Syllabus

rev N 01/03/2011

Bellevue College

Critical Reasoning

Philosophy 115

item 1633B013

Winter 2011; 5.0 Credits

Instructor: Robert Morton

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Course Description

Philosophy 115 introduces the nature and structure of argument patterns. Students will learn the difference between deductive and inductive reasoning, and how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of examples from each type of argumentation. Topics include validity and soundness, strength and cogency, definitions, informal fallacies, reasoning with categorical propositions, arguments from analogy, Mill's Methods, basic probability calculations, statistical reasoning, and hypothetical reasoning. It will be expected that students will be able to perform basic mathematical calculations with fractions. The use of calculators is acceptable.

Critical reasoning plays an important part in any rational person's life. When you argue for a position at work, at home, at school, or in the political arena, you need to provide good reason that others should believe you are right. Moreover, you will often need to be able to determine whether someone else's arguments are good or bad. A primary value of critical reasoning is thus in sorting out the good arguments from the bad. Philosophy 115 emphasizes this aspect of critical reasoning.

This section of Philosophy 115 is an online class. Therefore, for this course, students must be ready to motivate themselves to grapple with the texts, to study on their own, to learn in large part on their own, and to keep up with due dates. That said, the instructor is ready to be of assistance, within the limits of an online environment. Patrick Hurley's textbook, fortunately, is the number-one seller among logic texts across North America, and thousands of freshmen have been able to learn many valuable concepts and techniques relating to critical reasoning from it.

Although there are not official prerequisites for Philosophy 115, it is expected that students can read well, communicate clearly in writing, use e-mail, and handle basic mathematical calculations with fractions.

The instructor is happy to respond to specific questions on specific problems, but will not be of much help if students send a message saying merely that they are "lost." The instructor will also expect that students are capable of reading college-level textbooks, and will do so to answer many of the basic questions that arise in the course of their study of critical reasoning.

This class fulfills a requirement for either Quantitative/Symbolic Reasoning or Humanities for an Associate in Arts & Sciences degree at BC.

Required Course Texts
A Concise Introduction to Logic
TENTH EDITION
author: Patrick Hurley
publisher: Cengage Thomson Wadsworth
ISBN-13: 978-0-495-50383-5
ISBN-10:0-495-50383-5

Learning Logic 5.0 CD-ROM for Hurley's A Concise Introduction to Logic, 10th Edition
VERSION 5.0
authors: Hurley / DeMarco
publisher: Cengage Thomson Wadsworth
ISBN-10: 0-495-50559-5
ISBN-13: 978-0-495-50559-4

You must have both the textbook AND the CD. You must have the proper edition/version of each.

Course Requirements
Ten assignments: 100% of course grade

Read http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/ArtsHum/policy.html

Grading Policy
Weekly assignments are found at the Course Schedule on this course's Web site. Each assignment has a specific due date. Assignment scores will be sent back to students when the instructor has completed their evaluation. Students may turn in assignments early, but should not expect grades for such assignments to be sent out early. Late assignments will not be accepted.

The date each assignment is due is posted. Students have until midnight of the due date to electronically (via Blackboard Vista e-mail) transmit assignments. Send the assignment as the text of the message or as an attachment. Date and time is on all e-mails; if the time sent is after midnight, the assignment will not be accepted. Remember that you are responsible for submitting assignments in a timely manner. Avoid missing a deadline due to computer, server, weather, health, or other problems. Those are not acceptable reasons for submitting late work. My advice, both from a practical and a pedagogical perspective, is to plan ahead and get your work submitted well before the deadline.

At the end of the quarter, the instructor will drop the one lowest assignment grade along with the one highest assignment grade in calculating the cumulative assignment score for the course grade - if doing so benefits the student's final score.

It is each student's responsibility to be aware of the due dates, and to find a working computer and Internet connection to send their assignments in on time.

Plagiarism or cheating of any form will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, with no chance to make up that assignment. Do not copy anyone else's words (whether that person is a fellow student, an author of a book or magazine article, or a source from the Internet). Students are also expected to be honest in their course work. Students may seek the assistance of others in the form of tutorials, student study groups, or helpful advice. But students may not work together on specific assignment problems.

Each student is expected to do his or her own work for assignments. A score of zero given for violation of the plagiarism / cheating policy in this class is not eligible for the "low / high drop" safety net.

The instructor does not give Hardship Withdrawals or Incompletes to salvage students' GPAs or to maintain their financial aid. The course is designed so that all students may do well, but if for some reason (and there are many good reasons in our busy lives) you stop turning in work, then you should quickly contact the Registration Office and officially withdraw from the course. Otherwise you will receive a course grade (A-F) based on the course work you did and did not complete. That often results in a failing grade. It is your responsibility to find out the last day in which you may drop a class.

Students with disabilities
Students with disabilities who have accommodation needs are required to meet with the Director of Disability Support Services, room B132-G (425-564-2498 or TTY 425-603-4110) to establish their eligibility for accommodation. In addition, students are encouraged to review their accommodation requirements with the instructor during the first week of the quarter.

Tutoring
The Academic Success Center (aka the Tutoring Center) may be able to connect you with a qualified tutor for one-on-one sessions. To qualify for one-on-one tutoring, you must have a C average or below. For this quarter, the Academic Success Center also plans regularly scheduled drop-in tutoring sessions for which no appointment is required.

BC Academic Success Center
http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/tutoring/

PHIL 115 Course Schedule for Winter 2011
References below are to chapter sections of Patrick Hurley's A Concise Introduction to Logic (Tenth Edition), and to the Winter 2011 due dates for the assignments, which are due by midnight of the due date. Use the interactive CD to complement and assist your comprehension of the reading material.

We will not be covering every section of every chapter in the Hurley text. The book is designed to be used for both a Critical Reasoning class (e.g., PHIL 115) and a formal symbolic logic class (e.g., PHIL& 106, formerly PHIL 120).

Classes begin Monday, January 03, 2011.

Assignments are due no later than midnight of the indicated due date. Note that assignments may be due on differing days of the week, depending on holidays and other factors.

Week One: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4. Assignment 01 Due January 10, 2011.

Week Two: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5. Assignment 02 Due January 18, 2011.

Week Three: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4. Assignment 03 Due January 24, 2011.

Week Four: 4.1, 4.2. 4.3, 4.4, 4.5. Assignment 04 Due January 31, 2011.

Week Five: 4.7, 5.1. Assignment 05 Due February 07, 2011.

Week Six: 9.1, 9.2, 9.3. Assignment 06 Due February 14, 2011.

Week Seven: 10.1, 10.2. 10.3. Assignment 07 Due February 22, 2011.

Week Eight: 11.1, 11.2. Assignment 08 Due February 28, 2011.

Week Nine: 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6. Assignment 09 March 07, 2011.

Week Ten: 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4. Assignment 10 Due March 14, 2011.

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