



"Losing an illusion makes you wiser than finding a truth." Ludwig Börne

Phil3 - Critical Thinking

Section 5524, Spring 2020 Course Syllabus

Course Description

This is a course in practical reasoning, argumentation and the analysis of language as useful tools for making reasonable decisions about what to do and believe.

What we're going to do over the semester is to investigate and enhance your thinking skills. The aim is for you to have more clarity, freedom, and power in your thinking, and hence in your relationships to others and life. We will use class discussions and projects, as well as homework assignments, to improve your ability to think and live critically. The primary aim of this course is not merely to give you information about critical thinking, convey theoretical structures, or teach skills (although we will do that), but to provide an environment in which you can have some insight into your own and others' reasoning about complex and difficult issues, which you can then develop beyond this particular classroom experience.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze arguments to identify and explain the claims and premises.
2. Evaluate arguments to determine whether claims are adequately supported.
3. Compose cogent written arguments.

Class Meetings

Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:00PM - 1:20PM
Room 1509, Santa Rosa Campus - Emeritus Hall

Instructor Contact

[Stuart Campbell](#) (linked to my faculty webpage)

Email: scampbell@santarosa.edu

Office Hours:

Monday & Wednesday/8:00AM - 9:00AM, Emeritus 1509

Monday & Wednesday/1:30PM - 2:00PM, Emeritus 1513

You may also use the [Canvas Conversations Inbox](#) to send me a message.

I usually respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, and often quite a bit sooner. I may not respond on weekends, so please expect a response to those messages on Monday.

Course Web Site

Students will use the Canvas course web site for assignment instructions, submitting assignments (though some submitted in class), class resources, and viewing grades.

Textbook

Martin, Sean. *Critical Thinking - PHIL 3*. McGraw Hill Create, 2017

This instructor-defined textbook is available in the SRJC campus bookstore only, and is required for the course.

Reading Assignments

There will be regular reading assignments, some in the textbook and some available in the Modules section of Canvas. These will be announced in class. You are responsible for knowing and completing those assignments, whether or not you attend the class session when they are announced. Anytime you are absent from class, you should contact me via email to find out what assignments you missed; it would also be a good idea to come to an office hour to learn what course content you missed.

Required Software

- [Chrome](#) is the recommended browser for Canvas.

- There is also a Canvas Phone App, but it has limited functionality, and I recommend it only for reading things, not submitting assignments.

Important Dates

Day Class Begins: Monday, January 13, 2020

Day Class Ends: Wednesday, May 13, 2020

Last Day to Add without instructor's approval: Sunday, January 19, 2020

Last Day to Drop with refund: Sunday, January 26, 2020

Last Day to Add with instructor's approval: Sunday, February 2, 2020

Last Day to Drop without a 'W' symbol: Sunday, February 2, 2020

Last Day to Opt for Pass/No Pass: Sunday, February 23, 2020

Last Day to Drop with a 'W' symbol: Sunday, April 19, 2020

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 20, 2020; 10:00AM - 12:45PM

Dropping the Class

If you decide to discontinue this course, it is your responsibility to officially drop it. A student may be dropped from any class when that student's absences exceed ten percent (10%) of the total hours of class time. It is strongly advised that if you need to miss more than one class/homework deadline in a row that you contact the instructor to avoid being dropped from the class.

Attendance & Participation

Students who fail to attend the first class meeting may be dropped by the instructor.

Instructors are required to drop all No-Show students immediately following the second class meeting. A No-Show is an enrolled student who has not attended any class meeting of the course.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions during the semester, and to arrive in class ***on time*** ready to begin. Each student starts out with 100 points for participation. Missing a class will result in a loss of five points (not including first day of classes). For instance, one missed class during the semester will result in the student receiving 95 points; two missed classes will result in 90 points, etc. If a student misses five class sessions he or she **MAY BE DROPPED** from the course (students are responsible for adding or dropping classes, and cannot count on the

instructor to do it if they just stop attending). Beginning with the second day of classes, students are responsible for signing the attendance sheet when they arrive, and those sheets will be the sole basis for computing attendance.

You must sign the sheet to receive attendance credit, as that will be the only record!

Instructor Announcements

The instructor will post announcements on the Announcements page in Canvas throughout the semester. Canvas notifies students according to their preferred Notification Preferences. You should set those up to make sure you do not miss any announcements.

Late Policy

All assignments are due before class on the due date. Occasionally an assignment *may* be accepted late, but no later than the start of class following the assigned date, and they will be assessed a 20% penalty (two grades). Most assignments will be due by the due date and time, and you will not be able to submit them late.

Final Exam

The final exam will occur on the final exam date listed above under "Important Dates," and you must be present in class on that day to receive credit. There will be no opportunity to take the final exam early, so please check your schedule to make sure you will be able to attend.

Grading Policy

Click the "Grades" link in Canvas to keep track of your grades.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

<u>POINT VALUES:</u>		<u>COURSE GRADES:</u>	
Assignment	Points	Points	Grade
Homework assignments and Quizzes	575	810-900	A
Exams	100	720-809	B
Term essay	125	630-719	C
Attendance	100	540-629	D
TOTAL	900	below 540	F

These totals are approximate, and in general I grade on the percentage of total possible points earned.

Standards of Conduct

Students who register in SRJC classes are required to abide by the SRJC Student Conduct Standards. Violation of the Standards is basis for referral to the Vice President of Student Services or dismissal from class or from the College. See the [Student Code of Conduct page](#).

It is the responsibility of each student to come to class fully prepared with written and reading assignments completed, and to actively participate in class and group discussions.

Santa Rosa Junior College trusts each student to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. All assignments submitted in fulfillment of course requirements must be the student's own individual work, with the exception of the group projects. Failure to abide by the college's ethical standards may result in anything form failure of a particular assignment or exam, to expulsion from the school. In short, plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the school administration. See these links:

[SRJC Writing Center](#)

[SRJC's statement on Academic Integrity](#)

Special Needs

Every effort is made to conform to accessibility standards for all instructor-created materials. Students should contact their instructor as soon as possible if they find that they cannot access any course materials. Students with disabilities who believe they need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact [Disability Resources](#) (527-4278).

Assignments and Handouts

The specific assignments and handouts for this course will be available through the *Modules*.

Essay:

There will be a research essay due on the last day of the semester, May 22nd, by 11:59PM. **Late essays will not be accepted.** The aim of the essay will be to apply the concepts and skills we will be developing during the semester. We will be discussing this in more detail later in the semester, and there will be handout at that time.