PHILOSOPHY 1290 (A01) – CRITICAL THINKING
COURSE SYLLABUS
1045-1245 MTWRF
Helen Glass Centre 360

Instructor: Dave Hampton
SPC 308
Email: valaruakar68@hotmail.com or hampton@umanitoba.ca
Office Hours: 1000-1030 MTWRF

Course Description:
The advent of modern communication and computing technologies has vastly increased the quantity of information available to
the citizen, the accessibility to that information, to the means of distributing it, and to the speed with which it is available. While
this is a positive development in many respects it has not led to a decrease in epistemic dependence and, to some degree, has
contributed to the erosion of individual reading comprehension and critical reasoning skills. This is a matter of concern for
epistemic autonomy, the ability to reason critically for oneself, stands at the heart of both enlightenment values and the pursuit of
truth. The focus of this course will be upon the fundamentals of argumentation that are necessary to exercise epistemic autonomy.
We will devote our attention to argument construction, comprehension and evaluation; skills that the student in any academic or
professional discipline will find essential.

Required Text:

Student Evaluation:
| Attendance | 15% |
| Test | 35% |
| Final Examination | 50% |

Important Note: Final course grades are subject to the approval of the Faculty of Arts and may be subject to change in
order to fall within the parameters set by this Faculty, or in order to meet any new policies implemented by the Faculty.

Evaluation Explanations:
Attendance: It is difficult if not impossible to do well in this course without attending class. To encourage students
to attend regularly a sign in sheet will be distributed each class. Attendance will count toward 15% of the student’s
final grade with the attendance grade calculated on the basis of the percentage of classes attended by the student.

Test: There will be one in-class term test worth 35% of the final course grade. The test will consist of questions and
erises calculated to assess the student’s understanding of the concepts and skills studied in the first section of the
course.

Examinations: There will be a take-home final examination worth 50% of the student’s course grade. The exam will
be distributed in the last class and it will be due on Friday May 31st. The final examination will consist of short
answer questions and argument evaluation exercises covering material primarily from the last half of the course.

Late Policy: Overdue work will only be accepted with a documented medical excuse or on the basis of a serious
personal crisis. Note that failing to manage one’s time is not a ‘serious personal crisis.’

Academic Dishonesty: Students should acquaint themselves with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating and
examination impersonation (see the University of Manitoba Academic Regulations, Undergraduate Calendar, 2017-
18). Please note that the Philosophy Department possesses a ‘no tolerance’ policy with regard to exam offences.

Approximate Grade Scale:
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>93%+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>87-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>74-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>68-73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>62-67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>55-61%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;55%</td>
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APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE

Identifying & Comprehending Arguments

May 6 __________ Course Introduction & Expectations, Chapter 1 Arguments & Explanations

May 7 __________ Finish chapter 1; Representing Arguments, Read Chapter 2

May 8 __________ Finish Chapter 2

May 9 __________ Essay Structure, Read Handout Essay Posted to UMLearn

May 10 ______ Essay structure continued

May 13_______ Language Issues, Chapter 3

May 14_______ Finish Chapter 3

May 15_______ In-Class Term Test, Strong/Weak Arguments, Read Chapter 4

Evaluating Arguments

May 16_______ Premise Acceptability/Unacceptability, Read Chapter 5

May 17_______ Finish Chapter 5, Read Chapter 6, Relevance/Irrelevance

May 20_______ Victoria Day, university closed

May 21_______ Finish Chapter 6, Introduce Validity

May 22_______ Deductive Validity, Read Chapter 7 (pp. 178-187, 204-210)

May 23_______ VW date; Finish Chapter 7, Inductive Validity, Read Chapter 9 (pp. 255-265)

May 24_______ Causal Arguments and IBE Arguments, Read Chapter 10 (pp. 286-293, 298-303)

May 27_______ Finish Chapter 10

May 28_______ Inductive Analogy, Read Chapter 11 (pp. 333-345)

May 29_______ Finish Chapter 11, Take-Home Final posted to UMLearn/Distributed in Class

May 31_______ Take-home Final Exam Due