

Phil 230 SYLLABUS
Introduction to Formal Logic, Fall 2026

Class number: 14054
Mon/Wed 11:30am-12:45pm
Sierra Hall 190

Class number: 14078
Mon/Wed 2:30-3:45pm
JR 202

Class number: 14891
Mon/Wed 4:00-5:15pm
JR 302

Contact Information:

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Office: Sierra Tower 518

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 5:30-6:30pm

I am usually available in person for walk-ins on Mondays and Wednesdays, and on zoom by appointment Tuesdays and Thursdays: meshelski-csun.youcanbook.me

Course Description:

Introduction to modern deductive logic, including sentential and first-order logic. In a broad sense, logic is the study of correct reasoning, but the exact purpose of *formal* logic may not become clear until after we have finished the course. You will learn how to translate from English to symbolic language, and will use truth tables, proofs, and other techniques to determine the validity of arguments and identify other logical properties.

This course is available for General Education credit in Basic Skills Area 1B: Critical Thinking. The goal of the critical thinking requirement is that students will understand how to distinguish correct from faulty reasoning. You can read the learning outcomes of the GE program here: <https://catalog.csun.edu/general-education/student-learning-outcomes/>

Course Requirements and Method of Evaluation:

Grades will be based 90% on tests. If you pass the C test with an 80% or better, you can leave the course with a C, if you pass the B test with an 80% or better you can leave the course with a B, but to get an A you need to pass the A test with an 80% or better.

10% of your grade will be weekly quizzes and practice problems, meaning these can give you a plus/minus on top of your test grade. **Learning formal logic is an active process that requires you to work through practice problems every week.** Attendance is not required but most people have trouble succeeding without regular attendance, as well as office hours and/or tutoring.

Tests are done in class, we will have three scheduled testing days, and also the final exam period. If you do not pass a test the first time, you can re-take a similar test on the next testing day. Testing accommodation can be scheduled through DRES.

The first quizzes and practice problems will be done in Canvas, after that you will have to create an account in the website Carnap, and complete your practice problems there.
DO NOT COME TO CLASS WHILE SICK.

[The blank days continue with the previous topic above. Textbook is for all X: Calgary, it is free online.]

Schedule:

Monday, August 24	Part 1, Chapters 1-2: Arguments, consequence, validity
Wednesday, August 26	Part 1, Chapter 3: Necessity, contingency
Monday, August 31	Part 2, Chapters 4-7: Symbolization, truth-functional connectives
Wednesday, September 2	
Monday, September 7	Labor Day – no class
Wednesday, September 9	Part 3, Chapters 9-12: Truth tables and their uses
Monday, September 14	
Wednesday, September 16	Part 4, Chapters 15-17: Proofs
Monday, September 21	
Wednesday, September 23	
Monday, September 28	
Wednesday, September 30	
Monday, October 5	Part 5, Chapter 22: First-order logic
Wednesday, October 7	C Test: TFL concepts, symbolization, truth tables, proofs
Monday, October 12	
Wednesday, October 14	Part 5, Chapter 23: Symbolization in first-order logic
Monday, October 19	
Wednesday, October 21	Chapters 24-26: Symbolization with multiple quantifiers, identity
Monday, October 26	
Wednesday, October 28	Part 6, Chapters 29-33: Interpretations
Monday, November 2	
Wednesday, November 4	
Monday, November 9	B Test: FOL concepts, symbolization, interpretations
Wednesday, November 11	Veteran's Day – no class
Monday, November 16	Part 7, Chapters 34-37: Proofs in first-order logic
Wednesday, November 18	
Monday, November 23	
Wednesday, November 25	
Monday, November 30	
Wednesday, December 2	Part 4, Chapter 21 & Part 9, Chapter 46: Soundness, completeness
Monday, December 7	
Wednesday, December 9	A Test: FOL proofs
Final exams	The scheduled final exam, this is an optional test re-take period
11:30am section	Wednesday, December 16, 10:15am-12:15pm
2:30pm section	Monday, December 14, 3-5pm
4pm section	Monday, December 14, 5:30-7:30pm