

I do not feel obligated to believe that the same God who endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect had intended for us to forgo their use...

- Galileo Galilee (1564 – 1642)

• **Philosophy 004 – Critical Thinking**

Section 07

Spring 2017 (January 23rd – May 19th)

M/W 4:30 PM – 5:45 PM

Room: Mendocino Hall 1003

Satisfies General Education Area A3 (see course objectives/requirements below)

Instructor: J. P. Carboni

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Mailbox: Philosophy Department Office: Mendocino Hall Room 3032

Office Hours: Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30 PM – 2:50 PM & Friday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM & by Appointment - Mendocino Hall 3032

Course Description

Course Catalogue: “Study of the basic skills of good reasoning needed for the intelligent and responsible conduct of life. Topics include: argument structure and identification, validity and strength of arguments, common fallacies of reasoning, use and abuse of language in reasoning, principles of fair play in argumentation.”

When questioned about the beliefs that one holds, many individuals will claim that their beliefs are strong, secure and qualify as knowledge. This makes sense. After all, the beliefs that we hold (which number far more than we may initially think) form the basis of our understanding of the world around us. In essence, our beliefs determine how we interact with that world and how we interact with others whom we live with. However, there is a problem. Many of these beliefs that are determined to be true are either outright false or based on faulty reasoning. The question is how do we know this? How *can* we know this? How *can* we evaluate beliefs that are so vital to our daily lives? How can we evaluate the beliefs of others? To state that it is often confusing and, more than not, difficult is certainly an understatement. It is important to understand, however, that difficulty does not necessitate ignoring the problem.

This class is designed to help us understand the proper forms of reasoning and the methods we can use to determine the strength of our beliefs and the beliefs of others through an understanding of proper and improper argument forms. We will discuss what good reasoning is, different argument forms, effective methods of communication (both verbal and written) how to evaluate information and we will review various logical fallacies that we often encounter but fail to recognize.

• **Required Textbook:**

The textbook for this class can be found at the following link:

<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/#logicalreasoning>

It may also be linked through Prof. Dowden’s personal webpage at

<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/index.htm>)

• **Departmental Learning Objectives for Phil 004:**

Students will be able to:

1. Describe, explain and distinguish key concepts in critical thinking.
2. Identify an argument in a passage of ordinary text, including identifying the premises and conclusions and distinguishing them from extraneous information.
3. Identify errors of reasoning and explain what the error in reasoning is.
4. Engage with peers in cogent and respectful discussion.
5. Analyze specific arguments for consistency and credibility.
6. Apply good reasoning to issues and problems in professional and personal contexts.
7. Evaluate evidence and draw inferences from that evidence.
8. Determine what evidence is necessary to support a conclusion and identify and apply key strategies to find that evidence.
9. Construct and defend arguments in support of or in opposition to particular propositions.
10. Analyze and solve complicated strategic challenges in various areas of life.

• **Area A-3 Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

1. Students study about and consciously develop skills in critical thinking.
2. Knowledge through logical analysis and argument construction is pursued throughout the course.
3. Instruction develops understanding of logical relationships between premises and conclusions.
4. Instruction develops ability to recognize more common formal and informal fallacies.
5. Grading reflects emphasis on logical processes.
6. Develops basic skills, applicable to a variety of academic subjects and to the fulfillment of such roles as citizen, consumer, leader and moral agent.
 - a. Skill in evaluating the validity, strength and relevance of arguments.
 - b. A sense of logical structure of both inductive and deductive forms.
 - c. Awareness of uses and abuses of argument language, including connotation, ambiguity and definition.
 - d. Skill in handling a variety of arguments in variety of contexts.
 - e. Ability to argue fairly and to handle bias, emotion, and propaganda.

These outcomes include the student's ability to:

1. Locate the argument in a passage
 2. Detect errors of reasoning and explain how the reasoning is in error.
 3. Evaluate evidence and make appropriate inferences from that evidence.
 4. Construct and defend an argument in support of or in opposition to a proposition
- Student Learning Objectives for Area A3 courses can be viewed at:
<http://www.csus.edu/acaf/Portfolios/GE/geareaA3.stm>

These learning objectives will be met through a variety of practical assessments including quizzes, group work, essay writing and verbal communication (class/group participation).

• **Student Standards of Conduct:**

Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated in this class. All those who engage in these activities will receive a zero on the associated assignment. In addition, all incidents of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the department chair and to the Judicial Officer in the Office of Student Affairs. It is your responsibility to both know and adhere to Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy. This policy can be found at the following address:
<http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/UMA00150.htm>. If you wish for more assistance/advice on the issue of plagiarism, please see the following CSUS library link
<http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>.

In-Class Participation: Purposely "obstructing" the viewpoint of another student in the classroom during classroom discussions is prohibited. This class will involve many discussions concerning the material assigned for homework and the material presented during the classroom lectures. This being a philosophy course, many of these discussions *may* challenge certain beliefs that you hold. Open dialog and proper methods of argumentation (which will be discussed) are not only expected but required for this class.

Attendance/Participation: Students are expected to attend each class session. This class will involve many in-class discussions and a significant amount of in-class work. Students are expected to have completed the readings and participate in all in-class discussions.

Cell Phones and Computers: Please set your phone to vibrate before class. Cell phones are not to be used in class for any reason. If you must take a call (which I discourage unless an emergency) please step outside before you answer. No texting or Internet use will be allowed in class (unless directed by me).

Email Correspondence: Monday through Friday I check my Sac State *and* Gmail accounts a minimum of two times each day (morning and evening). If I do not respond to an email that you have sent within one business day, please feel free to resend the email. In order to ensure a prompt reply, all emails that you send must be formatted according to the following link:
<http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/how-to-correspond.html>

• **Disability Accommodations:**

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you will need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Information can be found at the following link: <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/ApplicationProcess-Forms.html>. Please discuss your

accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours *before* the end of the third week of the semester.

Special Note: All instructors employed by CSU, Sacramento are ‘mandatory reporters’ of suspected child abuse or neglect according to the *California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*. As such, I am bound to the requirements established by CSU Executive Order 1083 which can be found at the following link: <http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html>

• Evaluation/Homework Assignments:

In-Class Assignments: There will be a number of randomly assigned, short in-class assignments throughout the term. These assignments will be worth a total of 5 – 10 points each. At the end of the term, a total of 45 points will be possible. There are no make-ups on missed in-class work.

Quizzes: As outlined on the weekly course breakdown below, there will be two types of quizzes in this class.

- (1) **Reading Quizzes:** Prior to each new section lecture/new topic, there will be a quiz to be completed prior to the lecture on that reading/subject (see weekly breakdown below for details). These quizzes must be completed in Blackboard and must be completed prior to the scheduled class time. Each Reading Quiz will be made available on the date stated in the weekly breakdown and will be available until 10 minutes before that scheduled class. No make-ups will be given for missing a quiz. These quizzes will be multiple choice and/or true and false. Each quiz will be worth 10 points. Once you begin a quiz, you will have 20 minutes to complete it.
- (2) **Lecture Quizzes:** This course is scheduled to meet Monday and Wednesday. As illustrated in the weekly breakdown below, each class session will involve a lecture/class discussion on the material assigned. At the end of each week (after Wednesday’s lecture each week) students will be required to complete a short quiz on the lecture material provided. This quiz will be available on Blackboard on Wednesday after class and must be completed no later than 11 PM on Friday. Once you begin a quiz, you will have 20 minutes to complete it. Like each Reading Quiz, the Lecture Quizzes will be multiple choice and/or true and false. Each Lecture quiz will be worth 10 Points.

There will be no make-up quizzes if you miss a quiz (either type). I will, however, drop the lowest score received on each type of quiz at the end of the semester (one reading quiz and one lecture quiz). To do well on these quizzes and thus to do well in the class as a whole, you should make sure to attend class, to actively participate in the lecture and to complete the assigned readings.

Essays:

There will be three short essays in this class. For each assignment, you will be provided with assignment topics, structural details and a grading rubric two weeks prior to the due date for each essay. Essays must be handed in at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. Late essays will be docked 5 points for every day that they are late (excluding Saturday and Sunday). If your essay is late, you must arrange a method to hand in the essay with me after the class that the essays are due.

Essay #1 Prompt: **Monday, February 13th**
Essay # 2 Prompt: **Wednesday, March 29th**
Essay #3 Prompt: **Monday, April 24th**

Due: **Wednesday, March 1st**
Due: **Wednesday, April 12th**
Due: **Monday, May 8th**

Basic Essay Guidelines:

Students are expected to adhere to the guidelines posted in “How to Analyze a Philosophical Essay” that is located on the CSUS Department of Philosophy webpage. This information will be reviewed in class on *Monday of Week 5* (prior to the first essay being due). Below is the link to the webpage:

<http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/How%20to%20Write%20an%20Analysis.htm>

Below is a link to the department’s outline of proper philosophic analysis:

Philosophical Analysis: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/how-to-analyze.html>

Below is a link to the Department Grading Guidelines:

Grading Standards: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/grading-standards.html>

Examinations: There will be two in-class examinations in this class (a midterm and a final exam). There will be a comprehensive review held on the Wednesday before each exam. There will be no make-ups on exams - except with “extraordinary” circumstances - so schedule outside activities accordingly. Note: Extraordinary circumstances do not include *personal* athletic activities, vacations, car not starting, bought an early plane ticket home, just not feeling like it, etc. A doctor’s note (or something similar) will be required to schedule a make-up exam.

Midterm Exam: **Wednesday, March 15th (Week 8)**

Final Exam: **TBA**

Extra Credit Opportunity: There will be one extra credit opportunity in this course. The possible point value for this assignment will be a maximum of 15 points. The specific assignment details will be provided during week 4. The assignment will involve the *Nammour Symposium* held on April 5th (10:00 AM – 12:30 PM and 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM) and 6th (12:30 PM – 4:00 PM). This year’s symposium is on the well-being of political and economic migrants throughout the world.

A maximum of 15 extra credit points for attending one of the events and constructing a brief essay detailing one topic of interest (see assignment prompt for more details).

• **Grading Scale:**

All essays will be graded based upon an 80-point scale according to the following breakdown:

A Outstanding (75 - 80 pts)

B+ Above Satisfactory (68.5 - 71 pts)

B- Below Satisfactory (64 - 67 pts)

C Average (58 - 60 pts)

D+ Poor High (53 - 55.5 pts)

F Unacceptable (47 and lower pts)

A- Very Good (72 - 74 pts)

B Satisfactory (67 - 68 pts)

C+ Above Average (61 - 63 pts)

C- Below Average (56 - 57 pts)

D Poor Low (48 - 52 pts)

All Examinations will be graded based on a 100-Point scale according to the following breakdown:

A Outstanding (100 - 95 pts)	A- Very Good (94 - 90 pts)
B+ Above Satisfactory (89 - 86 pts)	B Satisfactory (83 - 85 pts)
B- Below Satisfactory (82 - 80 pts)	C+ Above Average (79 - 76 pts)
C Average (75 - 73 pts)	C- Below Average (72 - 70 pts)
D+ Poor High (69 - 66 pts)	D Poor Low (65 - 60 pts)
F Unacceptable (59 and lower pts)	

• **Total Point Breakdown:**

Reading Quizzes (x16 = 160 pts) – 150 after 1 dropped quiz

Lecture Quizzes (x13 = 130 pts) – 120 after 1 dropped quiz

Essay #1: 80 possible pts

Essay #2: 80 possible pts

Essay #3: 80 Possible pts

Midterm Examination: 100 possible pts

Final Examination: 100 possible pts

In Class Work: 45 possible points

Total Points Possible 775

Final Grade Breakdown: **A** 775 – 725 pts; **A-** 724 – 691 pts; **B+** 690 – 663 pts; **B** 662 – 648 pts; **B-** 647 - 616 pts; **C+** 615 – 586 pts; **C** 585 - 562 pts; **C-** 561 – 539 pts; **D+** 538 – 500 pts; **D** 499 – 485; **D-** 484 – 461; **F** 460 or lower points

Reading/Assignment Schedule

- Note: (1) All **Reading Quizzes** must be completed no later than 10 minutes prior to the class listed for each quiz
(2) All **Lecture Quizzes** must be completed by 11 PM on Friday each week

Week 1:	(Jan 23 rd – 27 th) <i>Class Introduction – What Is Philosophy, What Is Critical Thinking, and Why We Are Not Entitled to Our Opinions?</i> <i>For Mon:</i> Class Overview, In-Class Exercise <i>For Wed:</i> Are We Entitled to Our Opinions? (No Reading) – In Class Assignment
Week 2:	(Jan 30 th – Feb 3 rd) <i>How to Reason Logically</i> <i>For Mon:</i> Chapter 1 - “How to Reason Logically” • Due: Reading Quiz #1 (Posted to Blackboard on 1/27) <i>For Wed:</i> Chapter 1 Continued Wed: • Lecture Quiz #1 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/1)
Week 3:	(Feb 6 th – 10 th) <i>Effective Communication</i>

For Mon/Wed: Chapter 5 – “Obstacles to Better Communication”
Mon: • **Due: Reading Quiz #2 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/3)**
Wed: • **Lecture Quiz #2 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/8)**

Week 4: (Feb 13th – 17th)
Evaluating Information
For Mon/Wed: Chapter 4 – “How to Evaluate Information and Judge Credibility”
Mon: • **Due: Reading Quiz #3 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/10)**
• **Review for Essay #1**
Wed: • **Lecture Quiz #3 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/15)**

Week 5: (Feb 20th – 24th)
Claims, Issues and Arguments: what is an argument?
For Mon: Chapter 2 – “Claims, Issues and Arguments”
• **Due: Reading Quiz #4 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/17)**
For Wed: Chapter 2 Continued – When It Comes to Arguments, What’s Important ... What’s Not? & How to Write a Philosophic Essay
Wed: • **Lecture Quiz #4 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/22)**

Week 6: (Feb 27th – Mar 3rd)
Writing Logically
For Mon: Chapter 6 (Additional Materials for Your Review Posted on Blackboard)
• **Due: Reading Quiz #5 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/24)**
For Wed: Lecture on Chapter 3 - Vagueness and Ambiguity
• **Due: Reading Quiz #6 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/24)**
• **Due: Essay #1 - Wednesday, March 1st**
Wed: • **Lecture Quiz #5 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/1)**

Week 7: (March 6th – 10th)
Understanding That Bad Information Is All Around Us
For Mon/Wed: Chapter 7 – “Defending Against Deception”
• **Due: Reading Quiz #7 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/3)**
For Wed: Midterm Exam Study Guide Provided
Wed: • **Lecture Quiz #6 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/8)**

Week 8: (March 13th – 17th)
Do We Know What We Know and Midterm Exam

For Mon: In-Class Exercises (How Consistent Are Our Beliefs - materials provided in-class) & Midterm Exam Review
For Wed: **Midterm Exam**

Week 9: (March 20th – 24th)
Spring Break – No Classes Held

Week 10: (Mar 27th – 31st)
Fallacies and Being Consistent
For Mon: Chapter 8 – “Detecting Fallacies” – Formal vs. Informal & Midterm Exam Review
• **Due: Reading Quiz #8 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/24)**
For Wed: Continue Chapter 8: Detecting Fallacies
• **Review Essay #2**
• **Lecture Quiz #7 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/29)**

Week 11: (Apr 3rd – 7th)
Consistency & Inconsistency & Deductive vs. Inductive Reasoning
For Mon: Chapter 9 “Consistency and Inconsistency”
• **Due: Reading Quiz #9 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/29)**
For Wed: Discussion of Two Key Argument Forms: Deductive & Inductive Reasoning (No New Reading Due – Review Chapter 2)
• **Lecture Quiz #8 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/5)**

Week 12: (Apr 10th – 14th)
Logical Forms and Evaluations
For Mon: Chapter 11 – “Logical Form and Sentential Logic” Pgs 330 – 351
• **Due: Reading Quiz #10 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/7)**
For Wed: Chapter 11 – “Logical Form and Sentential Logic” Pgs 351 – 363
• **Due: Reading Quiz #11 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/7)**
• **Due: Essay #2 (Wednesday, April 12th)**
• **Lecture Quiz #9 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/12)**

Week 13: (Apr 17th – 21st)
Sentential Reasoning and Truth Tables & Aristotle’s Categorical Logic: The First Logician
For Mon: Sentential Logic Continued – In-Class Exercises: Truth Tables
For Wed: Chapter 12 – “Aristotelian Logic and Venn-Euler Diagrams” Pgs. 374 – 380 and Lecture on General Claims from Chapter 3 and the Square of Opposition
• **Due: Reading Quiz #12 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/17)**

• **Lecture Quiz #10 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/19)**

- Week 14: (Apr 24th – 28th)
How to Evaluate Using Venn Diagrams
For Mon: Chapter 12 Continued – “Aristotelian Logic and Venn Euler Diagrams” Continued Pgs 380 – 393; Reading on Venn Diagrams Posted on Blackboard
- **Due: Reading Quiz #13 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/21 – Based on Reading Posted to Blackboard entitled: “Venn Diagrams”)**
 - **Review of Essay #3**
 - **Lecture Quiz #11 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/24)**
- Week 15: (May 1st – 5th)
Venn/Euler Diagrams Continued – Diagramming Arguments Workshop
For Mon: Categorical Reasoning and Venn Diagrams -
- **Due: Reading Quiz #14 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/28)**
- For Wed: In Class Work: Venn Diagram Practice **and** introduction to Inductive Reasoning
- Wed:**
- **Lecture Quiz #12 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/3)**
- Week 16: (May 8th – 12th)
Inductive Reasoning
For Mon: Chapter 13 – “Inductive Reasoning” Pgs. 404 – 422
- **Due: Reading Quiz #15 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/5)**
 - **Due: Essay #3 (Monday, May 8th)**
 - **Provided: Final Examination Study Guide**
- For Wed: Chapter 13 – “Inductive Reasoning” Pgs. 422- 441 & Chapter 14 – “Reasoning about Causes and Their Effects”
- **Due: Reading Quiz #16 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/5)**
 - **Review for Final Examination**
- Wed:**
- **Lecture Quiz #13 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/10)**
- Week 17: (May 15th – 19th)
Final Examination Week – Examination Date TBA

Welcome to Philosophy 4!