

University of Indianapolis
PHIL-110-AU1
Term 1, Session I, 2008-2009

School for Adult Learning
Critical Thinking
Credit Hours: 3

Instructor

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Class Meetings

All meetings are on Thursday evenings from 6:00pm to 9:45pm
Dates: Aug. 28, Sept. 4, Sept. 11, Sept. 18, Sept. 25
All class sessions will be held in **TBA**

Welcome

Welcome to Critical Thinking. People often reason through things in an effort to discover the truth about some issue. This is typically what we do when we decide what house or car to buy, whom to vote for, where to work, etc. Basically what we are doing is listing, and evaluating, reasons for, and against, different claims. In fact, a person could reason through all important matters in life, including religious, moral, and personal matters: to discover, for example, whether or not God exists; whether it is morally permissible for a poor teenage woman living in America to have an abortion; whether a particular person would be a good spouse; etc.

Like anything else we do, we can reason well or poorly. When we reason well, we are likely to get to the truth of the matter; when we reason poorly, we do not improve our chances of getting to the truth of the matter. Over the centuries, philosophers have identified the patterns by which we reason; and they have separated these into good and bad patterns. We will discuss their findings, so we ourselves can reason better and so we can better evaluate the reasoning of others.

Tips for Success in this Class

To be successful in this class you should

- attend all classes
- complete all the homework exercises on time
- read all the assigned materials
- engage in discussion about the course materials
- work effectively in a small group and present your group's findings to the class

Required Texts:

A Concise Introduction to Logic, by Patrick J. Hurley 10th edition (Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 2006). ISBN# 0-495-50404-1. Available at the University of Indianapolis Bookstore.

Catalog Description

Critical Thinking provides instruction for students to develop the practical skills necessary to think clearly and rationally. Areas covered include: argument analysis, informal fallacies, deductive inference, inductive generalization, analogical reasoning, and explanation.

Course Summary

Critical thinking is a broad subject. We will focus on acquiring critical thinking techniques that have broad application. During Weeks 1 and 2, we will learn to identify arguments and their component parts, the two main kinds of argument, what makes for good (and bad) arguments of each kind, and different structures that arguments take. During Weeks 3 and 4, we will learn to identify roughly two dozen common fallacies in everyday reasoning, as well as reasoning by analogy. Week 5 will cover reasoning about probabilities and reasoning in applied ethics.

Course Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

This course is relevant to all domains of life: work, personal, social, political, religious/spiritual, etc. This is because in all of these domains, we can engage in reasoning, in order to better ourselves and others. The purpose of the course is to develop your reasoning abilities.

Here are the specific goals/objectives of the course:

- to develop students' abilities to differentiate arguments from non-arguments in everyday conversation and forms of print
- to develop students' abilities to identify the component parts of arguments
- to develop students' abilities to differentiate between deductive and inductive arguments
- to develop students' sensitivities to the most common fallacies that show up in human reasoning
- to develop students' tools for evaluating pieces of reasoning by analogy
- to develop students' tools for evaluating pieces of probabilistic reasoning
- to encourage students to exercise these abilities and use these tools in various domains of life, especially those concerning social responsibility.

Course Requirements and Grading Procedures

Quizzes

There will be four short quizzes (see the dates below). Each quiz will be close-book and will consist in questions that are of just the same format as the homework exercises that are due that week. Each quiz will be given at the end of class after we have discussed and clarified all the material. Each should take 10-15 minutes.

Tests

There will be two tests (see the dates below). Each test will be close-book and will consist in questions that are of just the same format as the homework exercises from the relevant sections of the text. In advance of each test, I will make available a practice test that mimics the upcoming test in content, length, and difficulty. Test 1 will cover 1.1-1.3, 1.4, and 1.6. Test 2 will cover 3.2-3.4.

General Class Participation

Throughout the course, you will be expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss the material. Your comments and questions will be vital to the success of the course. This part of your grade will be based on raising questions in class, generating and sustaining good discussion

in class, and communicating with the instructor during office visits or via e-mail. Notice: this is a participation grade, not an attendance grade. The attendance policy is below.

Please do your best to arrive at class on time and to actively contribute to the class – a good class requires team work. Being unprepared for class does a disservice to the class as a whole and is unfair to students who show up prepared and ready to participate.

Grading

Name	Date	Points
Quiz #1	Aug. 28	10 points
Quiz #2	Sept. 4	20 points
Quiz #3	Sept. 18	20 points
Quiz #4	Sept. 25	20 points
Test #1	Sept. 11	100 points
Test #2	Sept. 25	100 points
General Class Participation	All Classes	20 points
TOTAL		290 points

Grading Scale

267 to 290 = A	241 to 252 = B	211 to 223 = C	183 to 194 = D
261 to 267 = A-	232 to 241 = B-	203 to 211 = C-	174 to 183 = D-
252 to 261 = B+	223 to 232 = C+	194 to 203 = D+	0 to 174 = F

Course Policies

Attendance:

Due to the accelerated format of the classes in the School of Adult Learning, any student missing more than one class will be automatically dropped from the course. The *only* exceptions to the attendance policy are absences due to medical illness, military service, death of a family member and similar emergency situations. In any case, students should try to notify the instructor, as soon as reasonably possible, about any absences they foresee.

Electronic Devices: The use of electronic devices during class and examinations are expressly forbidden, unless prior consent of the instructor is given. This includes but is not limited to calculators, tape-recorders, cell phones, lap-top computers, PDA’s, MP3 players, etc.

Late and Missed Assignments: Missed assignments, regardless of type, will be given a 0, unless sufficient evidence is presented for why the assignment was missed. In the case of examinations, make-ups will be allowed only in those cases where the instructor has both been notified in advance about a conflict and permission has been granted by the instructor, or if an absence is adequately documented or explained and permitted by the instructor. Students should do everything in their power to avoid this kind of situation since it puts them at a large disadvantage given the compressed nature of the course.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: Any student who is caught engaging in academic dishonesty will be given an F for the class and reported to the Office of Student Affairs. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, theft of another student's or instructor's materials, or submitting work that has been done by someone else (e.g. papers bought from web-sites). Students are advised to obtain and read a copy of the *Student Handbook* from the Office of Student Affairs so that they are clear about the University's policy on Academic Integrity.

Withdrawal: According to the Office of the Registrar, the withdrawal deadline is Friday August 29. As of August 22, 2005, the School of Adult Learning no longer withdraws a student for not attending the first evening of class. The instructor reserves the right and the responsibility of withdrawing a student for excessive absences as determined by the instructor.

Anticipated Out-of-Class Study Time: Students should expect to spend two times the number of classroom hours in out of class study time as a general guideline. This means that students should expect to spend approximately 8 hours per week reading, doing the homework exercises, preparing for quizzes and tests, and working on the group project.

Class Schedule

Week 1: Thursday, August 28, 2008

Topics: The Nature, Parts, and Types of Arguments

- Read Hurley 1.1-1.3 (p. 1-38)
- Complete the following exercise questions:

1.1	p.8	I	4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24
	p.14	IV	1-5
1.2	p.24	I	1-10, 15, 24, 25
	p.31	V	1-4, 9
1.3	p.38	I	1, 2, 3, 5, 7-15, 18, 19

- You will take Quiz #1 at the end of class. It will be on the material from 1.1-1.3.

Week 2: Thursday, September 4, 2008

Topics: Evaluative Criteria and Diagramming Techniques

- Read Hurley 1.4 (p. 42-49) and 1.6 (p. 61-66)
- Complete the following exercise questions:

1.4	p.54	IV	All
	p.54	V	All
1.6	p.66	I	1, 3, 5, 6, 7; 2, 4, 8, 9, 10; Handout

- You will take Quiz #2 at the end of class. It will be on the material from 1.4 and 1.6.

Week 3: Thursday, September 11, 2008

Topics: Fallacies of Relevance and Fallacies of Weak Induction

- Read Hurley 3.2 (p. 116-126) and 3.3 (p. 131-140)
- Complete the following exercise questions:

3.2	p.127	I	All except 3, 9, 11, 13, 18, 21, 25
	p.144	III	4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 14, 20, 21, 23, 26
3.3	p.142	I	All except 2, 5, 8, 11, 13
	p.144	III	1, 25, 28, 29, 30

- You will take Test 1 at the beginning of class. It will be on the material from 1.1-1.3, 1.4, and 1.6.

Week 4: Thursday, September 18, 2008

Topics: Fallacies of Presumption, Ambiguity, and Grammatical Analogy; Reasoning by Analogy

- Read Hurley 3.4 (p. 149-163), except skip Fallacy #18; Read Hurley 9.1-9.3 (p. 468-479)
- Complete the following exercise questions:

3.4	p.164	I	All except 8, 9, 14, 18, 25
	p.166	III	2, 5, 10, 12, 15, 20
9.1	p.479	II	1-3

- You will take Quiz #3 at the end of class. It will be on the material from 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 9.1.

Week 5: Thursday, September 25, 2008

Topics: Notes on Probability and Applied Ethics Case Study

- Read Hurley 11.1 (p. 510-517), but only read about Rules 1-4 of the Probability Calculus

11.2	p.523	I	1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10
	p.523	II	1-4, 6, 7, Hints Handout
			Handout

- You will take Test 2 at the beginning of class. It will cover the material from 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 9.1.
- You will take Quiz #4 at the end of class. It will be on the material from 11.2 and the notes on Capital Punishment.