Critical Thinking at Stockholms Universitet

Tomek Garbus

Autumn 2025

1 Course Info

Course book is Richard Feldman's Reason and Argument

2 Course book – Chapter 1

2.1 Definitions

- **reconstructing an argument** – the process of identifying the premises and conclusions in a piece of argumentative writing

- **evaluating an argument** – the process of determining whether an argument is a good argument

- **argument** – a sequence of propositions intended to establish the truth of one of the propositions. The components of an argument are its premises and conclusion.

- **conclusion** – what an argument is intended to establish; the point of an argument; the proposition an argument is supposed to support

- **premise** – a part of an argument that is supposed to help establish the argument's conclusion

- **argument analysis** – the process of interpreting (reconstructing) and evaluating an argument

- **rhetorical power** – the power to persuade or convince. Arguments, as well as people, can have rhetorical power. Contrast with *rational strength* and *literary merit.*

- **rational strength** – the degree to which something provides good reason to believe something

- **literary merit** – the quality of a piece of writing determined primarily by whether it is well-written, original, well-organized, and interesting.

2.2 Notes

Steps of argument analysis

1. Reconstruct the argument

2. Evaluate the argument