

# Reason Logic and Persuasion

Instructor: Maria Doulatova

Office Hours: to be announced, 5th floor, PTL Office, 106 Somerset St. (appointment required; set up via email)

## Course Description:

A study of the logical structure of argumentation in ordinary language, with an emphasis on the relation of logic to practical affairs. Traditional informal fallacies will be studied as well. Discussions explore the nature of validity, truth, meaning, and evidence in relation to the evaluation of arguments.

Required Text: *The Power of Critical Thinking*, by Lewis Vaughn 4<sup>th</sup> ed. ISBN: 978-0-19-985667-1

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## Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

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

- Distinguish arguments from non-arguments
- Identify premises and conclusion of arguments
- 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 Uncogent arguments
- Be adept at spotting Informal Fallacies

## Expectations for All Students

- Commit to attending each class session;
- Be prepared to engage positively in class & actively listen during lecture;
- Be respectful of perspectives offered by classmates and professor;
- Complete weekly assignment sets;
- Turn off all wi-fi & mobile devices for the duration of class, unless personally cleared with me.

## Schedule of Topics and Readings

The class is (roughly speaking) composed of a series of lectures that aim to work through chapters 1-10 of our text in the given order. The syllabus and pace of the readings will be somewhat dictated by what we get covered in class each week — often a vague and changing dynamic.

### Assessment

30 %: Weekly answers to problem sets,

25 %: Midterm test on Chapters 1-5,

35 %: Final test on Chapters 6-10,

10 %: Participation, attention, and so forth: see “student expectations”, above.

### Homework Protocol

- HWs are graded on a 10 point basis; for *some* assignments, you get a 10/10 for merely *completing it*. You **MUST** bring HW to class to find out whether your answers are right or wrong. We discuss the correct answers in class.
- HW exercises will be posted on Sakai under Assignments 2, in the directions section. Sakai will almost always notify you by email that an assignment is due, however, always assume it is due and go to Sakai to find out which exercises are due even if you don't receive notification..
- Lowest 2 grades will be dropped from gradebook at the semester's end.

### Late Submission Policy

- **LATENESS:** Homework that is a few hours late, but sent **before class** the next day, will be DOCKED 10 points. Late HW **after class starts is not accepted, period.**
- If you have problems accessing Sakai, *you* are responsible for contacting IT and getting that fixed.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. You may miss a total of **three classes** (excused or unexcused). After that, your final grade will be affected. Student absence for religious holidays must be cleared via email to me **PRIOR** to the holiday (and are not counted towards your absences).

## Sakai and Homework Problem Sets

- **UPLOAD** your answers to Sakai under the ASSIGNMENTS 2 tab. No text attachments accepted—it must be in **.doc or .pdf format**. NOTE: google docs does not always work with Sakai.

## **The first part of the course will cover the following chapters and topics:**

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
1	Introduction to logic and critical reasoning	Ch.1:The Power of Critical Thinking
2	Impediments to critical thinking	Ch.2: Obstacles to Critical Thinking
3	Argument basics; judging arguments	Ch. 3: Making Sense of Arguments
4	Argument patterns; long arguments	Ch. 3: Making Sense of Arguments
5	Experts, evidence, common errors	Ch. 4: Reasons for Belief and Doubt
6	Fallacies	Ch. 5: Fallacies and Persuaders

## Disability Accommodation

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>.