

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE

Philosophy 60 – Logic & Critical Reasoning
W 6:30-9:45 p.m. C101B

Instructor: Zachary Fruhling
Hours: by appointment or by email
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Spring 2005: 3 units

Course Description:

Official Description: “This is an introductory course in informal logic and critical reasoning. Students are instructed in the practical applications of inferential, inductive, and deductive reasoning, problem analysis/resolution, the logic systems entailed by language, word functions, definition, and common fallacies of relevance and ambiguity. There is a strong emphasis on written expression and the application of critical thinking skills in a series of composition assignments.”—Course Catalog

Description Unpacked: The purpose of this course is to learn how to write well-developed, logically sound thesis defense essays. To this end, we will begin by understanding what makes arguments for a position “logically sound”. The first half of the course will be focused on argumentation, logic and fallacies. In the second part of the course we will work on incorporating our new understanding of good argument into the process of writing a good thesis defense paper, with the outcome that you will be able to produce a composition consisting of your own research and logically sound arguments for a position. You will also be able to apply the reasoning skills you acquire in this class to a host of problem-solving situations both in and out of academics (e.g. politics, advertising, scientific claims, casual and formal debates and discussions, etc.)

When evaluating your work, the focus will be on strength of your reasoning (your ability to state an argument clearly and logically); the focus will not be on grammar. *HOWEVER:* it will be assumed that you have mastered the English language. So, even though grammar is not stressed as a grading criterion, I will *not* read writing that has severe grammatical flaws. To demonstrate clear reasoning to me, you must be able to communicate your ideas clearly in English. Therefore, if you turn in writing that has severe grammatical flaws, your grade for that assignment will suffer. In fact, good reasoning requires proper language use due to the large difference in meaning that can result from very subtle language flaws. If you are weak in this area, it is *your* responsibility to seek aid through the many resources available to you (campus writing labs, tutoring center, peers, etc.). I am also available by appointment, usually before or after class.

Course Format:

Class sessions will be a combination of lecture, group activities, and discussion. Each three-hour session will be divided into two sub-sessions. Each sub-session will have its own content and its own lecture and/or mini-project.

Required Texts:

A Concise Introduction to Logic, 8th ed., **Patrick J. Hurley** (Wadsworth, 2003)
Writing Philosophy Papers, 4th ed., **Zachary Seech** (Wadsworth, 2000)
Sophie’s World, **Jostein Gaarder**, (Berkeley, 1996)

Course Requirements:

Reading Assignments:

- Below is the schedule indicating what material from the book will be covered in each class session.
- *You are expected to have read the assigned readings by the time you arrive at class* on the day for which the reading is scheduled
- Lectures are designed to supplement the reading assignments, not replace them.

Exams:

- There will be two in-class exams, each worth 30% of your final grade.
- Exams will cover material from lectures, readings, and discussion.
- We will review for each exam during the class meeting preceding the exam day.

Final Paper:

- The final paper will be worth 30% of your final grade.
- The paper will be due on the last day of class.
- Detailed instructions for the final paper will be given later.

In-class Mini-Projects and Homework:

- The mini-projects and homework together will be worth 10% of your final grade.
- Mini-projects will be done in class, although there may be related homework that must be done before class. Some will be done individually and others with partners or groups.
- The aim of these projects is to help you learn the material and make the class a little more interactive and fun. Sometimes you will be working on specific logic exercises. Other times I may ask you to draw a picture or diagram or write something about the topic at hand. Sometimes I will have you share your work with your neighbor for critical analysis, after which you will respond to the critique.
- Bring a container (manila folder, envelope, plastic sleeve) to keep your mini-projects and homework in. Although we will be going over the homework together in class, these assignments must be turned in with your final paper to receive credit for this work. You do not, however, need to hand in homework weekly.

Grading:

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Exams = 2 x 30%

Final Paper = 30%

Mini-Projects and Homework = 10%

*Note: To pass the course, all assignments must be completed. For example, supposing perfect work on everything in the course except the final paper, if you do not complete the final paper you cannot pass the course.

Grading Scale:

<u>Final %</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
< 60	F

Tentative Course Schedule*:

Date: Reading Assignment

- 2/2:** 1st Day of Class
- 2/9:** a) Hurley, ch. 1.1: Arguments, Premises and Conclusions
 pp. 22-24: Conditionals
 ch. 1.3: Deduction and Induction
 ch. 1.4: Validity, Truth, Soundness, Strength, and Cogency
 b) Hurley, ch. 1.4: Validity, Truth, Soundness, Strength, and Cogency (continued)
- 2/16:** a) Hurley, ch. 1.6: Extended Arguments
 b) Hurley, ch. 3.1: Fallacies in General
- 2/23:** a) Hurley, ch. 3.2: Fallacies of Relevance
 b) Hurley, ch. 3.3: Fallacies of Weak Induction
- 3/2:** a) Hurley, ch. 3.4: Fallacies of Presumption, Ambiguity, and Grammatical Analogy
 b) Review for Exam #1
- 3/9:** a) Exam #1
 b) Hurley, ch. 6.1: Symbols and Translation
 ch. 6.2: Truth Functions
- 3/16:** a) Hurley, ch. 6.3: Truth Tables for Propositions
 b) Hurley, ch. 6.3: Truth Tables for Propositions (cont.)
- 3/23:** **Spring Break – No Class**
- 3/30:** a) Hurley, ch. 6.4: Truth Tables for Arguments
 b) Hurley, ch. 6.4: Truth Tables for Arguments (cont.)
- 4/6:** a) Hurley, ch. 6.5: Indirect Truth Tables
 b) Hurley, ch. 6.5: Indirect Truth Tables (cont.)
- 4/13:** a) Hurley, ch. 7.1: Rules of Implication I
 b) Hurley, ch. 7.3: Rules of Replacement I (DeMorgan's Rule & Commutativity)
- 4/20:** a) ch. 7.4: Rules of Replacement II (Transposition, Material Implication, Material Equivalence)

- b) Review for Exam #2
- 4/27: a) Exam #2
b) Seech, ch. 1: First Things First
ch. 2: Thesis Defense Papers
- 5/4: a) Seech, ch. 3: Special Kinds of Papers
b) Seech, ch. 4: Writing and Revising the Paper
- 5/11: a) Seech, ch. 5: Language
b) ch. 6: Good Reasoning
- 5/18: a) Seech, ch. 7: Library and Internet Research
b) Seech, ch. 8: References to Other Sources
- 5/25: **Paper Due by 6:30 p.m. (I will leave the classroom at 6:31 and will *not* accept papers after I leave under any circumstance.)**

* Note that anything on this syllabus is subject to change.

Other Important Considerations that May Affect Your Grade:

- i) **Make every effort to attend class. This class is designed to be a relatively easy “B” if you (a) read the material carefully *before* class, (b) you attend every class and (c) you do every homework assignment. On the other hand, people who neglect to do these things tend to do poorly in my critical thinking classes. Aside from this tendency to do poorly, there is no direct consequence to your grade for being absent. Be forewarned, however, that this material is exceedingly difficult to master when working alone, so regular attendance is strongly encouraged. *If you miss class, ask a classmate about any assignment instructions, due dates, and/or exam schedules you may have missed information about. You are responsible for finding out if you missed anything important during your absence and for being present on exam dates.***
- ii) **Make every effort to be at class on time. If you must be late, enter as quietly and inconspicuously as possible - don’t distract others who have arrived on time. If you are consistently late to meetings, I will ask you to drop the class. Class will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m., so please plan accordingly.**
- iii) **Please make sure you hand in all work on time. I will not accept late work. *Having been absent from class will not be an adequate excuse for not being prepared for class - if you miss class, ask a classmate about any assignment instructions and due dates you may have missed information about. Some class sessions, such as those during the composition portion of this course, depend on your being prepared each week for class activities.***
- iv) **Participation, both oral and written, is required for this course. This course is interactive by nature and is not merely a lecture course (although I will lecture regularly). If you are uncomfortable with participation, this may not be the class for you (although I attempt to make the participation as painless, albeit as challenging, as possible).**
- v) **No makeup exams will be given, although the exam dates may be modified depending on class progress.**
- vi) **I will drop any enrolled students who do not attend the first course meeting. Other than this, however, any student who wishes to drop the course is responsible for dropping himself or herself. If you neglect to drop the course by the required deadline (March 16 or April 28, depending on whether you receive a “W”), you will receive a failing grade.**
- vii) **If you have a disability and will require special accommodations, please notify me soon after the start of classes. Any request for special accommodations must be accompanied by proper documentation.**
- viii) **Finally, and most importantly, *any* form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All out-of-class assignments are to be done independently (though you are encouraged to seek help - *not answers* - whenever necessary) and all tests will be closed-book/closed-notes. Any student determined to have practiced academic dishonesty will receive an automatic failing grade and will be referred to the dean. Refer to the College Catalog, pg. 141.**