

PHILOSOPHY 1900G (Section 2): LOGICAL AND CRITICAL REASONING

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Office Hours: T, Th 5-6PM, 7:30-8:30PM, and by appointment

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Course Description

This course will offer a survey of forms of human reasoning, in order to sharpen your awareness of what does and what does not constitute good reasoning, or rationality. Through a series of stages, we will attempt to develop a systematic language for describing argument structure. In particular, we will spend most of the semester considering the central notion of **validity**, and developing full-proof tests for detecting validity in arguments. (1) We will first look at the most basic components of inference in an **informal** context, examining a lot of everyday arguments and trying to work out concepts and techniques for classifying their internal structure, as well as for separating the good from the bad. (2) From there we will try to separate the form of arguments from the content, introduce a language – “**sentence logic**” – which describes the logical form of various basic types of inferences. (3) Having developed this first formal language, and employed it in testing for validity, we will go on to study **pragmatics** – the linguistic study of how people use language in concrete situations – in order to examine the shared assumptions and background knowledge necessary for communication and argumentation, and some general rules of conversation.

Course Schedule (Approximate):

Weeks 1-4: Informal Logic (Premises and Conclusions; Argument Maps; Chain Arguments; Truth and Validity; Validity Counterexamples; Unstated Premises)

Weeks 5-9: Sentence Logic I: And, Or, Not (Logical Form; Formal Language; Translation; Construction Rules for Formal Sentences; Formal Semantics: Truth Tables; Logical Truths, Logical Equivalence, and Validity)

Weeks 10-12: Sentence Logic II: If, and More (More Logical Form; Translation; Truth Tables; Logical Truths, Logical Equivalence, and Validity)

Weeks 13-15: Pragmatics (Common Ground; Types of Communication; Grice's Conversational Maxims; Presuppositions; Pragmatics and Logic)

Assignments, Grades, and Class Policies

I. Assignments and Points. The grading will be based on:

- A **midterm exam** (40 points)
- A **final exam** (40 points)
- **7 quizzes** (6 points each: $7 \times 6 = 42$ points)

for a total of **122 points**.

I will assign homework problems pretty much every class. However, these will not be collected for points. Still, it is still important that you do the problems, as without practice you will have more difficulty understanding the material.

II. Excused and Excusable Absences.

A. Missed quizzes and exams can **only** be made up in cases of (i) **documented** and (ii) **excusable** (legitimate) **absences**.

B. Some examples of **excusable absences**: absences due to away game or debate (that you are a member of), job interview (your own), illness (your own), marriage (your own or someone else's), funeral (your own or someone else's), military duty (your own).

- Simply having *scheduled a trip* (airplane reservations, bus ticket, 'catching a ride', etc.) does **NOT** qualify as legitimate absence
- Your *work schedule* does **NOT** count as an excused absence. It is *your responsibility* to register for a course that fits your schedule. (Even if you could get official documentation that you were working during a quiz, exam, etc., I would not count that as an excused absence.)

C. Even if a quiz is missed for an *excusable* (legitimate) reason, you must also have **documentation** of that excuse: **official** (printed) **evidence** from your coach, doctor or nurse, military superior, funeral home, etc.

D. (Missed Lecture Material): documented, excusable absences will only cover you for missed quizzes; it is still **your responsibility** to get **any lecture material** you missed.)

III. Free Quiz Makeup:

A. You get **one free makeup** for a quiz – that is, one makeup that requires no excuse or documentation. (Of course, if you *have* documentation of an excused absence, you will probably not want to spend your free makeup on that occasion.)

B. What the free makeup is **NOT**:

- i. This is **NOT** a chance to **re-take** a quiz you did poorly on.
- ii. It is **NOT** a chance to ‘drop the lowest grade,’ or anything of that sort.
- iii. It **ONLY** applies to an assignment that you **missed**.
- iv. There are **NO** free makeups for **exams**. If you miss an exam without documentation that the absence was **excusable** – and **unforeseeable** – then you should withdraw from the class.

C. You must see me to **schedule** a free makeup **no more than one week after** the missed assignment; if you wait longer than that, you can no longer use your free makeup for that assignment. (Example: if you missed the quiz on Tuesday the 10th, you need to see me by Tuesday the 17th about when you do your makeup; the makeup itself can be later, but you have to at least schedule it no more than two class days after missing the assignment.)

No free makeups during finals week.

D. (The “Multiple Extra-Curricular Absences” Clause): Absences due to “**extra-curricular activities**” – e.g., rehearsals or performances in university chorus, band, theatre, sports, debates – will be excused **one** time (one quiz). If there is a second absence due to an extra-curricular activity, you will need to use your free makeup. (ROTC and military activities do not count as extra-curricular.)

E. (Missed Lecture Material): the free makeup will only cover you for the missed quiz; it is still **your responsibility** to get **any lecture material** you missed.)

IV. Further Details:

A. You **DO NOT** need to call me, or otherwise tell me ahead of time, if you are going to miss class. I do not give attendance points. If you are going to miss class, there is nothing I can do about it.

B. I will only provide you with information on your grade in person.

V. Important Dates:

Quiz Schedules:

- Quiz 1: 1/19
- Quiz 2: 2/2
- Quiz 3: 2/16
- Quiz 4: 2/28 (Tuesday)
- Quiz 5: 3/23
- Quiz 6: 4/6
- Quiz 7: 4/20

Midterm: Tuesday March 7, 2017

Final Exam: Tuesday May 2, 7:30-9:30 PM

Spring Break: March 13-17, 2017

Last day to withdraw from the course: Friday March 31, 2017

VI. EIU Documents

A. Course Description: PHI 1900 (3-0-3) F, S. A study of the structure and evaluation of arguments, focusing upon: analysis and informal evaluation of everyday arguments; problem-solving strategies; formal tests of validity; conversational contexts of argumentation, and the interaction of contextual principles with principles of validity. H4 906. Credits: 3

B. Course Objectives: Students will learn:

- * to analyze the structure of arguments (and their constituent sentences)
- * to evaluate the support evidence provides for claims
- * to develop and understand Boolean algebra and to use it in order to represent the formal structure of English language sentences and arguments
- * to understand the extra-logical conversational principles of natural language and how these interact with logical factors in natural language argumentation.

C. Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

D. Students With Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

E. The Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.