

PHI 169 – CRITICAL REASONING - FALL 2017 – PREPARATION FOR EXAM #1

Doing the following will help you prepare for exam #1:

- (a) Review the main ideas and distinctions we have discussed so far, that is,
- What is an argument?
 - What is the difference between premises and conclusion?
 - What is the difference between deductive and inductive arguments?
 - What are the two features of a good argument?
 - What is the difference between validity and truth?
 - What is an example of a deductive argument, for example, Euclid's proof of propositions 1 through 5 in the *Elements*?
 - What is the difference between necessary and sufficient conditions?
 - What is an example of the distinction between necessary and sufficient conditions, for example, recall Friedman's video about capitalism and freedom?
- (b) Read the March 15, 2017 NY Times piece *Don't Try to Fix Obamacare. Abolish It* by Erickson:

As Republicans in Washington grapple with altering the Affordable Care Act, they have proceeded in a direction that will do little to curb the cost of health care in America. ... Despite the name "Affordable Care Act," the Democrats were far more focused on expanding coverage and ensuring every American could get insurance than they were on making coverage affordable. When Republicans decided to amend Obamacare, they too focused on the numbers covered. Instead, they should focus on cost.

If Republicans stopped worrying about how many people had access to a government-managed health care program and started focusing on reducing costs, they could potentially increase the number of people covered. Doing so would necessitate scaling back the government's involvement in health care, reducing insurance mandates, unleashing free-market competition among insurance providers and allowing consumer choice in selecting plans.

Increasing competition and choice would lower prices for all kinds of insurance. Lower prices would free up corporate dollars for other things like innovation and jobs. Lower prices would also make it far more affordable for Americans to buy their own insurance than wait for government to subsidize it.

Now do the following:

- Identify the conclusion of the argument.
- Identify the premises of the argument.
- Summarize the argument in terms of if-then statements. (Few sentences will be enough.)
- Does the argument, explicitly or implicitly, identify necessary conditions? Explain.
- Is it a deductively valid argument, inductively valid argument, or neither? Explain.
- Is the argument good? Explain. Remember the two features of a good argument.