

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 02

Fall 2019 (August 26th – December 13th)

T/TH 6:00 PM – 7:15 PM

Room: Mendocino Hall 3013

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

Instructor: J. P. Carboni

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Office Hours: **Thursday 5 - 5:50 PM**
Monday/Wednesday 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
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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/#logicalreasoning>)

• **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

Links to the above Learning Outcomes can be found at the following links:

<https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/>

<https://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/academic-affairs/general-education/>

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/umanual/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, graded and ungraded 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: https://www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/philosophy/_internal/g6-how-to-correspond-with-your-professor.pdf

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 CANVAS 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 Tuesday and Thursday. 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 (on Friday each week) students will be required to complete a short quiz on the lecture material provided. This quiz will be available in CANVAS on Friday before 5 PM and must be completed no later than 6 PM on Tuesday. 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: **Tuesday, 9/17**

Due: **Tuesday, 10/31**

Essay # 2 Prompt: **Tuesday, 10/22**

Due: **Tuesday, 11/5**

Essay #3 Prompt: **Tuesday, 11/19**

Due: **Tuesday, 12/3**

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:

https://www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/philosophy/_internal/g3-department-of-philosophy-writing-guidelines.pdf

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

Philosophical Analysis: https://www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/philosophy/_internal/g5-how-to-analyze-a-philosophical-essay.pdf

All essays will be graded based on the department grading guidelines. Below is a link to the Department Grading Guidelines:

Grading Standards: https://www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/philosophy/_internal/g4-grading-standards-for-philosophy-papers1.pdf

Examinations: There will be two examinations in this class (a midterm and a final exam). There will be a comprehensive review held on the 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: **Thursday, October 17th (Week 8)**

Final Exam: **TBA**

Extra Credit: There will be one extra credit assignment offered in the Fall 2019 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 Ethics Center events homepage:

Center for Practical and Professional Ethics: <https://www.csus.edu/center/practical-professional-ethics/#Center%20for%20Practical%20and%20Professional%20Ethics>

• 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** will be posted to CANVAS and must be completed no later than 10 minutes prior to the class listed for each quiz.
(2) All **Lecture Quizzes** will be posted to CANVAS at the end of the week

(usually Friday) and must be completed by 6 PM on Tuesday each week (before class each Tuesday).

Week 1: (8/26 – 8/30)
Class Introduction – What Is Philosophy, What Is Critical Thinking, and Why We Are Not Entitled to Our Opinions?
For Tues: Class Overview, In-Class Exercise
For Thurs: **In Class Assignment #1:** Are We Entitled to Our Opinions? (Reading Posted to CANVAS under Additional Readings: Are We Entitled to Our Opinions)
In Class Assignment #2: How Consistent Are Our Beliefs? (No Reading – In Class Logic Exercise)

Week 2: (9/2 – 9/6)
How to Reason Logically
For Mon: Chapter 1 - “How to Reason Logically”
• Due: Reading Quiz #1 (Posted to CANVAS on 8/30)
For Thursday: Logical Possibility vs. Logical Impossibility (What we should believe about Time Travel, Psychokinesis & Ancient Aliens)
• Lecture Quiz #1 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 9/10 – Posted to CANVAS on 9/6)

Note: Monday, September 2nd – No Classes Held

Week 3: (9/9 – 9/13)
Effective Communication
For Tues/Thurs: Chapter 5 – “Obstacles to Better Communication”
Tues: **• Due: Reading Quiz #2 (Posted to CANVAS on 9/6)**
Posted Fri: **• Lecture Quiz #2 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 9/17 – Posted to CANVAS on 9/13)**

Week 4: (9/16 – 9/20)
Evaluating Information
For Tues/Thurs: Chapter 4 – “How to Evaluate Information and Judge Credibility”
For Tues: **• Due: Reading Quiz #3 (Posted to CANVAS on 9/13)**
• Review for Writing Assignment #1
For Thurs: **In-Class Assignment #3: Judgement Exercise**
Posted Fri: **• Lecture Quiz #3 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 9/24 – Posted to CANVAS on 9/20)**

Week 5: (9/23 – 9/27)
Claims, Issues and Arguments: what is an argument?
For Tues: Chapter 2 – “Claims, Issues and Arguments”
• Due: Reading Quiz #4 (Posted to CANVAS on 9/27)

9/20)

For Thurs: Chapter 2 Continued – When It Comes to Arguments, What’s Important ... *What’s Not?* & How to Write a Philosophic Essay
(see links under *Basic Essay Guidelines* above)

Posted Fri: • **Lecture Quiz #4 (Due by 10 AM Monday 9/30 – Posted to CANVAS on 9/27)**

Week 6: (9/30 – 10/4)
Writing Logically
For Tues:

Chapter 6

• **Due: Reading Quiz #5 (Posted to CANVAS on 9/27)**

• **Due: Writing Assignment #1 (October 1st)**

For Thurs: Lecture on Chapter 3 - Vagueness and Ambiguity

• **Due: Reading Quiz #6 (Posted to CANVAS on 9/30)**

Posted Fri: • **Lecture Quiz #5 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 10/8 – Posted to CANVAS on 10/4)**

Week 7: (10/7 – 10/11)
Understanding That Bad Information Is All Around Us

For Tues/Thurs: Chapter 7 – “Defending Against Deception”

• **Due: Reading Quiz #7 (Posted to CANVAS on 10/4)**

For Thurs: **Midterm Exam Study Guide Provided (10/10)**

Posted Fri: • **Lecture Quiz #6 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 10/15 – Posted to CANVAS on 10/11)**

Week 8: (10/14 – 10/18)
Do We Know What We Know and Midterm Exam

For Tues: *In-Class Assignment #4 (Materials provided in-class) & Midterm Exam Review*

For Thurs: **Midterm Exam 10/17 (Normal Class Time – See Study Guide for all Exam Details)**

• **No lecture quiz for Week 8**

Week 9: (10/21 – 10/25)
Fallacies: Informal
For Tues:

Chapter 8 – “Detecting Fallacies” – Formal vs. Informal & discussion of informal fallacies → Lecture on Fallacy Forms and Start Informal Fallacies

• **Due: Reading Quiz #8 (Posted to CANVAS on 10/18)**

• **Review Writing Assignment #2 (10/21)**

For Thurs: Continue Chapter 8: Finish Informal Fallacies

Posted Fri: • **Lecture Quiz #7 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 10/29 –**

Posted to CANVAS on 10/25)

- Week 10: (10/28 – 11/1)
Fallacies: Formal & Consistency & Inconsistency & Deductive vs. Inductive Reasoning
For Tues: *Lecture on Formal Fallacies*
For Thurs: Chapter 9 “Consistency and Inconsistency” & Discussion of Two Key Argument Forms: Deductive & Inductive Reasoning (No New Reading Due – Review Chapter 2)
• ***Due: Reading Quiz #9 (Posted to CANVAS on 10/25)***
Posted Fri: • Lecture Quiz #8 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 11/5 Posted to CANVAS on 11/1)
- Week 11: (11/4 – 11/8)
Logical Forms and Evaluations
For Tues: Chapter 11 – “Logical Form and Sentential Logic” Pgs. 330 – 351
• ***Due: Reading Quiz #10 (Posted to CANVAS on 11/1)***
• ***Due: Writing Assignment #2 (11/5)***
For Thurs: Chapter 11 – “Logical Form and Sentential Logic” Pgs. 351 – 363
• ***Due: Reading Quiz #11 (Posted to CANVAS on 11/4)***
Posted Fri: • Lecture Quiz #9 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 11/12 - Posted to CANVAS on 11/8)
- Week 12: (11/11 – 11/15)
Sentential Reasoning and Truth Tables
For Tues: Sentential Logic Continued – In-Class Exercises: Truth Tables (long version)
For Thurs: Sentential Logic Continued – In-Class Exercises: Truth Tables (Short Version)
Posted Fri: • ***Lecture Quiz #10 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 11/19 - Posted to CANVAS on 11/15)***
- Note: Monday, November 11th – no classes held***
- Week 13: (11/18 – 11/22)
Aristotle’s Categorical Logic: The First Logician & How to Evaluate Using Venn Diagrams
For Tues: Chapter 12 – “Aristotelian Logic and Venn Euler Diagrams”; Aristotle’s Square of Opposition; Reading on Venn Diagrams Posted on CANVAS
• ***Due: Reading Quiz #12 & #13 (Posted to CANVAS on 11/15 – Based on Reading Posted to CANVAS entitled: “Venn Diagrams”)***
• ***Review of Writing Assignment #3 11/19***
For Thurs: ***In-Class Assignment #5: Applying Evaluation Skills***
Posted Fri: • ***Lecture Quiz #11 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 11/26 -***

Posted to CANVAS on 11/22)

- Week 14: (11/25 – 11/29)
Venn/Euler Diagrams Continued – Diagraming Arguments Workshop
For Tues: Identifying Categorical Arguments in Longer Essays & Poly-syllogisms
• **Due: Reading Quiz #14 (Quiz Will Be Taken IN-CLASS on Tuesday, November 26th)**
For Thurs: No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday (11/28 – 11/29)
Posted Fri: • Lecture Quiz #12 (Due by 6 PM Tuesday 12/3 – Posted to CANVAS on 11/29)
- Week 15: (12/2 – 12/6) – **Final Week of Instruction**
Inductive Reasoning
For Tues: Chapter 13 – “Inductive Reasoning” Pgs. 404 – 422
• **Due: Reading Quiz #15 (Posted to CANVAS on 11/29)**
• **Due: Writing Assignment #3 (Tuesday, 12/3)**
• **Provided on Tues: Study Guide for Final Examination (12/3)**
For Thurs: Chapter 13 – “Inductive Reasoning” Pgs. 422- 441 & Chapter 14 – “Reasoning about Causes and Their Effects”
• **Due Wed: Reading Quiz #16 (Posted to CANVAS on 12/2)**
Posted Fri: • Lecture Quiz #13 (Due by 10 AM Monday 12/9 – Posted to CANVAS on 12/6)
- Week 16: (12/9 – 12/13) – **Finals Week**
Final Examination Week – Date TBA
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Welcome to Philosophy 4!