

# PHILOSOPHY 1290 (A04) – CRITICAL THINKING (RL)

## COURSE SYLLABUS

2:30-3:45 T-Th

Instructor: Dave Hampton  
UC 468

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Office Hours: Remote & By Appointment

### 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:

Govier, T., *A Practical Study of Argument*, Enhanced Edition, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed (Cengage, 2014)

### Student Evaluation:

Assignments	60%
Final Exam	40%

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:

Assignments: There will be three take-home assignments due throughout the term. Each assignment will be equally weighted (20% of the final course grade). The assignments will consist of short answer questions and exercises calculated to assess the student's understanding of the concepts and skills studied in that section of the course.

Assignment 1 will consist of questions related to Chapters 1 and 2 of the text and the class lectures on essay structure. Assignment 2 will consist of questions pertaining to Chapters 3, 5 and 6 of the text. Assignment 3 will consist of questions related to Chapters 6 and 7 of the text.

Final Exam: There will be a 2-hour final exam during the regularly scheduled exam period. The final exam will consist of short answer questions and exercises primarily covering 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, 2020-21). Please note that the Philosophy Department possesses a 'no tolerance' policy with regard to academic dishonesty.

### Approximate Grade Scale:

A+	93%+	A	87-92%	B+	80-86%	B	74-79%
C+	68-73%	C	62-67%	D	55-61%	F	<55%

## APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE

Jan 19 ..... Course Introduction & Expectations

### Identifying Arguments

Jan 21 ..... Read Chapter 1

Jan 26 ..... Continue c.1, Premises & Conclusions, Read Chapter 2

### Comprehending Arguments

Jan 28 ..... Continue c.2, Assignment 1 Posted to UMLearn on Jan 28

Feb 2 ..... Continue c.2

Feb 4 ..... Essay Structure, Handout Essay Posted to UMLearn

Feb 9 ..... Essay Structure, continued

Feb 11 ..... Finish essay structure, Language Issues, Read Chapter 3

Feb 15 ..... Louis Riel Day

Feb 16-19 ..... Winter Term Break, no classes

Feb 23 ..... **Assignment 1 Due on Feb 23, Review Answers**

Feb 25 ..... Continue c.3, Assignment 2 Posted to UMLearn on Feb 25

### Argument Evaluation: Premises

Mar 2 ..... Continue c.3, Strong/Weak Arguments, Read Chapter 4

Mar 4 ..... Premise Acceptability/Unacceptability, Read Chapter 5

Mar 9 ..... Continue c.5, Relevance/Irrelevance, Read Chapter 6

Mar 11 ..... Continue c. 6

Mar 16 ..... **Assignment 2 Due on Mar 16, Review Answers**

### Argument Evaluation: Deductive Inferences

Mar 18 ..... Introduction to Validity (reread Chapter 4), Deductive Validity, Read Chapter 7 (178-187 and 204-210), Assignment 3 Posted to UMLearn on Mar 18

Mar 23 ..... Continue c.7

Mar 25 ..... Continue c.7

### Argument Evaluation: Inductive Inferences

Mar 30 ..... Inductive Validity, Read Chapter 9 (255-265) and Chapter 10 (286-293)

Mar 31 ..... **Voluntary Withdrawal Date**

Apr 1 ..... Continue c. 9 & 10, IBE Arguments, Read Chapter 10 (298-303)

Apr 6 ..... Continue IBE arguments

Apr 8 ..... **Assignment 3 Due on Apr 1, Review Answers**

Apr 13 ..... Continue IBE arguments

Apr 15 ..... Tips for the Final Exam

Apr 19-May 1 ..... Final Exam Period