

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 03

Spring 2018 (January 22nd – May 11th)

M 6:00 PM – 8:50 PM

Room: Douglas Hall 208

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 3000

Office Hours: **Monday 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM**
Wednesday 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM
Friday 11:00 – 12:00 PM
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:**

Text: “Logical Reasoning” by Dr. Bradley Dowden. There is no textbook that you are required to purchase for this class. The textbook can be downloaded for free at the following link:

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/stu-0100.htm>

If you wish for more assistance/advice on the issue of plagiarism, please see the following CSUS library link <http://csus.libguides.com/home> (information on citing and researching)

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.

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>

All emails not formatted according to the above link will be answered last.

• **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 (you will be informed of the specific point value when each assignment is given). 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, Wednesday and Friday. As illustrated in the weekly breakdown below, each class session will involve a lecture/class discussion on the material assigned for that class. At the end of each week (after Friday’s lecture each week) students will be required to complete a short quiz on the lecture material provided. This quiz will be available in Blackboard on Friday after class and must be completed no later than 10 AM on Monday. 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.

Writing Assignments:

There will be three short writing assignments 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. Assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. No emailed essays or electronically submitted essays will be accepted. 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, Feb 12th**
Essay # 2 Prompt: **Monday, March 26th**
Essay #3 Prompt: **Monday, April 23rd**

Due: **Monday, Feb 26th**
Due: **Monday, April 9th**
Due: **Monday, May 7th**

Basic Essay Guidelines:

Students are expected to adhere to the guidelines posted in both “Writing Guidelines” & “How to Analyze a Philosophical Essay” that are 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/writing%20guidelines.html>

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 examinations in this class (a midterm and a final exam). There will be a comprehensive review held on the Wednesday/Friday 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/for family vacation, just not feeling like it, etc. A doctor’s note (or something similar) will be required to schedule a make-up exam.

Midterm Exam: **Monday, March 12th (Week 8)**

Final Exam: **TBA**

Extra Credit: There will be one extra credit assignment offered in the Fall 2017 term. This assignment, which will be announced during Week 2, will involve attending a CSUS Ethics Center event. Detailed instructions will be provided for this assignment, including specific event details, during the second week of class. Below are the links to the two event homepages:

Center for Practical and Professional Ethics: <http://www.csus.edu/cppe/>

• Grading Scale:

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

A Outstanding (75 - 80 pts)	A- Very Good (72 - 74 pts)
B+ Above Satisfactory (68.5 - 71 pts)	B Satisfactory (67 - 68 pts)
B- Below Satisfactory (64 - 67 pts)	C+ Above Average (61 - 63 pts)
C Average (58 - 60 pts)	C- Below Average (56 - 57 pts)
D+ Poor High (53 - 55.5 pts)	D Poor Low (48 - 52 pts)
F Unacceptable (47 and lower 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** will be posted to Blackboard after the final class of the week (usually Friday) and must be completed by 10 AM on Monday each week (before class each Monday)

Week 1: (1/22 – 1/26)

Class Introduction – What Is Philosophy, What Is Critical Thinking, and Why We Are Not Entitled to Our Opinions?

For Mon:

1) *Class Overview*

2) ***In Class Assignment #1: Are We Entitled to Our Opinions? (No Reading)***

3) **In Class Assignment #2: How Consistent Are Our Beliefs?** (No Reading)

Week 2: (1/29 – 2/2)

How to Reason Logically

For Mon:

1) Chapter 1 - “How to Reason Logically” & Logical Possibility vs. Logical Impossibility (Time Travel, Psychokinesis & Ancient Aliens??)

• **Due: Reading Quiz #1 (Posted to Blackboard on 1/26)**

• **Lecture Quiz #1 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 2/2)**

Week 3: (2/5 – 2/9)

Effective Communication

For Mon:

1) Chapter 5 – “Obstacles to Better Communication”

• **Due: Reading Quiz #2 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/2)**

• **Lecture Quiz #2 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 2/9)**

Week 4: (2/12 – 2/16)

Evaluating Information

For Mon:

1) Chapter 4 – “How to Evaluate Information and Judge Credibility”

2) **In-Class Assignment #3: Judgement Exercise**

• **Due: Reading Quiz #3 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/9)**

• **Lecture Quiz #3 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 2/16)**

• **Review for Writing Assignment #1**

Week 5: (2/19 – 2/23)

Claims, Issues and Arguments: what is an argument?

For Mon:

1) Chapter 2 – “Claims, Issues and Arguments”: When It Comes to Arguments, What’s Important ... What’s Not?

2) How to Write a Philosophic Essay (see links under *Basic Essay Guidelines* above)

• **Due: Reading Quiz #4 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/16)**

• **Lecture Quiz #4 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 2/23)**

Week 6: (2/26 – 3/2)

Writing Logically

For Mon:

1) Chapter 6

2) Chapter 3 - Vagueness and Ambiguity

• **Due: Reading Quiz #5 – Based on Chapters 3 and 6 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/23)**

• **Due: Writing Assignment #1 (February 26th)**

- **Due: Reading Quiz #6 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/23)**
- **Lecture Quiz #5 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 3/2)**

- Week 7: (3/5 – 3/9)
Understanding That Bad Information Is All Around Us
 For Mon:
- 1) Chapter 7 – “Defending Against Deception”
 - 2) Midterm Exam Study Guide Reviewed (Posted on Friday 3/2)
 - 3) Midterm Review (**Requirement:** Two questions on Midterm Study Guide)
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #7 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/2)**
 - **Lecture Quiz #6 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 3/9)**
- Week 8: (3/12 – 3/16)
Do We Know What We Know and Midterm Exam
 For Mon:
- 1) **In-Class Assignment #4** (Materials provided in-class)
 - 2) **Midterm Exam 3/12 (Normal Class Time)**
 - **No lecture quiz for Week 8**
- Week 9: (3/19 – 3/23)
No Classes: Spring Break
- Week 10: (3/26 – 3/30)
Fallacies: Informal
 For Mon:
- 1) Chapter 8 – “Detecting Fallacies” – Formal vs. Informal & discussion of informal fallacies
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #8 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/23)**
 - **Review Writing Assignment #2**
 - **Lecture Quiz #7 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 3/30)**
- Note: Friday there are no classes - Cesar Chavez Holiday**
- Week 11: (4/2 – 4/6)
Fallacies: Formal & Consistency & Inconsistency & Deductive vs. Inductive Reasoning
 For Mon:
- 1) Lecture on Formal Fallacies
 - 2) Chapter 9 “Consistency and Inconsistency”
 - 3) Discussion of Two Key Argument Forms: Deductive & Inductive Reasoning (No New Reading Due – Review Chapter
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #9 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/30)**
 - 2)
 - **Lecture Quiz #8 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 4/6)**

- Week 12: (4/9 – 4/13)
Logical Forms and Evaluations
For Mon:
- 1) Chapter 11 – “Logical Form and Sentential Logic”
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #10 & 11 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/6)**
 - **Due: Writing Assignment #2 (April 9th)**
 - **Lecture Quiz #9 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 4/13)**
- Week 13: (4/16 – 4/20)
Sentential Reasoning and Truth Tables & Aristotle’s Categorical Logic: The First Logician
For Mon:
- 1) Sentential Logic Continued – In-Class Exercises: Truth Tables
 - 2) *Lecture on General Claims from Chapter 3*
 - 3) *The Square of Opposition (Reading Posted to Blackboard)*
 - 4) Chapter 12 – “Aristotelian Logic and Venn-Euler Diagrams”
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #12 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/13)**
 - **Lecture Quiz #10 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 4/20)**
- Week 14: (4/23 – 4/27)
How to Evaluate Using Venn Diagrams
For Mon:
- 1) Chapter 12 Continued – “Aristotelian Logic and Venn Euler Diagrams” Continued; Reading on Venn Diagrams Posted on Blackboard
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #13 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/20 – Based on Reading Posted to Blackboard entitled: “Venn Diagrams”)**
 - **Review of Writing Assignment #3**
 - **In-Class Assignment #5: Applying Evaluation Skills**
 - **Lecture Quiz #11 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 4/27)**
- Week 15: (4/30 – 5/4)
Venn/Euler Diagrams Continued – Diagraming Arguments Workshop
For Mon:
- 1) *Identifying Categorical Arguments in Longer Essays & Poly-syllogisms*
 - 2) In Class Work: Venn Diagram Practice (**if needed**) and introduction to Inductive Reasoning
 - **Due: Reading Quiz #14 (Quiz Will Be Taken IN- CLASS on Monday, April 30th)**
 - **Lecture Quiz #12 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 5/4)**

Week 16: (5/7 – 5/11)

Inductive Reasoning

For Mon:

1) Chapter 13 – “Inductive Reasoning”

2) Chapter 14 – “Reasoning about Causes and Their Effects”

3) Final Exam Review

• **Due: Reading Quiz #15 & 16 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/4)**

• **Due: Writing Assignment #3 (Monday, May 7th)**

• **Provided: Study Guide for Final Examination**

• **Lecture Quiz #13 (Due by 10 AM Monday - Posted to Blackboard on 5/11)**

Week 17: (5/14 – 5/18)

Final Examination Week – Date TBA

General Assignment Due Dates (See Next Page)

Quizzes Breakdown:

Reading Quizzes Due Dates:

RQ1 – Monday, 1/29

RQ2 – Monday, 2/5

RQ3 – Monday, 2/12

RQ4 – Monday, 2/19

RQ5 – Monday, 2/26

RQ6 – Monday, 2/26

RQ7 – Monday, 3/5

RQ8 – Monday, 3/26

RQ9 – Monday, 4/2

RQ10 – Monday, 4/9

RQ11 – Monday, 4/9

RQ12 – Monday, 4/16

RQ13 – Monday, 4/23

RQ14 – Monday, 4/30 (Taken In-Class)

RQ15 – Monday, 5/7

RQ16 – Monday, 5/7

Lecture Quizzes Due Dates:

LQ1- Monday, 2/5

LQ2- Monday, 2/12

LQ3- Monday, 2/19

LQ4- Monday, 2/26

LQ5- Monday, 3/5

LQ6- Monday, 3/12

LQ7- Monday, 4/2

LQ8- Monday, 4/9

LQ9- Monday, 4/16

LQ10- Monday, 4/23

LQ11- Monday, 4/30

LQ12 – Monday, 5/7

LQ13 – Monday, 5/14

Writing Assignments:

Due: Monday, February 26th

Due: Monday, April 9th

Due: Monday, May 7th

Examinations:

Midterm Examination: *Monday, 3/12*

Final Examination: **TBA**

Welcome to Philosophy 4!