

Philosophy 100: Introduction to Critical Reasoning
Instructor: C. Jacob Hale, Ph.D. [he/him]
Fall 2026

Online Class:
Phil 100-02 (14059)
Phil 100-03 (14462)
Phil 100-04 (14463)

Prerequisites: Not open to students who have completed PHIL 200.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Instructor: Email: jacob.hale@csun.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 p.m.; and, by appointment. Only on Zoom:
<https://csun.zoom.us/my/jacobhalezoomroom>
(If prompted for a passcode, here it is: 136059)

Department: Phone: 818-677-2757
Email: philosophy@csun.edu

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please Note:

This is an online class. There are no class meetings or lectures. There will be an in-person midterm exam (Monday, October 5, 4:00-5:15 p.m.) and an in-person final exam (Monday, December 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m.). I will hold office hours on Zoom. All your course materials, including the textbook, are available to you free of charge on Canvas. If you have any questions, please reach out to me on email or on Canvas.

Catalog Description:

Introduction to the identification, analysis, and evaluation of arguments. Students will learn to critically assess a variety of kinds of arguments, with attention to deduction and induction in real-world critical reasoning. Questions may include: What is an argument? What is the point of making arguments? What makes an argument good or bad? Can bad arguments be persuasive, and why?

Instructor's Description:

In this course we will study *arguments*. We will work to improve your abilities to identify arguments and their parts (that is, premises and conclusions); we will study the concepts used to evaluate arguments; and, we will learn how to use the formal methods of truth-functional logic to evaluate truth-functional deductive arguments. We will focus on arguments that occur in everyday reasoning.

Role in General Education:

Basic Skills Area 1B Critical Thinking

Goal: Students will analyze information and ideas carefully and logically from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Students must earn a C- or better grade to satisfy the GE Basic Skills requirement.

Student Learning Outcomes

Each course meeting the Basic Skills Critical Thinking requirement must fulfill all of the following student learning outcomes.

Students will:

1. Explain and apply the basic concepts essential to a critical examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse.
2. Use investigative and analytical thinking skills to examine alternatives, explore complex questions and solve challenging problems.
3. Synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions.
4. Evaluate the logic and validity of arguments, as well as the relevance of data and information.
5. Recognize and avoid common logical and rhetorical fallacies.

Immigration Enforcement Information and Resources at CSUN:

CSUN is committed to ensuring that every CSUN community member, regardless of immigration status, has the opportunity to thrive academically, personally and professionally. California State University (CSU) campuses, including CSUN, do not assist immigration officials engaged in enforcement activities on our campus, including officials of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection. For more information and for advice and resources for students, staff and faculty about immigration enforcement issues, please see this website:

<https://w2.csun.edu/immigration-enforcement-information-services-resource-hub>

Confidentiality of Communications:

Please be aware that campus email is a matter of public record, and can be accessed by governmental agencies. The status of Canvas messages is not clear to me. At this point, Zoom meetings are not saved or retained; this could change, of course. I will never record Zoom meetings or office hours, and you are not permitted to record me on Zoom. Therefore, at least until I let you know otherwise, if you need to communicate with me about something that you want to remain confidential, a Zoom meeting is the best way for us to communicate. I will always do my best to schedule Zoom meetings with you, independently of office hours, if you ask me.

As a faculty member assigned to teach lower-division undergraduate courses, I am a “limited reporter,” which is a category of mandated reporter. In this capacity, California Penal Code requires me to report child abuse or neglect only if occurs on CSU premises or at an official activity of, or program conducted by, the CSU.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Please note that I reserve the right to make changes just in case I believe, after careful consideration, that they are necessary to promote student learning.

Canvas:

Everything you need for this course is on Canvas. Follow the weekly modules for reading assignments, information about any other materials relevant for a given week, and for written assignments. Your textbook is on Canvas, as are your syllabus, links for Zoom office hours, links to YouTube videos that I have made for you, all of your homework assignments, study materials for the midterm and final exams, and more information about those exams. After each homework assignment has been submitted, I will post answers to it. If you have any trouble finding something you need for this course on Canvas, please let me know. On Canvas all three sections of Philosophy 100 that I am teaching this semester as merged.

Reading Assignments:

Textbook: *Hale’s Introduction to Critical Reasoning*, by C. Jacob Hale (me). This textbook has three chapters, all of which are available to you free of charge on Canvas in a file entitled “Textbook.” You should download the textbook to a device you will use to access it, for two reasons: (1) you don’t want to be unable to access it because Canvas isn’t working, and (2) some charts in the book will not display properly on Canvas.

I have posted each chapter separately as a Word document and as a PDF; you can choose whichever is easiest for you to use. The chapter titles are as follows:

Chapter 1: Identifying Arguments and Their Parts

Chapter 2: Evaluating Arguments: The Basic Concepts

Chapter 3: Evaluating Truth-Functional Arguments

Each chapter has a detailed table of contents, narrative sections, practice problems sets, answers to all the practice problems, multiple choice practice questions, and answers to all the multiple choice practice questions.

In the Weekly Schedule (later in this syllabus), you will find the semester broken down into weeks. You can also find this information by following the weekly modules on Canvas. For each week, I have listed reading assignments, information about which problem practice sets to study, information about which multiple choice practice questions to study, and all homework assignment due dates. As you work on the practice problems sets and the multiple choice practice problems, be sure to check your answers against the answers in your textbook, and to ask me any questions that you might have.

Since pagination might differ depending on the program or device each student is using, I have not used page numbers in the Weekly Schedule. Reading assignments are listed by the titles of the sections. These reading assignments, along with relevant practice problems sets and relevant multiple choice practice questions, are listed in the weekly modules on Canvas, as well as in the Weekly Schedule on this syllabus.

I have created a number of short videos (typically less than 15 minutes each) to help you understand the course material. Most of the videos will focus on practice problems sets in your textbook. The videos are posted on YouTube, and you can find links to the videos relevant for each week the modules on Canvas, and in Weekly Schedule on this syllabus.

Graded Assignments and Grading:

The following scale will be used to determine course grades:

A: 90% and above
B: 80-89.999...%
C: 70-79.999...%
D: 60-69.999...%
F: less than 60%

A student must earn 70% or higher on the final exam to pass the course.

“Plus”/ “minus” grades will not be used in this course.

In borderline cases only, informed Zoom participation, significant improvement, and effort.

Homework Assignments:

There are fourteen (14) homework assignments in this course; most – but not all – are worth 30 points. I have posted all of the homework assignments on Canvas and you will submit your work through Canvas. You will have a homework assignment due on most – but not all – Monday mornings of this semester; they are due by 7:00 a.m. Some homework assignments will have extra credit possibilities; there will not be any stand-alone extra credit assignments available.

Students are allowed and encouraged to work together on homework assignments and to submit group work. Groups may be a maximum of four students each. (For example, if three students work together on an assignment, I would prefer that only one student submit the assignment but be sure to put all three names on it; this will allow me to get your work graded more quickly.) I also encourage you to help each other on Discord or other platforms that facilitate collaboration.

I will post answers to each homework assignment shortly after it is due. Obviously, I cannot accept homework submissions after having posted answers for that assignment. So, if you need a short extension, please let me know in advance!

I realize that sometimes “bad stuff” happens; for example, somebody might misunderstand instructions, forget a deadline, have a WiFi problem, accidentally upload the wrong document to

Canvas, or – there are so many possibilities! Because of this, I will **drop the two lowest homework scores for each student.** (By ‘lowest’, I mean the lowest percentage not the lowest raw number.)

Midterm Exam:

You will have an in-person midterm exam on Monday, October 5, 4:00-5:00 p.m., in Sequoia Hall 104. This exam will be worth 140 points and exam will cover Chapters 1 and 2. You must write your answers by hand in official University exam booklets; I recommend bringing two. You may not use any notes or other materials – just your own mind. All devices must be out of sight and silent. The only accommodations will be those administered by Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES); this is a firm policy with absolutely no exceptions. If you cannot commit to following this policy, do not take this class.

Final Exam:

You will have an in-person final exam on Monday, December 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m., in Sequoia Hall 104. **A student must earn 70% or higher on the final exam to pass the course.** The final exam will be worth approximately 200 points and exam will cover Chapter 3. You must write your answers by hand in official University exam booklets; I recommend bringing two. You may not use any notes or other materials – just your own mind. All devices must be out of sight and silent. The only accommodations will be those administered by Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES); this is a firm policy with absolutely no exceptions. If you cannot commit to following this policy, do not take this class.

Instructor’s Zoom Office Hours:

My regularly scheduled office hours are Wednesdays, 1-2:30 p.m., and Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 p.m. In addition to answering your questions about the assigned material from your textbook or about material in the videos I have posted, I am happy to go over your drafts of homework assignments before you turn them in.

If my regularly scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me to schedule an appointment (individually or with a small group) at another time, or for help on email or through Canvas messages.

Statement on Using AI for this Course:

Want to flunk this class? Have AI do your homework assignments for you!

Why I say this? Not because I have a class policy against your using AI to do your homework assignments – I don’t. I say this for two reasons: (1) ChatGPT is pretty bad at the material we cover, generating wrong answers almost as often as it generates correct answers, frequently contradicting itself, as well as being so wordy that it often fails to zero in on the points that really matter, so it earns low scores on homework assignments, and (2) if you have AI do your homework assignments for you, you won’t understand the material well enough to pass the exams.

Discord:

While I am not setting up a Discord for this course, I strongly encourage my students to create a discord for your class and help each other there (without feeling inhibited by my presence, as I realize some of you might).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE FOR FALL 2026

(Completed through Week 7; I will finish this soon)

NOTE: YOUR TEXTBOOK IS ON CANVAS, IN FILES IN A FOLDER ENTITLED "TEXTBOOK"

Week 1: August 22-28

Reading:

Welcome to Phil 100: Intro to Critical Reasoning [on Canvas, in Module for Week One]

Canvas Guide [on Canvas, in Module for Week One]

Syllabus, pgs. 1-6 [on Canvas, in "Files" in a folder entitled "Syllabus & Important Course Info"]

How to Succeed in Our Class [on Canvas, in files in a folder called "Syllabus & Important Course Info"]

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), from Chapter One:

Reading for this week:

What Is an Argument?

Premise Introducers and Conclusion Introducers

Where Is the Conclusion?

Arguments Presented Without Premise Introducers or Conclusion Introducers

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Boxes 1A and 1B

Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-16

Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-16

Practice Problems Sets 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3

Answers to Practice Problems Sets 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3

You Tube videos for this week:

Practice Problems Set 1-1

https://youtu.be/YuD_CQlcbao

Practice Problems Set 1-2

<https://youtu.be/eS2oXJ9DPHw>

Practice Problems Set 1-3

<https://youtu.be/mUPmBx7msxo>

Week 2: August 31-September 4

Homework #1 due by 7:00 a.m. on August 31 (answers will be published on Canvas later that day)

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), from Chapter One:

Reading for this week:

Rhetorical Questions and Imperatives Used to Express Statements

Adding Words When Writing a Conclusion by Itself

Editing Out Extraneous Material When Writing a Conclusion by Itself

Different Meanings of Common Premise Introducers and Conclusion Introducers

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Box 1C

Multiple Choice Practice Questions 17-29

Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 17-29

Practice Problems Sets 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7, and 1-8

Answers to Practice Problems Sets 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7, and 1-8

You Tube videos for this week:

Practice Problems Set 1-4

<https://youtu.be/BYIVXoWrDxQ>

Practice Problems Set 1-5

https://youtu.be/Rw2zOR7qw_c

Practice Problems Set 1-6

<https://youtu.be/TUv2BUrEn0M>

Practice Problems Set 1-7, 1 of 2

<https://youtu.be/AoCw9P8yffs>

Practice Problems Set 1-7, 2 of 2

<https://youtu.be/uxWNXIrsHKA>

Practice Problems Set 1-8

<https://youtu.be/qKYB2iQps8I>

Week 3: September 7-11

Holiday: Monday, September 7, Labor Day

Homework #2 due by 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 8 (answers will be published on Canvas later that day)

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), from Chapter One:

Reading for this week:

A Few Other Uses of the Word 'Because'

Argument Reconstruction

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Box 1D

Multiple Choice Practice Questions 30-31

Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 30-31

Practice Problems Sets 1-9 and 1-10

Answers to Practice Problems Sets 1-9 and 1-10

You Tube videos for this week:

Practice Problems Set 1-9

<https://youtu.be/xhLQBcWUaE0>

Practice Problems Set 1-10

<https://youtu.be/Z2HyZQZ81pU>

Week 4: September 14-18

Homework #3 due by 7:00 a.m. on Monday, September 14 (answers will be published on Canvas later that day)

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), from Chapter One:

Reading for this week:

Arguments with Unstated Conclusions

Arguments with Subconclusions

More Complicated Arguments with Subconclusions

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Box 1E

Multiple Choice Practice Questions 32-40

Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 32-40

Practice Problems Sets 1-11, 1-12, and 1-13

Answers to Practice Problems Sets 1-11, 1-12, and 1-13

You Tube videos to watch:

Practice Problems Set 1-11

<https://youtu.be/85Woe7baDsY>

Practice Problems Set 1-12

https://youtu.be/BtvCGqZr_pl

Practice Problems Set 1-13

<https://youtu.be/AiLpiOmBbOO>

Week 5: September 21-25

Homework #4 due by 7:00 a.m. on Monday, September 21 (answers will be published on Canvas later that day)

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), from Chapter One:

Reading for this week:

Determining Whether or Not Passages Contain Arguments
A Short Recap

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Practice Problems Sets 1-14 and 1-15
Answers to Practice Problems Sets 1-14 and 1-15
Multiple Choice Practice Questions 41-60
Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 41-60

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), Chapter Two:

Reading for this week:

The Conditions for a Good Argument
The Conditions for a Good Deductive Argument
The Distinction Between Deductive and Inductive Arguments
Arguments with Unstated Premises
The Method of Counterexample: A Way to Demonstrate Invalidity
A Short Recap

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Boxes 2A, 2B, 2C, and 2D
Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-40
Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-40
Practice Problems Sets 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3
Answers to Practice Problems Sets 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3

You Tube videos for this week:

Practice Problems Set 1-15
https://youtu.be/V1Sz_SZhJ0o

Practice Problems Set 2-1
https://youtu.be/fO_Ru3f6TJI

Practice Problems Set 2-2
<https://youtu.be/xOZomzMDBRo>

Practice Problems Set 2-3
<https://youtu.be/OrK4MwjZYRE>

Week 6: September 28-October 2

Homework #5 due by 7:00 a.m. on Monday, September 21 (answers will be published on Canvas later that day)

Review for Midterm Exam:

Work on Midterm Practice Test [in Files in Folder “Exam Study”]

Check your work: see Midterm Practice Test-answers [in Files in Folder “Exam Study”]

Review all previous material for the class

Ask me any questions you might have

Week 7: October 5-9

Midterm Exam, 4:00-5:15 p.m., in person

You must write your answers by hand in official University exam booklets; I recommend bringing two. You may not use any notes or other materials – just your own mind. All devices must be out of sight and silent. The only accommodations will be those administered by Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES); this is a firm policy with absolutely no exceptions.

Hale's Introduction to Critical Reasoning (textbook), Chapter Three:

Reading for this week:

Introduction to Truth-Functional Logic
Negation Explained and Its Truth Conditions Defined
Conjunction Explained and Its Truth Conditions Defined
Disjunction Explained and Its Truth Conditions Defined
Conditional Statements Explained and Their Truth Conditions Defined
How the Negation Sign Works Differently Than the Other Symbols
Parentheses
Truth-Functional Equivalence
Truth Tables with More Than Two Variables

Additional textbook material to study this week:

Important Boxes 3A and 3B
Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-9
Answers to Multiple Choice Practice Questions 1-9
Practice Problems Sets: 3-1 and 3-2
Answers to Practice Problems Sets: 3-1 and 3-2

You Tube videos to watch:

Chapter Three Overview

https://youtu.be/zVx8hlt-3_0

Practice Problems Set 3-1

<https://youtu.be/laAUVS7BSbE>

Practice Problems Set 3-2

<https://youtu.be/oz4NkYLFunM>