 25 lectures and corresponding lesson and research material (“Lesson Plans” on Sakai) that work through *most* chapters of our text in roughly the given order. The syllabus and pace of the readings will be somewhat dictated by what gets covered in class each week—often a complex and changing dynamic. However, the intended schedule of readings is located below.

Assessment

25 %: HW assignments (e.g. HW 1) on Sakai Assignments

25 %: Midterm online exam

25 %: Blog Comments, any Quizzes, and VSAs (assigned as part of various lesson plans)

25 %: Final take home exam on argument reconstruction, evaluation and fallacy finding

Homework, VSA, and Blog Information

Lateness:

Homework and VSAs less than 12 hours late = docked 20% automatically.

HW less than 24 hours late = docked 50% automatically.

Blog comments more than a week after the initial blog posting date will not be given credit.

- Exception: Unless there are very good DOCUMENTED extenuating circumstances (hospitalization, car accident, death). *I will not accept work later than the above deadlines.* If you have an exceptional circumstance, email me your explanation, and if I reply that you may, then put your assignment **in pdf format** in the Sakai Dropbox (left sidebar or tab).

Homework

- HWs are graded on a 10 point basis. Answers will sometimes be discussed online in Webex discussion or the class blog; the correct answers will **always** be given in the **model answer**, located in Sakai Assignments under the corresponding HW #, visible after the due date.

- Lowest HW score will be dropped from final grade.

- HW exercises are posted on Sakai under Assignments tab, in the directions section. Sakai will almost always notify you by email that an assignment is due, **however, always assume there is one assigned and due Sunday evening at 5pm: if you don't get a notification, you should still go to Sakai to find out which exercises are due.**

- Write your answers directly into the text box supplied by Sakai. No attachments accepted for HW—it must be typed in PLEASE SAVE WORK FREQUENTLY b/c Sakai sometimes LOOSES it. USE YOUR OWN WORDS unless giving a definition from the text.

VSAs

- VSAs are assigned from within certain lesson plans and are due by 5pm Friday the week in which they are assigned. Upload your VSA on to Sakai Assignments (VSAs)

Blog

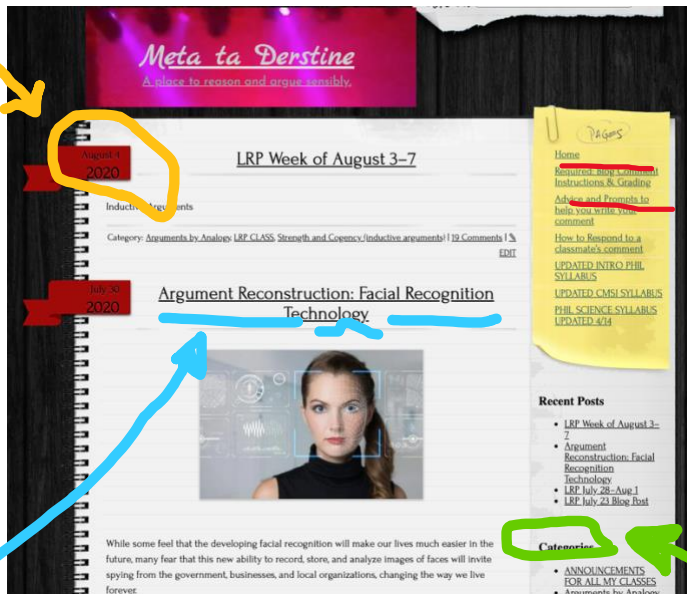
The blog is not on Sakai. It is located at <https://lrp18su.edublogs.org/>

Passcode: lrp19

I use this blog for many classes. Posts are listed in order of date, with the most recent at the top. Posts are titled informatively, e.g., “LRP blog post week of Oct. 26th,” and there is always a date on the red ribbon to the right of the post (picture below). The easiest way to locate your class’s post and to comment on it is to go to the right sidebar and scroll down to see Categories, then look for LRP, and click that link. It will take you to the most recent posts, in order of date. Remember to click the blog title (e.g., LRP blog post week of Oct 26th” in order to get into that post so you can comment (comment box at bottom).

Reading Blog Instructions is required. They are located in the right-side top (yellow) MENU on the blog home page.

Blog Portfolio: You must write your posts in a separate document to keep as a portfolio, which will be turned into Sakai during the last week of class. You want to keep a copy of the date of all comments and replies, as well as the content of the comment/reply itself. There is a model student blog under Sakai/Resources/ Models



Other Miscellaneous Information

Final exam for asynchronous classes: our final exam will be available during two time slots assigned to such classes, Sunday, December 20 from 4 to 7pm, and Tuesday, December 22 from 4 to 7pm (All times EST).

SAKAI PROBLEMS? If you have problems accessing Sakai, you are responsible for contacting the Sakai help desk and getting that fixed. I don't even know *how* to help with that type of thing. Sakai help is at 848-932-

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. You should be familiar with the university [policy on academic integrity](#). Violations will be reported and enforced according to this policy.

- Use of external website resources such as Chegg.com or others to obtain solutions to homework assignments, quizzes, or exams is cheating and a violation of the University Academic Integrity Policy. Cheating in the course will result in grade penalties, disciplinary sanctions or educational sanctions. Posting homework assignments, or exams, to external sites without the instructor's permission may be a violation of copyright and may constitute the facilitation of dishonesty, which may result in the same penalties as plain cheating. For some very helpful resources, visit: <https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-students>

Disability Accommodations: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.