

Reasoning & Rational Decision-Making

PHILOSOPHY 1250-001, TTh 1 - 2:20pm

Salt Lake Community College, Fall 2024

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This class is an introduction to informal logic, focusing on issues of logical form, standards of good and bad reasoning, and argumentative writing. More specifically, this course is intended to strengthen reasoning, reading, communication, and argumentative skills through analyzing and evaluating argument structure, understanding fallacies, and by identifying the various reasoning methodologies that ground knowledge claims in a variety of professional, scientific, and public contexts.

TEXTBOOKS: *Critical Thinking: A Student's Introduction*, 7th ed., by Bassham, Irwin, Nardone, & Wallace. Also a few articles to download from Canvas.

GRADING: Your grade will reflect your completion of five general assignments:

1) **ATTENDANCE** – There are 28 classes to attend during the semester (not including exams), and you will receive 1 point for each class you attend up to a total of 25 points. This means that you can miss 3 classes during the semester without penalty. Attendance will count for a total of 20% of your total final grade. Note: if it becomes evident that you have showed up for class not having done the reading assignment (or other requested preparation), then you will not receive attendance credit even if you were in class.

2) **HOMEWORK** – When it comes to becoming a good critical thinker, the only way to learn is to practice, practice, practice. As such, you will be assigned various homework exercises out of the textbook or on Canvas. Please type out the answers and submit them on Canvas prior to class. This work will together count for 25% of your total final grade. See the “Schedule of Readings & Assignments” for the due dates and exercise numbers of your various assignments.

3) **QUIZZES** – There will be 2 shorter online quizzes that you must take. They are “open book,” but there are also limits on how much time you have to complete them. These quizzes will count for 20% of your total final grade. See the “Schedule of Readings & Assignments” for the deadlines on each quiz.

4) **EXAMS** – There will be 2 longer in-class exams that you must take. These exams will count for 20% of your total final grade. See the “Schedule of Readings & Assignments” for the dates of each exam.

5) **ESSAY** – For a final assignment, you must write an argumentative essay. Specific instructions will be given on Canvas. This essay will be worth 15% of your total final grade. See the “Schedule of Readings & Assignments” for the due date.

In figuring grades, please note that all non-whole numbers will be rounded up only at .5 or higher. Cheating on any assignment will result at least in your failure of that assignment. All grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 93+, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-77,
C = 76-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0

STANDARDS FOR GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

In general, A-grades in this course imply an excellent understanding of the material; B-grades imply a good understanding of the material; and C-grades imply some understanding of the material. Don't expect an A-grade for the course just because you showed up for class and tried hard. You must also demonstrate that you have mastered the material.

Good spelling and grammar are expected on all work that you turn in. (Exceptions will be made for the in-class exams.) Points will be taken off for submissions that have not been carefully proofread. Homework or essays with significant errors will automatically be deducted a minimum of 15%. As a review, consider viewing the short slide show on grammar and spelling which is posted on the Canvas course homepage. Also, make use of the spell-check and

grammar-check options that are available as part of your computer's word processing program.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The standard time expectation for a 3 credit hour class at the college-level is 6–9 hours of work per week outside of class. Please be aware of this.

All cell phones should be turned off upon entering the classroom. This also means no texting. If computer use becomes a distraction (watching YouTube videos, Instagram, etc.), then they will be turned off as well.

General Education – This course fulfills the Humanities Distribution requirement for the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning. General Education courses teach basic skills as well as broaden a student's knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Education is much more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information in meaningful ways in order to enrich one's life. While the subject of each course is important and useful, we become truly educated through making connections of such varied information with the different methods of organizing human experience that are practiced by different disciplines. Therefore, this course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to develop broader perspectives and deeper understandings of your community and the world, as well as challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its inhabitants.

ePortfolio – Each student in General Education courses at SLCC maintains a General Education ePortfolio. Instructors in every Gen Ed course will ask you to put at least one assignment from the course into your ePortfolio, and accompany it with reflective writing. It is a requirement in this class for you to add to your ePortfolio, and this syllabus details the assignments and reflections you are to include. It is a requirement in this class for you to add your Signature Assignment to your ePortfolio and accompany it with reflective writing. The reflective writing should look back and recount the struggles, problems,

failures, and successes involved in learning the new concept and applying it to your project. Your ePortfolio will allow you to include your educational goals, describe your extracurricular activities, and post your resume. When you finish your time at SLCC, your ePortfolio will then be a multi-media showcase of your educational experience.

This syllabus is subject to change.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

The readings for this course will either be from *Critical Thinking*, seventh edition, by Bassham, et al., or they will be downloadable in your weekly modules. Students are expected to have done all readings prior to class as it corresponds to the schedule below. Please be aware that all of these dates are subject to revision.

Week of Aug 20th	intro to the class (Tues)
	intro to the class (Thurs)
Week of Aug 26th	chap 1 from textbook (Tues)
	chap 2 from textbook (Thurs)
	Due: exercises 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 (Part 1 only on each of these)
Week of Sept 2nd	chap 2 from textbook (Tues)
	Clifford (Thurs)
	Due: Starting My Essay assignment
Week of Sept 9th	chap 3 from textbook (Tues)

	chap 3 in textbook (Thurs) Due: exercises 3.2, 3.5
Week of Sept 16th	chaps 5 & 6 in textbook (Tues) chaps 5 & 6 in textbook (Thurs) Due: exercises 5.2 part 1, 6.1 parts 1& 2 Take Quiz 1 by Sat at midnight
Week of Sept 23rd	chap 7 (<u>169–180 only</u>) in textbook (Tues) chap 7 (<u>164–180 only</u>) in textbook (Thurs) Due: exercises 7.1
Week of Sept 30th	chap 9 in textbook (Tues) chap 9 in textbook (Thurs) Due: exercises 9.3 part 1, 9.4 part 1
Week of Oct 7th	Test review (Tues) First Exam (Thurs)
Week of Oct 14th	How to Read Philosophy (Tues) no class (Thurs)
Week of Oct 21st	chap 8 in textbook (Tues) Nichols (Thurs) Due: first draft of essay
Week of Oct 28th	Smith & Sheehan (Tues)

Hempel & Naughton (Thurs)
Due: homework exercises on Canvas

Week of Nov 4th

Kuhn (Tues)

Dougherty (Thurs)
Due: homework exercises on Canvas
Take Quiz 2 by Sat at midnight

Week of Nov 11th

Haack (Tues)

Kitcher (Thurs)
Due: homework exercises on Canvas

Week of Nov 18th

Ruppel, Service, Ashley, & Randerson (Tues)

Four Ethical Theories (Thurs)

Week of Nov 25th

Four Ethical Theories (Tues)

no class (Thurs)

Week of Dec 2nd

final discussion (Tues)

Second Exam (Thurs)
Submit Essay by Sat @ midnight