

Syllabus
PHIL 1250 (3 Cr.)
Critical Thinking
Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Kristopher G. Phillips
Office: 108F General Classrooms
Office Hours: MWF: 3:00p-4:00p, T 8:00a-10:00a

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TA: Colby Meline: colbysmeline@gmail.com

All Classes Meet at the Scheduled Time on Zoom (links in Canvas)

Section 30R: MWF 10:00a-10:50a

Section 31R: MWF 11:00a-11:50a

Section 32R: MWF 2:00p-2:50p

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this class we will discuss and explore some of the methods and principles that distinguish logically good reasoning from bad. We will also learn how to use formal systems to recognize, construct, and evaluate every-day argumentation. We will spend most of our time ensuring that the student has a ready grasp of the difference between inductive and deductive standards of argument evaluation; a distinction which is central to understanding the enterprises of the sciences. Logical skills are not only instrumental in students' success on aptitude tests such as the GRE and the LSAT, but also in nearly any course or job that utilizes analytic skills.

The material will likely be a little tricky. Like any skill, the study of logic requires significant practice to master, and it will not always come easily. Do not get discouraged, and please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I'll make liberal use of Canvas to offer tips, guidance, and to help answer questions. I am confident that you can do it, and again, I'm here to help.

This course fulfills the *Humanities Knowledge Area* for the General Education Program.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- **Critical Thinking:** The successful student will begin to be able to differentiate between good and bad reasons for holding philosophical beliefs and will be able to seek out and identify the assumptions that lie at the basis of philosophical positions.
- **Inquiry and Analysis:** The successful student will begin to be able to break complex philosophical problems into their components, and will be able to identify the consequences and implications of philosophical positions.
- **Communication:** The successful student will increase their capacity for written expression of difficult philosophical positions and arguments clearly, concisely, and thoroughly.

Evaluation of these learning outcomes will be done through homework, and a paper.

TEXT: *A Concise Introduction to Logic* (13th ed), by Patrick Hurley and Lori Watson (Cengage Learning, 2018). ISBN: 9781305958098

This can be found at the College Bookstore, and is *required*.

Materials not available in the required texts will be provided on Canvas.

A Brief note on the textbook: Any edition after the 11th is fine. Textbook publishers often take advantage of students in a way that I find immoral. The last substantive revision of the book happened between the 10th and 11th editions. Editions 11-13 are, for all intents and purposes the same. Please find yourself the most affordable edition you can.

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SCHEDULE:

We will take on a brisk pace in order to cover a fair amount of material. It is critical that you keep up with the material.

Weeks 1-3 **Introduction to Philosophy and Logic**
Chapter 1 (1.1-1.5): *Basic Concepts*
First Quiz

Weeks 3-4 **Fallacies, Formal and Informal**
Chapter 3 (3.1-3.5) *Fallacies of all kinds*
Second Quiz

Weeks 5-8 **Formal Logic 1 – Propositional Logic**
Chapter 6 (6.1-6.6) *Symbols and Translation, Truth-Tables, and argument forms*
Third Quiz

Weeks 8-11 **Formal Logic 2 – Natural Deduction**
Chapter 7 (7.1-7.7) *Natural Deduction, Conditional Proof, and Indirect Proof*
Exam

--Thanksgiving Break--

Week 12 **Hypothetical and Scientific Reasoning**
Chapter 13 (13.1-13.4) *Hypothetical Reasoning, Examples, and Extra-Empirical Virtues*

Week 13 **Science and Superstition: The Demarcation Problem**
Chapter 14 (14.1-14.5) *Distinguishing Science from Superstition*
Final Paper Due

ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION, POLICY:

Homework: You will be expected to complete 10 homework assignments. Each homework assignment will be worth 5 points. I expect you to show your work.. I will post the answer keys to the assignments, but I strongly encourage you to do your best to work through the homework *before* looking at the answer key. You will also notice that the starred questions have answers in the back of the book. Try your hand at those first, and check your work. If you're having trouble with the material, reach out to me or Colby; we're here to help you. You will get 5 points on your homework as long as you complete it.

Quizzes: You will have three quizzes early in the term. Each quiz will cover the foundational material in one chapter. These are designed to ensure that you have a solid grasp on the material before we move on to the next chapter because if you fall behind, it's very difficult to make up ground. The chapters all build on one another, so it's critical that you understand them. The quizzes are repeatable, so if you find that you didn't understand the material as well as you thought, I encourage you to work with me, Colby, or both to get up to speed. You may take each quiz twice, and I will count the higher of the two scores.

Exam: You will have one exam. It will cover all of the formal material and the informal fallacies (Chapters 1, 3, 6, and 7). This exam will be a take-home, but will not be repeatable.

Paper: You are expected to complete one short paper for this course. Your paper should be 900-1200 words, and will be a critical response to either the Ruse, Thagard, or Levinovitz paper on the demarcation between science and

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pseudoscience. You will be expected to reconstruct and critically evaluate the author's argument. More details on the paper will be presented on Canvas around the mid-point of the course.
This paper is worth 50 points.

Breakdown:

Homework x 10: 25% of final grade
Quizzes x 3: 25% of final grade
Exam: 25% of final grade
Paper: 25% of final grade

Late Work: I will accept late assignments, but for each 24-hour period assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 4%.

Attendance: The course meets at the scheduled time, but does so via Zoom. I understand that there will be times that life gets in the way – whether you have an outside appointment, or the internet goes down at your place, or whatever, so I will not require that you attend. That being said, I would like to see some indication that you're engaged with the course, and ideally you will attend via zoom and participate in the course. In the case that you do miss a class, they are all being recorded, and I will post them to Canvas so you can review them at your convenience.

There is also a mandatory, zero point, attendance quiz. Please fill that out as soon as you can.

Expectations for Remote Synchronous Instruction

What you can expect from me as your professor:

1. I will treat you the way I treat all of my students: with the respect and dignity that you deserve as *people*. This means that I will respect the fact that life sometimes gets in the way of our best laid plans. I will do my best to work with you to ensure that you are able to learn the material in this class to the best of your abilities.
2. I will be clear and direct with my expectations for assignments, and I will communicate those expectations to you well in advance of any deadlines (I will also be clear about deadlines, and communicate those in advance).
3. I will do my best to respond to your emails, discussion posts, or messages within 24 hours of receiving them.
4. I will be available during my standing office hours via zoom. I will post a link on Canvas so that you can access my office hours as needed.
 - a. I will also host "open-air" (outdoors, and on campus) office hours early in the semester so we can meet in person if you like.
5. I have arranged my home-office so that it is a professional workspace where I can devote my attention to you and your needs. I will maintain that space as I would our classroom.
6. We will hold courses synchronously, as scheduled, but I will also post the recorded classes to Canvas for your review.
7. I will provide thorough, thoughtful feedback on your assignments in a timely manner.
8. I will do everything I can to facilitate the creation and maintenance of a community – philosophy is best done in dialogue with one another, so I will work hard to ensure the opportunity for us all to engage in that dialogue.

What I expect from you:

1. It is really important that you have a space dedicated to class and studying. Remote instruction makes it really tempting to try to do your work in bed, but that's a *really* bad idea.
 - a. There are all sorts of studies about how mixing your sleep/relaxation space with your work space causes both your ability to sleep/relax and your ability to work suffer. So I ask that you plan ahead and set up a space where you can be productive.
2. Be attentive and engaged with not only the class, but with one another. Philosophy is best done in a community where we can share ideas. That we're not meeting in person makes facilitating that environment slightly more tricky, however it is still doable. Please engage regularly, and contribute to the class often.

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3. Stay on top of the material – read the assigned texts, do the homework, and come with questions. I hope you will work hard to make sure you can tell both what you understand and where you do not understand the material. I am most effective in helping when presented with specific passages, subjects, or arguments that you're struggling with.
4. Come to the synchronous classes. I don't mind talking to myself (I do it a lot more than I would care to admit), but I prefer to talk with you. Please come to class and participate!
5. I expect that you will reach out to me when you have questions. You will almost certainly hit a point where you will need some kind of clarification or help. In those moments, please ask!

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>.

SUU Care and Support Team: The SUU Care and Support Team (CAST) is comprised of trained faculty and staff who are committed to creating an environment at SUU that supports students who may be struggling with emotional distress and mental health issues. As a member of CAST, please know that I am here to help. I am not a professional counselor, but I do care, know how and where to find help if you need it, and want to see you succeed. Please do not be afraid to visit me if you're struggling. <http://www.suu.edu/cast/>

SUU Pride Alliance: SUU Pride Alliance is a network comprising students, staff, and faculty dedicated to creating safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals on the campus of Southern Utah University (SUU). As a member, please know that I am committed to seeing that everyone is afforded the dignity and respect they deserve regardless of their identity. <http://www.suu.edu/allies/>

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>.

HEOA Compliance: The sharing of copyrighted material through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, except as provided under U.S. copyright law, is prohibited by law.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.