

Phil 115A: Introduction to Practical Reasoning Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke
Class Times: MWF 3:30-4:50
Location: SMITH 115

Office Hours: W 1-2 (and by appointment)
Office: M396 Savery Hall
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Overview: Today's world of information is rife with arguments; from advertising to political speeches, someone is trying to convince you of something. It's crucial therefore that we be able to recognize bad arguments and to identify fallacies in order to avoid making errors when creating our own arguments. This course is designed to introduce you to the various forms of argumentation and the ways to assess the strengths/limitations of those arguments. Upon completing this course, the student will be able to create their own arguments and assess the merit of the arguments of others.

Goals and Objectives:

- Identify Different Forms of Argumentation
- Extract and Reconstruct Arguments from Different Media
- Develop Strategies for Critically Evaluating Each Form
- Construct Arguments in Support of a Particular Position

Text: Mark Storey, "Critical Thinking," (e-book on Canvas).

*Additional sources to supplement weekly objectives; provided on course site. (See *).*

Overview of Requirements:

Homework	(9 x 15 points each)	135 points
Participation		95 points
Peer Review		80 points
Paper		100 points
Exam 1		120 points
Exam 2		120 points
Exam 3		150 points
		Total 800

Requirements:

Homework: Weekly homework assignments will be posted on the course web site and due at the beginning of class on Friday. You must attend class in order to turn in your homework. (No drive by submissions or submission by proxy.) **No late homework will be accepted without a legitimate excuse.**

Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in class. This can be accomplished by actively listening, asking good questions, participating in class discussion/exercises, and attending office

hours. Group work cannot be made up and the use of electronics, such as phone/computer/music players during class, may result in a lower participation grade.

Peer Review: On the 16th of May, we will conduct a peer review of the assigned paper. The points for this assignment are broken into two categories: half the points will be for having a rough draft (finished, hard copy, with citations and bibliography) and the other half of the points will be given for a completed review of another student's paper. The review and paper must be brought to class. Only excused absences will be allowed to make up this assignment.

Paper: Students are expected to write a 3-4 page critical paper, which will be assigned May 2nd. The first draft is due on May 16th during class, and at that time, the papers will undergo peer review. The final paper (worth 100 points) **and** the original draft are due on May 30th.

Exams: Tentative dates for Exams 1 and 2 are April 20th and May 18th respectively. A final will be held on the last day of class, June 7th. Make sure to note this date when making any travel plans- tickets home/vacation/etc. do not constitute excused absences. All exams will cover lecture material, readings, as well as in-class discussion. You may be tested on assigned readings that were not covered in class. I do not schedule review sessions or provide review questions.

Grading

When converting total points to decimal grades the following scale will be used. I determine your overall class grade by adding up all of the points you earned for each assignment, multiplying the total by 1.25, and using the following chart to determine your final grade for the course.

Letter Grade	Total Points Ranges
A	975-1000
A-	960-974
B+	939-959
B	900-938
B-	885-899
C+	868-884
C	850-867
C-	837-849
D+	806-836
D	785-805
D-	765-784

F	0-764
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There will be no curves and no extra credit in this class. You will not be graded relative to your fellow students. What this means is that it is possible for *everyone* to get an A (4.0) or an E (0.0) or anything in-between. **In order to pass the course you must complete all assignments with an additive percentage of 60% or higher.**

TENTATIVE COURSE READINGS AND CALENDAR

I reserve the right to change the syllabus or schedule for any reason.

Week 1	CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS	
	03/26 Introduction, Syllabus, Exercise	No Reading Assigned
	03/28 What are arguments?	Critical Thinking, pp. 1-9
	03/30 TRAVEL APA	Homework 1 Due (Submit on Canvas)
Week 2	DEDUCTIVE & NON-DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS	
	04/02 Two Categories of Arguments	Critical Thinking pp. 11-18
	04/04 General Patterns	No Assigned Reading
	04/06 Monty Python Exercise	Homework 2 Due
Week 3	DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS- VALIDITY AND SOUNDNESS	
	04/09 Valid and Invalid	Critical Thinking pp. 19-26
	04/11 Soundness	Critical Thinking pp. 32-35
	04/13 Practice Problems	Homework 3 Due
Week 4	NON-DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS- COGENCY AND STRENGTH	
	04/16 Strong and Weak Arguments	Critical Thinking pp. 27-31
	04/18 Cogency	Critical Thinking pp. 36-38
	04/20 EXAM 1	Homework 4 Due

Week 5	ARGUMENT ANALYSIS	
	04/23 Evaluating Arguments & Defeated Arguments	*Feldman, pp. 167-175 *Defeated Arguments.pdf
	04/25 Evaluating Premises	*Feldman, pp. 175-188
	04/27 Reconstruction & Analysis	Homework 5 Due
Week 6	ADVERTISING/WRITING AN ARGUMENTATIVE PAPER	
	04/30 Advertising	*Vaughn-Advertising
	05/02 Writing a Philosophy Paper	*Writing Module 1, 3, 4
	05/04 Comparing Papers Exercise	Homework 6 Due (Outline)
Week 7	TESTIMONIAL ARGUMENTS	
	05/07 Testimonial Arguments	*Feldman pp. 216-223
	05/09 Evaluating Testimonial Arguments	*Feldman pp. 223-231
	05/11 Assessment in Action	Homework 7 Due
Week 8	STATISTICAL & CAUSAL ARGUMENTS	
	05/14 Statistical Arguments & Predictions	*Feldman pp. 232-276
	05/16 Peer review	No Reading Assigned
	05/18 Exam 2	Homework 8 Due
Week 9	AMPLIATIVE ARGUMENTS	
	05/21 Causal Arguments, Video	*Feldman pp. 277-294
	05/23 Argument from Analogy, IBE	Critical Thinking pp. 49-67
	05/25 IBE	Homework 9 Due
Week 10	FALLACIES OR ERRORS IN REASONING/	
	05/28 HOLIDAY! No Class	No Reading Assigned

05/30 Paper Due, Fallacies

*Bassham, Fallacies 1 & 2

06/01 Fallacies, cont.

Homework 10 Due

Week 11 **Final Exam JUNE 7th, 2:30-4:20 Smith 115**

General Information

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is very important for doing well in this course. We will be discussing numerous cases, examples, issues, and theories. Philosophy cannot be done in isolation. Thus, attendance, participation, discussion, and asking questions, are all very important.

Cheating and Plagiarism: You are responsible for upholding the University's standards of academic honesty. Therefore, you should avoid engaging in illegitimate forms of help, looking at copies of exams from current and previous years, and/or peeking at someone else's work during an exam. If you are caught violating the University's standards of academic honesty, you will be reported to the Dean's Representative for Academic Conduct and the score of "0" given to the assignment.

Electronic Devices: All electronic devices may only be used in the classroom with the permission of the instructor or Disability Services to meet an accommodation. Activities that are not related to the course, such as checking e-mail, texting, on-line gaming, and social networking, are disruptive to the class.

Exams: There are no opportunities to make up missed exams unless you encounter circumstances or events deemed suitable by the instructor, such as serious illness (requiring documentation), a university event at which you are required to attend, jury duty, or a religious observation. **Please do not ask for alternative dates or times.**

Accommodations: If you have letters of accommodation or are a student athlete who will be traveling during our class times, please contact me as soon as possible.

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS***

COURSES, GRADING, ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of creations, ideas or words of publicly available work without formally acknowledging the author or source through appropriate use of quotation marks, references, and the like. Plagiarizing is presenting someone else's work as one's own original work or thought. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. The University of Washington takes plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism may lead to disciplinary action by the University against the student who submitted the work. Any student who is uncertain whether his or her use of the work of others constitutes plagiarism should consult the course instructor for guidance before formally submitting the course work involved. *(Sources: UW Graduate School Style Manual; UW Bothell Catalog; UW Student Conduct Code)*

Incompletes

An incomplete is given only when the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work until within two weeks of the end of the quarter and has furnished proof satisfactory to the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control. *(Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading")*

Grade Appeal Procedure

A student who believes he or she has been improperly graded must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's explanation, the student may submit a written appeal to the chair of the Department of Philosophy with a copy of the appeal also sent to the instructor. The chair consults with the instructor to ensure that the evaluation of the student's performance has not been arbitrary or capricious. Should the chair believe the instructor's conduct to be arbitrary or capricious and the instructor declines to revise the grade, the chair, with the approval of the voting members of his or her faculty, shall appoint an appropriate member, or members, of the faculty of the Department of Philosophy to evaluate the performance of the student and assign a grade. The Dean and Provost should be informed of this action. Once a student submits a written appeal, this document and all subsequent actions on this appeal are recorded in written form for deposit in a School file. *(Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading")*

Concerns About a Course, an Instructor, or a Teaching Assistant

If you have any concerns about a Philosophy course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall).

If you have any concerns about a teaching assistant, please see the teaching assistant about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the teaching assistant or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the instructor in charge of the course. If you are still not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall), or the Graduate School at G-1 Communications Building (543-5900).

* *Adapted from material prepared by the UW Department of History and used with permission.*