



**Syllabus**  
**PHIL 1250 (3 Cr.)**  
**Reasoning and Rational Decision Making**  
**Spring 2016**

**Weeks 9-11** **Probability Theory**

Hacking: *The Gambler's Fallacy* (Canvas)

Hacking: *Elementary Probability Ideas* (Canvas)

Hacking: *Conditional Probability* (Canvas)

**[Third Quiz]**

**Weeks 11-13** **Informal Fallacies**

Chapter 3 (3.1-3.5) *Fallacies of all kinds* (H: 122-199)

**[Fourth Quiz]**

**Weeks 14-15** **Science, Hypothetical Reasoning, and Superstition**

Chapter 13 (13.1-13.4) *Hypothetical Reasoning and Science* (H: 609-631)

Chapter 14 (14.1-14.5) *Distinguishing Science from Superstition* (H: 632-659)

**[Paper Due]**

**[Final Exam: Wednesday, April 27th at 11:00a]**

**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION, POLICY:**

*Two Exams:* You will have a mid-term and a final exam. The mid-term will cover all the material from Chapters 1, 6, and 7 that we cover in class. The final exam will cover *only* informal fallacies, probability, and science (it is not cumulative). Each exam will be worth 50 points (see breakdown below). The mid-term will be held in the testing center on campus, and you will have approximate one-week to take it. The final exam will be held in class, during the scheduled time (see above).

*Four Quizzes:* You will have four quizzes this semester, one on each chapter/segment of the course that does not have an exam following it. These are substantial quizzes, and should help you gage where your strengths and weaknesses are heading into the exams. Each quiz will be worth 25 points. The exams will be take-home exams, and you will be given the weekend to complete them.

*Homework:* You will be expected to complete 10 homework assignments over the course of the semester. Each homework assignment will be worth 5 points, and while there will be more than 10 opportunities to do homework, you must complete 10, and I will only grade 10. *I will not accept late homework.*

*Paper:* You are expected to complete one short paper this semester. Your paper should be 700-900 words, and will be a critical response to either the Ruse or Thagard paper on science and pseudoscience. You will be expected to reconstruct and critically evaluate the author's argument. More details on this in class. This paper is worth 50 points.

*Breakdown:*

Exams: 2 @ 50 points = 100pts.

Quizzes: 4 @ 25 points = 100pts.

Homework: 10 @ 5 points = 50pts.

Final Paper: 1 @ 50 points = 50pts.

Total possible points: 300

**Late Work:** My policy on this will vary depending on the type of assignment:

I will allow make-up exams and quizzes for excused absences only. I will not accept late homework under any circumstances. I will accept late papers, but for each 24-hour period that the paper is late, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a grade.

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**Grade Disputes:** If you feel that your work has been unfairly assessed, you may ask that I reconsider. I am, after all, a human who makes mistakes on occasion. I will do so **only if** you submit to me, on paper, a one-paragraph typewritten explanation of why you believe that your work has been unfairly evaluated. You must indicate the grade you believe yourself to deserve and explain clearly why it is that you deserve that grade. Your dispute must be submitted within **one week** of receiving your grade.

**Attendance:** Excessive absences (6 or more) will hurt you 1 letter grade (as in A- to B-). Philosophy is hard even if you come to class. Skip at your own risk. You are responsible for information that I offer in lecture that is not in the readings. I will not give you notes for unexcused absences. Participation in class discussion can raise your grade up to 1/3 of a letter grade.

**Plagiarism or academic fraud of any sort will result in an F for the course.** Academic dishonesty is a serious matter. Please familiarize yourself with Southern Utah University's *Student Handbook*, which you can find online at <https://www.suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP633Academic.pdf>. I will follow the regulations described in this document for dealing with cheating, plagiarism, etc. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism or academic fraud after reading through the student handbook, please do not hesitate to ask me for further clarification.

**Disabilities:** I warmly welcome any of you who have disabilities. Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations, or auxiliary aids must contact the Office for Students with Disabilities. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of these services and aids. Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines. For Southern Utah University's full policy, see: <http://suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP119Disability.pdf>.

**Emergency Management:** In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at <http://suu.edu/emergency>.

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