

SYLLABUS

Course Title: Introduction to Critical Reasoning

Course Number: PHIL 100 Online (Fall 2026)

Ticket Number: 14513/14517/15346

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Office Hours: On campus: Wed. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM at ST 505

ZOOM online office hour meetings: every **Wednesday. from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM** (also available by appointment)

Link:

<https://csun.zoom.us/j/85128697920?pwd=I1dqajwkdPLnrRvSg4O3inGxRjE21a.1>

ZOOM Meeting ID: 851 2869 7920 Passcode: 2026

WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO LEARN IN THIS CLASS:

You are going to learn arguably the most important skills in your life: critical thinking skills. In this age of information (and misinformation), everyone needs to master critical thinking in order to live a good life. Truth and knowledge (as justified true beliefs) are important and essential for us to live a meaningful life. These critical thinking skills for finding truth and justifying our beliefs are also fundamental to mastering other subjects and making sound judgments every day.

Learning critical thinking is a long and difficult journey. We'll first learn about what critical thinking is, how to develop a critical mindset, how to make accurate statements, and how to identify and analyze an argument. Then we'll learn about the notion of valid arguments, some common valid argument forms, and learn how to detect fallacies in our reasoning—there are many types of fallacies found in our life. In the second half of the semester, we'll learn the *formal* aspect of critical thinking, which is more like math but very important for a critical thinker. Throughout this course, we will learn how to apply these important skills to interesting and significant issues we encounter every day. You will be challenged in this class – in this class you need to learn many new concepts, but more important, you will have an opportunity to develop *skills* of critical thinking. Skill development is always hard, but everyone can do well (think of learning how to swim or play basketball) as long as you put enough effort and have good coaching. In this class, we'll also teach the skills of learning – *learning how to learn*, which is valuable to your study of all subjects. Trust me on this: every student can become a good critical thinker.

This course satisfies the **Critical Thinking component (Area 1B, used to be A3) of the Basic Skill section of the General Education Program**, which recognizes critical reasoning as a fundamental competence.

TEXTBOOKS:

- **No book needs to be purchased for this class.**
- **Instead, the instructor wrote his own book for this class: Critical Thinking in the Information Age.**
 - This class is fully online and has a weekly schedule. Each week we will be studying **one chapter** of the book –which is our required reading each week, and they are available on Canvas.
 - One reason to adopt my own book is to reduce student cost on textbooks. A typical commercial textbook on critical reasoning costs around \$100. The other reason is that I believe my book is more relevant to CSUN students and updated with information of current affairs. I hope you will like it.
 - The book contains a lot of materials; I hope everyone may find something interesting and challenging in the book. If you feel some parts are easy, then please explore the recommended readings at the end of each chapter. If you feel the material is hard, then read it one more time or *three* times, and take notes while reading it. If you still struggle with the content, you can always ask me and your fellow classmates. There are also a lot of online lessons and guides on critical thinking (you can find many video tutorials on YouTube), and you may use them freely as long as they are reliable. The goal of this class is to help you develop your critical thinking skills, and as long as you accomplish this task in the end, it does not matter how you get it done. All the helpful tools can be used for this goal.
 - To develop skills of critical reasoning you need a lot of exercises. We'll provide examples in the book and give some exercises at the end of each chapter. You will find more opportunities for exercises in practice quizzes and actual quizzes on the online Canvas course site.

Recommended Textbooks:

Though we don't require you to purchase any textbook, there are many books on critical thinking that are available and some of them have open access. There are also books on critical thinking available online at CSUN University Library, with free access to all of you. I have selected the following two books for you, which I think are helpful and fit well with my lectures. They will serve as complementary readings for this class. The acronyms for these textbooks are used in the course schedule below.

- **[ICTC] *An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity : Think More, Think Better*** by J. Y. F. Lau; Published by John Wiley & Sons.

Available at University Library online:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csun/reader.action?docID=706494>

- [CTT] *The Critical Thinking Toolkit*

by Galen A. Foresman, Peter S. Fosl, and Jamie C. Watson; pub. by John Wiley & Sons.

Available at University Library online:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csun/reader.action?docID=4538252>

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This is a **completely online course** offered on CSUN Canvas (<https://canvas.csun.edu/>): all course-related activities will be provided online, including all course materials, course assignments, and online discussions. The first thing before you are committed to taking this class is to make sure that *you are ready for taking a fully online class*, especially a critical thinking class. You may take a self-assessment for online readiness to check whether you're ready for taking an online class. Here is the link to an [Online Readiness Self-Assessment](#) provided by Stanislaus State University, which you can use to test your online readiness.

All enrolled students are able to access the Canvas site for this course at <http://canvas.csun.edu/>. Students who register later will be added within 24 hours of your registration. Once you log on CSUN Canvas site with your student ID and password (the same as your portal ID and password), you can see this course under the name “**PHIL 100: Introduction to Critical Reasoning**.” If you have any questions about Canvas, you can find campus support [here](#).

You do not need to come to campus to take this class, and we don't require synchronous meetings. But **you need to have reliable Internet access to access course materials and complete course assignments**. If you don't have reliable Internet access, here are some options identified by CSUN: <https://www.csun.edu/it/internet-connectivity-users-who-do-not-have-it>. Make sure you are comfortable with the online nature of this class. As you may know, logic (critical reasoning) is a very difficult course, and many people find it more difficult to learn it online.

I will maintain a weekly structure for this course. The last part of the syllabus gives you a detailed weekly schedule and reading assignment. **On each Monday of the week** I will publish a **lecture (one chapter of my textbook)** that you should study, and supplement it with other recommended materials. My book and recommended materials are complementary, as they often explain similar materials from different angles. Students have different styles of learning, and we'll try to provide multiple means of learning to meet student needs, including texts, images, and videos. It does not matter *how* you come to understand the materials; what matters is you understand them in the end.

Also available each Monday is a **discussion forum** for you to share our thoughts or questions, and to give comments or feedback on course-related materials. I will give you some guidelines (prompts) for each week's discussions, and your contributions are vital to the quality of this forum. You are required to participate in discussions each week, and your contributions will be graded. You are also required to respond to at least **two** other students' discussion posts with **substantial** input, which are due at the end of each week (**Saturday night**). Discussions will be divided into 15-student groups, so that you can know each other better and engage at a personal level. The learning of critical thinking is hard, and good friends can be a great help.

For most of the weeks, you will have a **practice quiz**. The practice quizzes are very similar to the real quizzes, but they will not count toward your final grade. The **actual quiz** of the week

will be available by Wednesday morning, and you can take it until the night of that Saturday.

Please make sure that you have some free time (usually less than one hour) and Internet access between Wednesday morning and Saturday night so that you can take the quiz.

Though practice quizzes don't count toward your final grade, they are identical in format and similar in content to the actual quizzes. So they are excellent preparations for the actual quizzes.

Synchronous Online Video meetings are not required for this class, but they will be offered when necessary or upon request. Video office hours are available on Wednesday from 11:00 to 1:30 PM, and anyone can join the session whether they have questions or not.

All **communications** in this class can be conducted electronically. You should check our Canvas course at least twice a week for any updates. You will receive weekly notices on Canvas, and such notices will also be sent to your CSUN email addresses automatically by Canvas server. If you are using a different email account, you should make sure that all your CSUN emails are forwarded to your regular email accounts. Since there are at least two ways to get notifications about any Canvas assignments, it is your full responsibility to make sure that you get notices from the Canvas Keep in mind that **you are not allowed to make up an assignment** if you miss them. Taking a class online needs strong self-discipline, and it takes great responsibility to succeed in this class.

Rules concerning the Use of AI Programs in this Course:

In the past few years we have seen the rapid advancement of AI programs (such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude), and such programs can solve most problems in science, math, engineering, and logic. It is no surprise that these programs can handle the critical thinking questions quite well and complete the quizzes and exams with almost perfect scores. They are very useful, but in this class that is teaching and helping you develop critical thinking skills, AI can be a hindrance to your learning of critical thinking skills and prevent you from true learning.

Here is a helpful analogy. In elementary school, students start to learn basic arithmetic such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. It can get quite complicated, especially with fractions and large numbers. It is much easier and more accurate to use a calculator to do such calculations. Yet students in elementary school are not allowed to use calculators when they learn these operations. Why? Because the students need to master these skills on their own; or at the minimum, they have to understand the concepts and how to apply them properly on their own – otherwise they could not even use the calculator very well.

The college education is similar – it is still a process of developing your skills and enhancing your knowledge. We can use calculator and AI programs as great tools, but we don't want them to replace ourselves and make us dispensable. We want to use the tools, not to be replaced by them. More importantly, critical thinking skills are so important in our lives and society that we cannot completely delegate them to machines, which still have inherent biases and make serious mistakes.

Therefore, in this class, we will **prohibit** the use of AI in all class assignments, including weekly discussions, quizzes, exams, and writing and presentations. You may use AI to help you understand course materials or generate practice questions, but please never use AI to do any assignment in this class. As a part of class policy, **any assignment that is done by AI will get no credit, and any information that is not created by yourself must be properly cited.** Note

the purpose of these rules is to help you master the skills of critical thinking. AI programs can be very useful and effective, but we must develop core skills before we can make good use of AI technologies.

Course Requirements:

1. Studying the course materials diligently, as required by the course schedule; in some weeks you may need more time than usual –some materials are very difficult, and the level of difficulty is also relative to your background skills.
2. Participating in online discussions as required.
3. Working at the practice quizzes and relevant exercises in the textbook sets to master the materials.
4. Finishing all the required assignments, including discussion forums, quizzes, exams, and other homework **on time**. You are strongly encouraged to reflect on your performance and think of ways of improving your learning.
5. This is a four-unit class –which means you need to spend extra time (about a third more time) on this class than typical 3-unit classes.

Technological Requirement:

1. Reliable access to Internet
2. Devices: laptop/desktop computers are recommended for this course-- most of the content, esp. quizzes and exams are designed for being used on computers.
 - a. Do let me know if you have difficulties accessing any course content. I will try to resolve them as soon as possible.

Students with Disabilities:

This instructor, in conjunction with California State University Northridge, is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Any information regarding your disability will remain confidential. Because many accommodations require early planning, requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible. Any requests for accommodations will be reviewed in a timely manner to determine their appropriateness to this setting.

CSUN is one of the leaders in the nation to serve students with disabilities. Visit CSUN Disability Resources and Educational Services center or online at <https://www.csun.edu/dres> for all the services CSUN is able to provide, including alternative testing accommodations and Academic coaching through The Thriving and Achieving Program (TAP).

Learning Resource Center and Student Support

CSUN LRC provides a variety of useful support to students at any level. Please visit the LRC website to find out what you can get from LRC: <https://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/learning-resource-center>.

CSUN [Philosophy department](#) provides tutoring help on critical reasoning and logic classes, and you can find more information on the department website. Tutors are also CSUN students

(including some past students of this course), and they will be more than happy to answer all your questions. More details will be updated on Canvas throughout the semester.

Academic Honesty

Given the online nature of the class, students are allowed to use the textbooks and online lectures notes while completing quizzes or exams. Students are also encouraged to form study groups to study the course materials together. However, students cannot help each other out during the quiz or exam-taking period. In particular, **students cannot copy other students' quizzes/exams or let their quizzes/exams be copied, and cannot disclose the content of quizzes or exams to other students under any circumstances**. If you let other student(s) copy your answer(s) or disclose information about the exam, then you're violating CSUN policy on academic honesty.

Violation of such policies may result in failing the class and is subject to further disciplinary actions from the University. **Please be reminded that the Canvas has plenty of tools to identify various ways of cheating**. Some students in my past classes were disciplined for their cheating behavior. For detailed information on CSUN policy on academic dishonesty, please refer to CSUN catalog: <https://catalog.csun.edu/policies/academic-dishonesty/>. Here you will find clear definition on what counts as academic dishonesty.

Also, as stated earlier, do not use AI to do any assignment in this class. AI may hinder your development as a critical thinker. In this class you will have a lot of flexibility and freedom, and in return I hope you treat me and other students with respect and honor. After all, college learning (especially with the learning of critical reasoning skills) is not just about grades, but more about mastering the skills that are of crucial importance for your future.

Campus Support for Online Learning

CSUN has great support for students of online learning. IT department has all the tools you need to succeed in your online learning, and check out their website for more information: <https://www.csun.edu/it/students>. In addition, CSUN University Library provides great support to online learning, which you can find most of its service here: <https://library.csun.edu/learning-commons>.

Etiquette for Online Classes (Netiquette) –Common Guidelines

- Basic principle: **respect everyone; critique the other's opinions but don't attack the person.**
 - We are a community of critical thinkers who help each other with learning and developing crucial skills.
- Language:
 - Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
 - Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
 - Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Attitude:
 - Keep an open-mind and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.

- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Using humor is acceptable but be careful that it is not misinterpreted. For example, are you being humorous or sarcastic?
- Community:
 - Share tips with other students.
 - Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
 - Do not dominate any discussion. Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Online class is still a class, and we need to follow proper etiquette in order to build a happy learning community.
 - Think and edit before you push the Send/Submit button –check if you have violated any of the above rules of Netiquette.

Note: these guidelines are adapted from https://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm, where more information can be found.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS:

1. This is a **Critical Reasoning** class and a skill-development class. Critical reasoning skills are hard to acquire and they need a lot of your time and hard work to develop. To take the class online does not imply that you won't need an equal amount of work; if anything, it is the contrary: **you need to spend more time and to work harder taking this course online than what you might need taking it on campus.** **You need to be mentally prepared for the time and effort required for this course.**
 - a. Phil. 100 used to be one of the high-failure courses on this campus. Quite often 30% of students fail or withdraw from this class. The reason is that logical reasoning does not come naturally, and it requires great effort and hard work to master such skills.
 - b. The online aspect of class does have benefits: it has a more flexible schedule and is more convenient for students, and it offers more opportunities to study the materials and gives more chances of practices. Logic is about skill development, and practices are crucial for skill developments.
 - c. **Not all students are fit for online instructions**, especially a skill development class like Critical Reasoning. Some students find it much easier to learn logic in person. **If that is the case for you, please do consider taking a regular critical reasoning class, instead of an online one.**
 - i. How fit are you for learning logic online? You may be OK if you have all the following traits:
 1. You are **self-disciplined** – you can carry on a rigid study schedule on your own; this is of primary importance!
 2. You have good computer skills (typing, using common software and browsing Internet, reading on computer screen; etc.)

3. You can understand pretty well from written texts without the need of teacher's explanations.
 4. You can understand **abstract concepts** and **reasoning** by studying them on your own.
 5. You can follow the step-by-step instructions or reasoning without the need of face-to-face communications.
 6. You are not afraid to ask questions when you have troubles or concerns with a class.
- ii. Do keep it in mind that our logic class may be different from other online classes you have taken. Even if you have taken online classes before, you may find it difficult to take this class online. Many students who have done well in other online classes have struggled in this class. Almost all of them found out that this class required a lot more effort than they initially thought it would.
- d. In order to succeed in this class, be sure to consider the strategies listed below.
2. **Carefully PLAN your study time each week**, so that you can devote a **set period of study time for this class**. Some chapters are more difficult than the others for some students, so you may want to have some extra time budgeted for each week. It is important to know that critical reasoning courses have a strong degree of **continuity** – if you miss some work in the beginning, it will be difficult for you to catch up later since the later materials rely heavily on earlier knowledge.
 - a. **Find your pace of work in the week as soon as possible**. Work out your schedule with this course in the first couple of weeks and stick to it.
 - b. Finish everything before the end of the week. **Do not procrastinate!**
 3. **A typical weekly plan:**
 - a. Study the lecture and textbook first, starting on each Monday of the week; give yourself **three or four hours** to study the textbook. Some students may need **double** or **triple** this amount of time on some difficult chapters (the first few chapters may be easier than the latter ones). You often need to read the textbook more than one time. Please don't try to finish the lecture in just one try, especially for the difficult chapters with new concepts and complex analyses. You can take your time to work on different sections of the chapter.
 - b. Next, work on the questions in the book and practice quizzes; you may also study the recommended readings to deepen your understanding.
 - c. Analyze your answers to the quizzes; in particular, pay particular attention to the parts you have got wrong. It is very important to be able to learn from one's own mistakes. *And it is often from one's mistake that one learns the best* – you could identify where you misunderstood the question, failed to apply the skills, or did not have a good grasp of the concepts used in these questions.

- i. If some questions are right by luck, then you need to fully understand them as well.
 - ii. This part can take anytime from 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending how well you understand the materials.
- d. Now it is time to post your thoughts on the discussion forum; address all the prompts in the discussion forum; this may take 30-60 minutes.
 - i. You can also ask questions in the forum; and you can share your tips as well.
- e. Once you feel completely confident about the course materials, it is time to attempt the actual quiz. The quiz will be open on Wednesday mornings, and it will be closed by Saturday night. You can take the quiz anytime in this period. The quiz needs to be finished in 30 minutes. This means, once you start taking the quiz, you must finish it in 30 minutes.
- f. Remember you need to respond to at least **two** other students' discussion post in the weekly forum. This should be done before Saturday night as well.
 - i. Make sure you finish all the assignments on time. With the online classes, **self-discipline is necessary for success in this class.**
- g. **Let me emphasize it again: It is important for all of you to have a fixed weekly schedule dedicated to this class,** just as if you were taking a regular class. For example, you can schedule your reading and learning of the course materials (textbooks and lectures) on Monday or Tuesday (find some time in the morning, afternoon, evening, or night), and try out the practice test on Wednesday (probably with immediate analysis after the test). Finish your initial post by Wednesday. And you can re-study the course materials again before you take the actual quiz on Thursday or Friday. Finish your responding posts by Saturday.
 - i. Everyone's schedule may be different, but everyone needs to have a stable schedule and stick to it every week.
 - ii. Typically, for a 4-unit class you would expect to spend 12 hours total on the class. So **please give yourself 12 hours for this class**, though some weeks are easier and some weeks are harder.
- 4. **Ask me for help (such as emailing me and scheduling a video meeting with me) if you have any questions, concerns, or simply feel that you are struggling in class.**
 - a. This is a difficult class for many students! Many students have failed in the past. **If you feel you are struggling, you are not alone.** You need to ask for help at the earliest stage. Don't give up; in the end it is often much more rewarding with a challenging class, because you will learn and develop important skills that you did not have before.
 - b. From my past experiences, the students who came to my office often had improved significantly. You may struggle with a question for a couple of hours, yet all you need

is a hint to see the light. If you cannot make it to my office hours, you can make an appointment to see if I am available at other times.

- i. We can make online appointments so that we can use *Zoom* to have video meetings. I can also meet you in person if necessary.
- ii. Feel free to voice your concerns! Remember this is your class and you want to be more active and take charge of this class. I am flexible with my pedagogy. If you feel there is anything I need to change, do let me know!

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

- **Weekly Discussions** **25% of course grade**
 - Each student needs to make a post responding to the weekly prompts **every week** and is also required to respond to at least **two** other students' posts by the end of the week. Prompts will be given for each week's discussions, and in addition, students can ask their questions related to course materials in their posts and responses.
 - Evaluation of online discussions is *mostly* based on one's effort than performance. It is OK to make mistakes or to ask any questions. Treat it as discussions inside a classroom. In order to get a perfect score, you need to show good effort (in both their posts and their responses) and good understanding in response to the prompts.
 - Simple statements like "I have learned a lot this week" or "I really enjoyed your post" is not going to get much credit. You need to show **substantial** thinking and reflections in order to get full credit. Try to respond to the prompts as thoughtfully as possible.
 - **Constructive criticism** is often the best feedback one can give – if you find a mistake in another student's post, don't hesitate to point it out. The student who has made the mistake should appreciate it –*only people who really care about you will take their precious time to point out the mistakes you have made*, and that will help you get better.
 - **Write your own post:** don't use AI program to generate responses to prompts. Such practices can be easily caught, and your posts will get no credit.
 - **It is important for everyone to participate in weekly discussions.** This is where the class community is built, and ideas are freely exchanged.
- **Quizzes** **25% of course grade in total**

- Critical thinking skills don't come naturally, and you need a lot of practice in order for to master them. We'll offer many practice questions in both the book and the Canvas site, and these will help you prepare for the quizzes.
- The practice quiz and the actual quiz are supposed to have the same level of difficulty, though sometimes students may feel differently due to a variety of factors. So don't feel overconfident if you do very well on the practice quizzes – **make sure you understand everything**: you need to **know why** you get it right when you are correct, and **know why** you get it wrong when you make a mistake.
 - You will have unlimited attempts at practice quizzes, and **two** attempts at the actual quizzes. The practice quizzes don't count toward your final grade, and only the highest score of the actual quiz counts toward your final grade.
 - One learns the best from one's own mistakes –so the best strategy of learning is to analyze how you make the mistakes.
 - This also applies to almost every subject and to most things in our life. It is called learning with a growth mindset:
 - **The Growth Mindset**: this is now a popular concept in education. It roughly describes a mindset that accepts challenges, views errors as not failures but as necessary steps and opportunities to success, and interprets the others' criticism as the means to get better.
 - You always believe that you can do something you couldn't do before.
 - As the ancient Chinese saying goes, everyone can become a sage, as long as one works hard to make it happen.
- **Midterm** **25 % (12.5% for each assignment)**
 - **Midterm Exam**: this is similar in format to the quizzes but has more questions that cover all learning modules until the midterm.
 - **Midterm Essay**: this assignment asks you to use your critical thinking skills to analyze a contemporary essay.
- **Final** **25 % (12.5% for each assignment)**
 - **Final Exam**: this covers everything since the midterm.
 - **Final Essay**: this assignment asks you to examine some interesting issues of critical thinking (logic) and reflect on your progress as a critical thinker.
There will be no makeup for quizzes and exams, given that students have plenty of time to take them.
- **Summary**:
 - Weekly discussions 25% (graded mostly on effort)

- Quizzes (12) 25% (multiple attempts & practice quizzes)
- Midterm 25%
 - Midterm Exam 12.5%
 - Midterm Essay 12.5%
- Final 25%
 - Final Exam 12.5%
 - Final Essay 12.5%
- Of all the assignments, discussion posts are the least difficult but require your good effort; quizzes are more difficult, and you need to learn from your mistakes in order to develop critical thinking skills; the exams are the most intensive, and the essays are the most sophisticated: to do them well you need to demonstrate your mastering of critical thinking skills.
 - Make sure you develop a good habit and have a good weekly schedule, so that you can get all the easy credit, develop your skills through practices and quizzes, and demonstrate your skills on the exams and essays.
 - You are expected to spend up to 12 hours a week on this class.
- Final grade is the weighted sum of all the above components calculated by percentage. The gradebook on Canvas will reflect your **current** grading average as the class moves along. The final letter grade will be based on the following table:

Final %	≥92	90-91.9	88-89.9	82-87.9	80-81.9	78-79.9	72-77.9	70-71.9	68-69.9	62-67.9	60-61.9	<60
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE:

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisites: *Prerequisites: Completion of the lower division writing requirement. Not open to students who have completed [PHIL 200](#).* 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? Available for General Education, [Basic Skills](#) Area 1B Critical Thinking.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSUN GE requirements for Critical Reasoning):

Students will:

1. Explain and apply the basic concepts essential to critical examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse;
2. Use investigative and analytical thinking skills to examine alternative, 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, and the relevance of data and information;
5. Recognize and avoid common logical and rhetorical fallacies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES of THIS CLASS:

Once finishing this course, students are expected to

1. be able to recognize an argument, identify its components, and evaluate its strength;
2. be able to evaluate the reliability of various sources of belief, including media, expert, and personal experience;
3. be able to recognize and avoid common logical and rhetorical fallacies;
4. be able to recognize, evaluate, and use deductive reasoning and some inductive reasoning (probability and statistical reasoning);
5. develop an attitude of critical thinking toward both academic subjects and issues in ordinary life.

The SLOs are targeted by the corresponding COs as follows:

SLOs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Course Objectives	1-4	2, 4, 5	2, 4	1, 4	3

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Content	Reading Assignments (text abbr. listed above; all lectures are required readings)
Week 1: 8/24- 29	Introduction to the course; • Why do we need to learn critical thinking? • What is critical thinking? • Quiz 1 (on syllabus)	• Course Syllabus • Lecture 1: Introduction to Critical Thinking
Week 2: 8/31-9/5	A Critical Mind • How the first critical thinker died (Socrates) • Why are we not critical thinkers by nature?	• Lecture 2: A Critical Mind • Recommended: [ICTC], Chapter 1

Week 3: 9/7-9/12	Truth, Knowledge, and Relativism • Is there such a thing as “alternative fact”? • Is your truth as good as mine? • Quiz 2	• Lecture 3: Truth, Knowledge, and Relativism • Recommended: [ICTC], Chapter 6; • Recommended: [CTT], Chapter 8;
Week 4: 9/14-19	Logic in Natural Language • What are you talking about? • Quiz 3	• Lecture 4: Language & Logic • Recommended: [ICTC], Chapters 2-5;
Week 5: 9/21-26	Critical Thinking Basics-1 Argument Basics & Patterns • Are you making an argument? • Quiz 4	• Lecture 5: Argument Basics -1 ◦ Recommended: [ICTC], Chapters 8-10;
Week 6: 9/28-10/3	Critical Thinking Basics-2: Complex Argument Analysis and Diagramming • What kind of argument is that? It is so confusing! • Quiz 5	• Lecture 6: Argument Basics -2: Complex Argument Analysis and Diagramming ◦ Recommended: [ICTC], Chapters 11-12;
Week 7: 10/5-10	Common Fallacies in the Reasoning • Are you kidding me? That must be a fallacy! • Quiz 6	• Lecture 7: Common Fallacies ◦ Recommended: [ICTC], Chapter 19; ◦ Recommended: [CTT], Chapter 5;
Week 8: 10/12-17	Midterm Review • Midterm Exam • Midterm Essay	• Review PowerPoint for Exam I;
Week 9: 10/19-24	Propositional Logic-I Logical connectives, Symbolization, and the Truth table • Symbols for proposition? A secret language? • Quiz 7	• Lecture 8: Propositional Logic-I • Recommended: [CTT], Chapter 4, p. 72-76

Week 10: 10/26- 10/31	Propositional Logic-II Validity check for propositional arguments • “I learned to build a table, used for checking validity!” • Quiz 8	• Lecture 9: Propositional Logic-II ◦ Recommended: [CTT], Chapter 4, p. 76-96
Week 11: 11/3-7	Categorical Logic- I: the oldest deductive logic in the world • Categorical Statements • Venn Diagram • Quiz 9	• Lecture 10: Categorical Logic -I ◦ Recommended: [CTT], Chapter 3
Week 12: 11/9-14	Categorical Logic – II • Categorical inferences • The Square of Opposition • Syllogism • Quiz 10	• Lecture 11: Categorical Logic -II
Week 13: 11/16-21	Reasoning with Probability • Talking about probabilities... • The logic of decision-making • Quiz 11	• Lecture 12: Reasoning with Probability • Recommended: [ICTC], Chapter 17; [CTT], Chapter 6.1, 6.4, 6.5
Week 14: 11/23-28	Thanksgiving Break!	NO Class.
Week 15: 11/30- 12/5	Statistical Reasoning • Lies, damned lies, and statistics • The meaning of these numbers? - Quiz 12	• Lecture 13: Statistical Reasoning • Recommended: [ICTC], Chapter 15, 17; [CTT], Chapter 6.3-4, p. 170-181; 6.7
Week 16: 12/7-12	Review for Final; • Final Exam • Final Essay	• Lecture 14: Epilogue • Review PPT for Final

Note: We'll try to follow this schedule as best as we can, though it may be revised. Any revisions will be announced on Canvas in advance.