

# Introduction to Critical Thinking

PHL 100 AB5

Fall 2016

Tuesday 4pm - 6:50pm | Room: A402

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Daniel Hooley | [Dan.Hooley@ufv.ca](mailto:Dan.Hooley@ufv.ca) | Office location: D3012 | Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3pm, please make appointment by email beforehand.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introduction to critical thinking and informal logic. You will learn to identify arguments, recognize different types of arguments, and critically evaluate the structure of different arguments. The goal of this course is to improve your critical thinking skills. Special focus will be given to applying these skills to ideas and arguments presented in written form; however, we will also apply them in other contexts.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- *The Power of Critical Thinking* (eds MacDonald and Vaughn)

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish between arguments and other forms of persuasion
- Accurately identify arguments
- Recognize different types of arguments and evidence
- Understand and use central concepts used in reasoning (such as truth, necessary and sufficient conditions, definition, fallacy, validity, soundness, etc.)
- Evaluate arguments
- Construct good arguments
- Engage in reasoned discussion on contemporary public issues

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Participation	(10%)
Weekly Homework	(10%)
Other Assignments	(25%)
Midterm	(25%)
Final Exam	(30%)

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

Midterm	October 11th
Final Exam	TBA

## GRADE SCALE

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage Equivalent</i>	<i>Grade point value</i>
A+	90-100	4.33
A	85-89	4.0
A-	80-84	3.67
B+	77-79	3.33
B	73-76	3.0
B-	70-72	2.67
C+	67-69	2.33
C	63-66	2.0
C-	60-62	1.67
D	50-59	1.0
F	<50	0.0

## COURSE SCHEDULE

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\*The schedule and selection of readings are tentative and may be changed or modified during the course.

### **SEPTEMBER 6th: Introduction**

- Optional:* Chapter 1

### **SEPTEMBER 13th: Making Sense of Arguments**

- Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 (up to p.83)

### **SEPTEMBER 20th: Making Sense of Arguments Continued**

- Chapter 3 (83-120)

### **SEPTEMBER 27th: Reasons for Belief and Doubt**

- Chapter 4

### **OCTOBER 4th: Faulty Reasoning**

- Chapter 5

### **OCTOBER 11th: Midterm**

### **OCTOBER 18th: Deductive Reasoning: Categorical Logic**

- Chapter 6

**OCTOBER 25th: Deductive Reasoning: Propositional Logic**

- Chapter 7

**NOVEMBER 1st: Inductive Reasoning**

- Chapter 8

**NOVEMBER 8th: Inference to the Best Explanation**

- Chapter 9

**NOVEMBER 15th: Judging Scientific Theories**

- Chapter 10

**NOVEMBER 22nd: Critical Thinking Applied**

- Chapter 11

**NOVEMBER 29th: Catch-up & Review**

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**COURSE POLICIES**

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**LATE PAPERS AND EXAMS:** Late papers will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made before the assignment is due (at least 1 day prior to the due date), or you have a documented medical or family emergency. No late exams will be given, except in the case of medical or family emergencies.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** I expect that the assignments you submit for this class are the product of your own work, and are not plagiarized by other sources. Prior to the first essay we will review how to avoid accidental plagiarism, as well as other forms of academic misconduct. For additional information on plagiarism, see: <http://libguides.ufv.ca/Plagiarism>.

**ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS:** Students with different needs and learning styles are welcome in this course, and any student with a disability will be accommodated. If you have a disability, or need accommodation for specific learning needs, please see me or contact the Disability Resource Center: <https://www.ufv.ca/disabilityservices/>.

**EMAIL POLICY:** I will do my best to respond to student emails within 24 hours (if it is not the weekend, I will usually respond much sooner than this). I only ask that you make sure the information you are seeking is not available on the course webpage or the syllabus. If your question cannot be easily answered via an email, I will suggest you meet me during one of my office hours, or after class to discuss the matter.

**LAPTOPS & PHONES:** I want to encourage you all to not use laptops and other technology (tablets, phones, etc.) during class. There is [pretty good evidence](#) that students do better in university classes when they take notes by hand. And notes covering the main arguments covered in class will be provided prior to class. I do this so that you don't have to worry about summarizing the main arguments/ideas we are considering, and can instead focus on understanding and evaluating the arguments we are considering. If you'd prefer, you can use a laptop or tablet in class, but I ask that you don't use it for purposes other than taking notes.