

LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING HONORS SYLLABUS: PRINT AND KEEP THIS WITH YOU
PHILOSOPHY 102 HONORS Fall 2009

Instructor: Anne Morrissey, Trinity 102, 898-4713

Office Hours: Mondays 1:20 to 3:50 & Tuesdays and Thursdays 2 to 3:15

Philosophy Department (where my mailbox is located) is in Trinity 121, 898-6183

Below are the times and locations of all my sections for this class:

Phil102 Section 4, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 to 12:15 in Glenn 212

Phil102 Section 10, Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 to 1:45 in Butte 109

Phil 102E (English as second language) Section1, Mondays & Wednesdays, 4 to 5:15 in Tehama 308

Phil 102H (Honors) Section1, Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 to 4:45 in O'Connell 239

email: amorrissey@csuchico.edu Please don't email 'Ann' without an "e" Morrissey, who is an MD at the Student Health Center.

The Final Exam for all my sections is Tuesday, December 15, at 4pm in PAC 144. This is a common time, not the time scheduled for when your class meets.

REQUIRED TEXT: Critical Thinking, 9th Edition, by Moore and Parker. Bring the book to each class.

OTHER REQUIRED PURCHASES: Scantron Forms 882-E (at least 3; one for each exam) and also Quizzstrips (for each quiz, at least 8, although we'll probably have 10-14 quizzes). Both types are available in the A.S. Bookstore and the small stores on campus. Always have a Quizzstrip with you.

Welcome! I look forward to meeting you and spending the semester developing our critical thinking skills together. Before I go into all the mechanics of the class, I wanted to go over a few important topics with you.

1) Aim high. You're at a good university and all here want you to do well so you can have a rewarding life. So, don't sell yourself short. If something is difficult, be active, not passive. Try to figure out what to do, read actively so that you can figure out what's being discussed. ASK QUESTIONS. Be persistent. You want to gain depth and not be superficial.

2) Below are some of the basic things I expect from you for each class:

a) Do the readings and the assignments and bring the text to class.

b) **Check the answers** to the assignments on **my (Blackboard) Vista page** (which will be set up under my Philosophy 102 section 4 class for use by all my sections) **before you come to class**. Make a note of any of the problems you have questions about and ask about those in class. Your questions are a really important part of the class.

[If you have **any problems** during the semester downloading and/or **opening** things from my Vista page, **call the Student Computing helpline** at 898-4357, which is open Mondays through Thursdays 24 hours, Fridays until 11:30 p.m., Saturdays noon to 11:30, and Sundays opening at noon.]

c) Be on time and stay the whole class. If you wish to leave class early, I will ask you to keep walking over to the Records office where you can drop this class. Also, when we do exercises in class, this is not an invitation to leave the classroom to get a drink or call a friend.

d) **Check your university email** account often. I sometimes send a message to you (which will come from Marie Knox, our department associate) and you'll need to see it in a timely fashion.

e) **All electronics need to be turned off.** It's simply rude to have them on, plus, on quiz and exam days, if anyone has anything electronic out, I will have to assume you're cheating and you will get an automatic F for the class. If you're in the habit of turning off your electronics before entering any of your classes, you're less likely to accidentally leave something out or on.

My promise to you is that I, too, will be prepared and enthusiastic for class. I will do my utmost to help you succeed so that you can use these valuable critical thinking skills through the rest of your life.

OFFICE HOURS: Please come in to see me if you are having ANY trouble with class work. One way to tell whether you should come in is to 1) do the exercises, 2) check the answers on my Vista class page before class and make a note of answers you don't understand, 3) ask questions about those problems in class. If, after working on them further, you're still having problems, come see me.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: The objective of this course is to help you identify, understand, and evaluate arguments. The text will explain basic concepts and principles of critical thinking, and we'll spend a great deal of time practicing various techniques using exercises in the text and using your own written work. This is a university-approved General Education course in Sub-Area A3. This course helps students achieve the ability to think clearly and logically, and to find and critically examine information. You will be able to read, listen, view, and reason critically and synthesize information from varied sources.

As a Sub-Area A3 class you will need to demonstrate: 1) the ability to distinguish between fact and judgment and between belief and knowledge; 2) the ability to distinguish between correct and incorrect reasoning, including an understanding of the formal and informal fallacies in language and thought; 3) knowledge of and skill in using elementary methods and patterns of reasoning, including induction and deduction; and 4) the ability to criticize, analyze, and advocate ideas with logical force within human discourse, both oral and written.

Since this is an honors section, we will be going into these topics in even greater depth than my other sections.

COURSE ORGANIZATION: Usually we'll spend class on issues raised in the text and applying critical thinking principles to exercises from the book (which will clarify and put into practice what you've read in the text). Ideally, this course will be a combination of lecture and workshop (all of us working on problems and concepts together). This requires that you participate. The only way to get good at critical thinking is to do it, and besides, it's a lot more fun that way. Note that how well you do in the class absolutely depends on you doing the homework assignments. That's where you get your practice at developing critical thinking skills. Later in this syllabus you'll see the anticipated order of chapters and topics in the book and the exercises we'll likely do.

CLASS GRADE 65% based on the exams.
 20% based on the mandatory group paper.
 15% based on quizzes.

EXAMS count for **65% of your grade**. The exams are closed book, true/false, multiple choice, and problem solving. There'll be 3 regular exams plus an optional comprehensive final (see NO MAKEUP section below). I tell you what will be on the exam the class period before an exam. I announce exam dates at least one week in advance. The first exam will probably be as late as the 7th week of class. See the last page for an estimate of time between exams. One definite date is for the third exam on Tuesday, May 12 in the last week of classes. If you don't wish to take an exam during dead week (the last week of classes), do not take this class. Part of each regular exam (NOT the final) will involve **group work which will count toward your exam grade**. Most of the exam grade will be determined by your individual exam work, the group exam work will count for 1/7 of the exam grade.

EXAM GRADES: These are the grades you will receive for the following scores on an exam:
95-100 = A, 90-94 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 65-69 = D+, 60-64 = D.

NO MAKEUP EXAM, FINAL IS OPTIONAL: No makeup exams are given. Since there are times when you can't help but miss class (and some of those times are exam days, unfortunately), the cumulative final can be used to make up for one missed exam. **If you miss an exam, the final is no longer optional---you must take it or else you'll get an F for the class.**

For those of you who do take all the exams, you do not have to take the final. If you have taken all the exams, and you do take the final, your grade on it will be substituted for your lowest exam grade if your final exam grade is higher than your lowest exam grade. In other words, I will count your highest 3 exam letter grades in calculating your exam grade (plus the average of your 3 group exams). **The date of the final exam for all my sections is Tuesday, December 15, 4-5:50 p.m., PAC 144.**

MANDATORY GROUP PAPER counts for **20% of your grade**. Since this is a course in critical thinking, what better critical skill to cultivate and enhance than that of working collaboratively in a group. Most of you probably plan a career where often you must work together with others on projects that have serious consequences. Your group paper should not only help you improve and enhance your written critical thinking skills, but also give you a chance to work out essential practicalities like time management when it involves you and others, how to collaborate on one written report, how to deal with group dynamics, etc.

There will be one group paper assignment. Everyone must do it in a group. You'll have about 2 to 3 weeks to do the paper. I will give you time in class to choose your group consisting of 3 or 4 people. This paper requires that you meet outside of class numerous times. You will turn in one essay (or set of essays) for the entire group and you will all receive the grade that the paper receives.

I'll hand out the paper topic or topics probably halfway to 2/3 of the way through the semester (once we've covered enough material for a meaningful essay). Often I ask you several different questions, each of which requires an essay answer. Sometimes you'll be asked to analyze one reading.

Each person in the group must work on all parts of the assignment in order for her name to go on the paper. This includes the final wording of the paper. **Failure to fully participate** means you can't get credit for the paper which will result in an **F for the class** since this paper is mandatory. Since this is a GE course, AND an honors class, you're expected to do written work. Missing this element of the course constitutes a serious problem, hence the serious penalty of failing the class. I consider this group paper to be an alternate form of exam and that explains the heavy weight (20%) I give to the paper.

Please note that in essay answers, some people think that an essay deserves an A unless there's something wrong with it. This is a mistaken assumption. A more accurate assumption is that an adequate answer deserves a C unless there's something especially good about it, and that a good essay deserves a B unless there's something truly outstanding about it. So, if you're disappointed with your grade, don't come to me and ask what's wrong with it. But by all means do come to me if you're prepared to explain why yours is truly a good or outstanding essay.

TYPING TIPS: Always use two spaces after a period. I will require that on typed work. I will also require that you double space your essays. Also, titles should be in italics.

QUIZZES count for **15% of your grade**. These will be frequent, every week or so, and may or may not be announced ahead of time. One of these will involve written short essays outside of class (done in a group), most will be in class consisting of true/false, multiple choice, problem solving questions. I'll drop your one lowest in-class 10 point quiz score when I calculate your quiz/assignments grade. I will inform you of your quiz grade on the last day of class.

ATTENDANCE: If you're absent, you're absent. Even though each class meeting may not seem like an invaluable learning experience, I assume that you will benefit, sometimes in subtle and intangible ways, from most class meetings if you are there and are paying attention. If you're absent, it will be for some legitimate reason (like illness, jury duty, a death in the family, etc.). Nevertheless, even if you're absent for a legitimate reason, you are still absent and will not receive the full benefit of the missed class nor will the class benefit from your participation. You are responsible for the content of all lectures, discussions and any changes announced in class, whether you are there or not. If you're absent you need to call and/or email another classmate for information about the class that day. To facilitate this, get the full name, phone number, and email of at least 3 other students in this class.

PARTICIPATION IN CLASS: Will be noted and taken into account if your grade is on some border (make sure I know your name).

FIGURING OUT YOUR GRADE IN THE CLASS: This will be important for you on the last day of class when you'll know what all your grades are up to the final and will be able to figure out what your grade is in the class. This will allow you to make a fully informed decision as to whether or not you want to take the optional final. I assign a numerical equivalent to the exam letter grades (A = 10, A- = 9, B+ = 8, B = 7, B- = 6, C+ = 5, C = 4, C- = 3, D+ = 2, D = 1, D- = 0.5, F = 0) **Grades with .6 or above get bumped up, grades with .5 or below stay the same. "Bumping" only goes one number past the decimal point.**

First, I average the letter grades of the 3 group exams. E.g., if you had a B+, a B and an A on the group exams, that would be equivalent to an 8, a 7, and 10 for a total of 25, which is divided by 3 for an exam average of 8.3. Following the decimal point rule above, this would stay as an 8 (a B+). This group exam average counts the equivalent of 1/2 of one individual exam, or 1/7 of the exam grade total. Then I **add in your 3 individual exam letter grades doubled**. For example, let's say you get a B+ (8), a B- (6), and a C+ (5) on the 3 regular exams for a total of 19. But, since each individual exam counts twice as much as the average for all 3 of the group exams, I'm going to **double** the total of 19 to a 38. I then add the 8 (the B+) that is the **group exam average** for a final total of 46. I then **divide this by 7** for a grade of 6.5 which stays at a 6 for the exam grade of B-. (It's divided by 7 because each exam counts twice as much as the group exam average, so 3 exams times 2 = 6 plus the one group exam average makes 7.)

Let's assume that your group paper grade is an A- (a 9) and your quiz grade is a B- (a 6). To figure out your grade in the class do the following:

Since the **exams count 65%**, multiply the exam grade of 6 (a B-) **times 13** for a total of 78.

Since the **group paper counts for 20%** multiply the 9 (an A-) **times 4** for a total of 36.

The **quiz grade** of 6 (a B-) counts for **15%**, so **multiply by 3** for 18.

Add those 3 totals together for 132 which you then divide by 20, which gives you a 6.6.

Following my decimal point rule, this counts as a 7, which means you get a B for the class.

YOU WILL RECEIVE AN F FOR THE CLASS IF YOU DO NOT TAKE 3 EXAMS AND PARTICIPATE IN THE GROUP PAPER. I GIVE NO INCOMPLETES FOR THIS CLASS.

HONESTY: For any work, you should observe standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating before, during, and after an exam, discussing exam or quiz questions with people in other sections, having electronics out or on, or other violations will result in an "F" for the class and a recommendation that anyone violating these rules be expelled. If you're unsure what constitutes cheating, feel free to ask.

NOTE AS WELL: Arriving late or leaving early is extremely rude and annoys most instructors, including me.

Please don't start packing up your books at the end of class if anyone is talking. If you do, I will come to a dead halt and simply wait until people have stopped (hence, defeating your purpose of leaving quickly).

I reserve the right to revise this syllabus at any time during the semester.

CHAPTERS COVERED FOR THE CLASS:

THE FIRST 6 to 7 WEEKS, Chapters 1, 4, 3, 6, 7:

Ch. 1 & 4 (with an immediate take-home group quiz concerning material in Ch. 4). In Ch. 1 the focus is on what is an argument and we'll spend some significant time on how to tell the difference between value judgments and claims that are not value judgments. Ch. 4 is about credibility and how to tell whether a claim is probably true or not. In Ch. 3, we'll focus on vagueness and clarity. We'll cover the chapters 1, 3 and 4 quickly, in about 3 weeks.

We'll then do Ch. 6 and 7, which covers fallacies (common errors in reasoning). We'll spend about 3 to 3 1/2 weeks on these 2 chapters.

1st exam on the above chapters, probably in the 7th week.

THE NEXT 3 to 3 1/2 WEEKS, Chapters 2 and 9:

Then we'll do the logic part of the course. In Ch. 2, our focus is on what it means to say an argument is valid and sound. We'll also do pages 297-321 in Ch. 9, focusing on symbolizing (translating) and using the short truth-table method to prove that arguments are valid or not. This should take 3 to 3 1/2 weeks.

2nd exam on the above 2 chapters.

THE NEXT 3-3/12 WEEKS, Chapters 10 and 11

We'll end with Chapters 10 & 11 where we'll learn how to evaluate 3 extremely common types of inductive arguments that we encounter daily.

3rd exam on these 2 chapters is December 8th

Listed below are the exercises in the book you will most likely do as homework:

Exercises 1-1, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-7, 1-10, 1-11, 1-13, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, 4-12, 4-13, 3-1, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-8, 3-13,

6-2, 6-3, 6-5, 6-7, 6-8, 7-2 through 7-7, 7-9 through 7-12, 7-17, 7-18 and in addition, I'll have a download exercise for Chapters 6 & 7

Exercises 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-5, 2-8, 2-10, 9-1, 9-2, 9-4, 9-5, 9-11, 9-12, 9-15

Exercises 10-1, 10-3 through 10-9, 10-11 through 10-17, 11-1, 11-2, 11-4, 11-5, 11-7, 11-10, 11-11, 11-12, 11-14, 11-15, 11-16, 11-17, 11-19, 11-20, 11-22, 11-23. I'll also have downloads with additional exercises for Ch. 10 & 11

SOME SPELLING TIPS

Argument (there's no "e" after the "u")

It's = it is [It's hot outside.] its = the possessive [The tree lost its leaves during autumn]

its leaves = the leaves of the tree

They're = they are [My students? They're a rowdy group!] Their = the possessive [My students have lost their minds.] their minds = minds of my students

Are = the plural present tense of the verb "to be" [My students are a rowdy bunch.] Our = the possessive [Our cats are very entertaining.] our cats = cats belonging to us

Weather = the climate [The weather in Chico was very hot in July.] Whether = used to indicate