

Syllabus

Code: PHIL 105

Title: Critical Thinking

Institute: Business and Social Science

Department: Philosophy

Course Description: The focus of this course is the development of students' analytic skills. Students will evaluate claims, distinguish arguments from explanations, identify examples of pseudoreasoning, and use inductive generalizations. Problem solving will be the primary mode of learning.

Prerequisites: READ 092, READ 095 or passing score Accuplacer Test.

Corequisites: N/A

Prerequisites or Corequisites:

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Lab/Studio Hours:

Required Textbook/Materials:

Concise Guide to Critical Thinking, Lewis Vaughn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2nd ed.

N.B. For students taking the Distance Education (online) section, see the course addendum for that section, obtainable from the Philosophy Department's Learning Assistant (MAN 127) or the Philosophy web page.

Additional Time Requirements:

For information on Brookdale's policy on credit hour requirements and outside class student work refer to [Academic Credit Hour Policy](#).

See course/instructor section addendum.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, as demonstrated through examinations, the student will be able to:

- evaluate claims (HU)
- distinguish arguments from explanations (HU)
- distinguish good reasoning from fallacious reasoning (HU) (E)
- produce arguments using the principles of good reasoning in the areas of science, aesthetics and morality (HU) (E)

Learning Outcome(s) support the following General Education Knowledge Areas (HU) Humanities (E) Ethical Reasoning and Action.

Syllabus

Grading Standard:

Students will take several in-class tests, the exact number and style at the discretion of the instructor.

The grading standard for this course will be as follows:

100% to 93% = A

92% to 90 = A-

89% to 87% = B+

86% to 83% = B

82% to 80 = B-

79% to 77% = C+

6% to 70% = C

69% to 60% = D

Below 60% = F

Critical thinking provides students with the logical tools to address perplexing problems in a rational and objective way. Through lectures and class discussions, students learn techniques, such as dialogue and argumentation, that will help them better analyze and assess different points of view.

Course Content:

Unit I - Understand the Basics of Critical Thinking

Chapter 1

1. Distinguish between statements and non-statements.
2. Understand the basic concepts of reasons, argument, inference, premises, and conclusions.

Chapter 2

1. Understand the common impediments to critical thinking.
2. Learn the psychological obstacles to critical thinking.
3. Determine the philosophical obstacles to critical thinking.

Chapter 3

1. Distinguish between different types of arguments.
2. Judge whether arguments are inductive or deductive.
3. Determine how to formulate implicit premises or conclusions.

Syllabus

Unit II - Determine Reasons for Beliefs & Doubt

Chapter 6

1. Determine what to do when claims conflict.
2. Be able to distinguish true experts from non-experts.
3. Determine when it is acceptable to rely on evidence from personal experience.

Chapter 12

1. Learn how to recognize fallacies of irrelevant premises.
2. Learn how to recognize fallacies of unacceptable premises.

Unit III - Learn Deductive Reasoning and Examine the Various Argument Patterns

Chapter 4

1. Learn how to translate ordinary statements into standard categorical form.
2. Learn how to determine the validity of very simple arguments.
3. Learn the common forms of deductive argument patterns.

Chapter 5

1. Know what enumerative induction is and how it is used.
2. Learn the definition of target population, sample, and relevant property.
3. Understand the basics of opinion polls.

Unit IV - Learn How to Distinguish between Arguments and Explanations

Chapter 10

1. Understand what inference to the best explanation is.
2. Know what an explanation is and how it differs from an argument.
3. Understand the importance of using criteria to judge the adequacy of theories.
4. Be able to list and explain the five criteria of adequacy.

Chapter 11

1. Know the five steps of the scientific method.
2. Understand the logic of scientific testing.
3. Understand how to apply the criteria of adequacy to the theories of evolution and creationism.

Chapter 13

1. Learn the difference between descriptive and prescriptive claims.
2. Learn the difference between moral and non-moral claims.
3. Know the reason why a moral argument must contain at least one moral premise.
4. Recognize the difference among moral judgments, principles, and theories.
5. Learn objective standards for analyzing aesthetic claims Learn to evaluate art in different genres.

Syllabus

Department Policies:

Department policies are in alignment with College Policies.

College Policies:

As an academic institution, Brookdale facilitates the free exchange of ideas, upholds the virtues of civil discourse, and honors diverse perspectives informed by credible sources. Our College values all students and strives for inclusion and safety regardless of a student's disability, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, religious affiliation, political orientation, socioeconomic standing, and veteran status. For additional information, support services, and engagement opportunities, please visit www.brookdalecc.edu/support.

For information regarding:

- ◆ Brookdale's Academic Integrity Code
- ◆ Student Conduct Code
- ◆ Student Grade Appeal Process

Please refer to the [BCC STUDENT HANDBOOK AND BCC CATALOG](#).

NOTIFICATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Brookdale Community College offers reasonable accommodations and/or services to persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who wish to self-identify must contact the Disabilities Services Office at 732-224-2730 (voice) or 732-842-4211 (TTY) to provide appropriate documentation of the disability, and request specific accommodations or services. If a student qualifies, reasonable accommodations and/or services, which are appropriate for the college level and are recommended in the documentation, can be approved.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT/LABS:

See the Tutoring Center for information [Academic Tutoring - Brookdale Community College \(brookdalecc.edu\)](http://brookdalecc.edu)

MENTAL HEALTH:

- Mental Health Crisis Support: From a campus phone, dial 5555 or 732-224-2329 from an external line; off-hours calls will be forwarded to BCC police (2222 from a campus phone)
- Psychological Counseling Services: 732-224-2986 (to schedule an appointment during regular hours)

The syllabus is intended to give student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the faculty member reserves the right to modify, supplement, and make changes as the need arises.