

PHILOSOPHY 1290 (A04) – CRITICAL THINKING (RL)
COURSE SYLLABUS

2:30-3:45 T-Th

Instructor: Dave Hampton
UC 468

Email: valaruakar68@hotmail.com or hampton@umanitoba.ca

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, 7th 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 take-home 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; they will be similar in number and nature to what you would have in a 2-hour sit down exam.

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

Sep 10 Course Introduction & Expectations

Identifying Arguments

Sep 15 Read Chapter 1

Sep 17 Cont c.1, Premises & Conclusions, Read Chapter 2

Comprehending Arguments

Sep 22 Continue c.2, Assignment 1 Posted to UMLearn on Sep 22

Sep 24 Continue c.2

Sep 29 Essay Structure, Handout Essay Posted to UMLearn

Oct 1 Essay Structure, continued

Oct 6 Finish essay structure, Language Issues, Read Chapter 3

Oct 8 Continue c.3

Oct 13 **Assignment 1 Due on Oct 8, Review Answers**

Argument Evaluation: Premises

Oct 15 Continue c.3, Strong/Weak Arguments, Read Chapter 4, Assignment 2 Posted to UMLearn on Oct 15

Oct 20 Premise Acceptability/Unacceptability, Read Chapter 5

Oct 22 Continue c.5, Relevance/Irrelevance, Read Chapter 6

Oct 27 Continue c. 6

Argument Evaluation: Deductive Inferences

Oct 29 Continue c. 6, Introduction to Validity (reread Chapter 4), Deductive Validity, Read Chapter 7 (178-187 and 204-210)

Nov 3 **Assignment 2 Due on Nov 3, Review Answers**

Nov 5 Continue c.7, Assignment 3 Posted to UMLearn on Nov 5

Nov 8-13 Fall Term Break, no classes

Nov 11 Remembrance Day

Argument Evaluation: Inductive Inferences

Nov 17 Continue c.7, Inductive Validity, Read Chapter 9 (255-265)

Nov 19 Continue Ch. 9, Causal Inductive Validity, Read Chapter 10 (286-293)

Nov 23 **Voluntary Withdrawal Date**

Nov 24 **Assignment 3 Due on Nov 24, Review Answers**

Nov 26 Continue Causal Inductive Validity, IBE Arguments, Read Chapter 10 (298-303)

Dec 1 Continue IBE arguments

Dec 3 Continue IBE arguments, Inductive Analogy, Read Chapter 11 (333-345)

Dec 8 Continue Ch. 11

Dec 10 Tips for the Final Exam

Dec 12-23 Final Exam Period