

LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING SYLLABUS: KEEP THIS WITH YOU

PHIL 102 & 102E 1Spring 2008

Phil102-4 11-12:15 TR Glenn 212

Phil102-12 & 42 TR 12:30-1:45 Holt 325

Phil 102E-1 MW 4-5:15 Butte 221

Phil 102H-1 TR 3:30-4:45 OCNL 239

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**Please don't email 'Ann' without an "e" Morrissey, who is an MD at the Student Health Center.

Instructor: Anne Morrissey, Trinity 102

Office Hours: M 1:20-3:50 & TR 2-3:15

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Philosophy Dept: Trinity 121

Philosophy Dept. Phone: 898-6183

Final Exam is Tues., December 16, 4pm, PAC 144

REQUIRED TEXT: Critical Thinking, 9th Ed., 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 Quizzstrips (for each quiz, at least 8, although we'll probably have 12-15 quizzes), both types are available in the A.S. Bookstore. Always have a Quizzstrip with you.

OFFICE HOURS: Please come in to see me if you are having ANY trouble with class work. The way to tell is: do the exercises and note when we go over them which ones give you trouble. If, after working on them further, you still don't see what's going on, come get help.

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.

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.

EXAMS: 75% 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 may 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 last regular exam on Mon., December 8 (for MW section) and Tues., December 9 (for TTh sections), 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.

GUARANTEED EXAM GRADES: If you receive the following scores on an exam, you're guaranteed to receive a grade no lower than that indicated: 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 (since I will drop your lowest exam grade if you take the final). 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 do take the final, your grade on it will be substituted for your lowest exam grade. If your final exam grade is lower than your lowest exam grade, I will disregard the final exam grade. In other words, since we'll have three regular exams, and you also take the final, I will only take your three highest exam grades from the four you've taken to figure out your exam component grade.

QUIZZES & ASSIGNMENTS: 25% of your grade. These will be frequent, every week or so, and may or may not be announced ahead of time. Some of these will involve written short essays outside of class (usually in a group), many will be in class 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. Since this is a GE class, you must do written work that's graded by me. Much of that will occur in these quizzes and assignments. **If you do not participate in most of these, you will not fulfill the GE requirement and I will give you an F for the class.** 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 TIP: Always use two spaces after a period. I will require that on typed work.

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).

CLASS GRADE: 75% based on your average on the exams,
25% based on quizzes and assignments.

FIGURING OUT YOUR GRADE IN THE CLASS: This will be important for you on the last day of class when you'll have everything graded returned 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 on the group part of the 3 regular exams. E.g., if you had a B+, a B and an A on the group part of the 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 (B+). This group exam average counts the equivalent of 1/2 of one individual exam, or 1/7 of the exam grade total. I'll then average your exam letter grades to get your exam grade. 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. However, 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 points that is the average of the 3 group exams 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 quiz grade is a C-. To figure out your grade in the class do the following:
Exam = 75% so multiply the exam grade of 6 (a B-) times 15 for a total of 90.
Quizzes = 25% so multiply quiz/assignment grade of 3 (a C-) times 5 for a 15.
Add these together for a total of 105, then divide by 20 for a 5.2, which stays at a 5 for a C+ for the class grade.

YOU WILL RECEIVE AN F FOR THE CLASS IF YOU DO NOT TAKE 3 EXAMS AND PARTICIPATE IN MOST OF THE TESTING IN THE QUIZZES AND ASSIGNMENTS SECTION OF THE COURSE. 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, 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 6-7 WEEKS, Chapters 1, 4, 3, 2, 9:

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.

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. This should take 3-3 1/2 weeks.

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

THE NEXT 3 1/2-4 WEEKS, Chapters 6 and 7:

We'll then do Ch. 6 and 7, which covers fallacies (common errors in reasoning). We'll spend about 3 1/2 to 4 weeks on these 2 chapters.

2nd exam on the above 2 chapters.

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

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

3rd exam on these 2 chapters is December 8th or 9th (depending on which day your class meets).

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

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 Ch. 6 & 7

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 alternatives [I don't know whether to wear my black or red shoes.]