

PHL245H5

T0101

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The Basics

- My name is Itai David Hass. Generally, I am referred to as David, my middle name, but any name, on the condition that it is used consistently and with my consent, may be used (this requires surprisingly little pragmatic competence).
- I am a student of Computer Science and Philosophy at University of Toronto.
- I like logic and intellectual collaboration, which in part are the reasons why I am acting as TA for PHL245.
- I am your friend. Do not hesitate to ask me questions during tutorial or my office hours, by email or by stalking me in the campus hallways.

Success in a nutshell

- Attend all lectures.

The material covered in PHL245 is *cumulative*. Shortly, if a fellow student claims to have both received a 4.0 grade in PHL245 and skipped lecture on more than one occasion, do not believe her.

- Complete all the assignments.

Again, the material covered is *cumulative*. Do not be deceived by thinking that you have understood the current material without having completed the relevant assignment. Disillusionment will arise, in the best case, the following lecture, or in the worst, during the final exam.

- Read "Logic: Techniques of Formal Reasoning".

The required text for this course is phenomenal. Don't believe those who say otherwise. When stumped by the material, don't succumb to Google's alluring service. Rather, search for the answer within the book or the professor's supplementary reading material. The book was, after all, written by logicians, and so is very clear and explanatory.

- Contemplate.

This is a course in philosophy, after all. Think before you act; why is it, for example, the case that if P implies Q, then not Q implies

not P? Understanding, rather than memorizing, is in my opinion, and this may be debated, key.

- Attend tutorial.

I enjoy teaching others and devising means by which to clearly explain an arbitrary subject of knowledge. It therefore behooves the student to use this to her advantage and regularly attend this tutorial, and thus gain a substantial advantage over those students who choose not to. Beside as a forum in which there is no such thing as a silly question, this tutorial may be used by the keen student who seeks to expand her understanding of symbolic logic beyond the given material. This student will invariably excel in this course, and will be surprised to find excessive practice of *derivations* unnecessary as means by which to prepare for the tests.

Summary

I hold that the average student who takes it upon herself to do as is suggested will easily complete this course with a 4.0 grade. Given a mathematical intuition, namely that of *abstraction*, this is an easy course. I maintain that symbolic logic can be as simple and entertaining as Saturday's Sudoku. It might initially seem more difficult and tedious, but as the student who dedicates reasonable time to symbolic logic will experience, it isn't.