

August 17, 2022

Critical Thinking: Philosophy 3, On-line & In Class (Blended) Sections 1484: Meetings, Wednesday 2:00-4:00  
(In Class meetings, Emeritus 1520)

Instructor; Dr. Crowell; Office Hours Wednesday 1:00 pm

College phone: 527-4607. Voicemail 527-4999, extension 5121.

E-mail : [ecrowell@santarosa.edu](mailto:ecrowell@santarosa.edu)

Class Schedules: Section 1484 Wednesdays 2:00-4:00

This section is “blended”. I will meet in the classroom (Emeritus 1520) for the first hour, (2:00) and the remaining hours (4:00) remotely on Zoom. As the semester unfolds there will be additional open hours online by arrangement. This is in addition to an online office hour before class. However, to establish class enrollment, in class attendance is encouraged for at least two in class sections.

This beginning course is a study of arguments. An argument, for this class, includes giving reasons, establishing support for things we think are true and justifying beliefs or actions based on beliefs. We will, attempt to establish the standards for arguing properly and, by implication, ways to distinguish between correct and incorrect arguments. This does not mean that on many complex questions there is a single right answer, but it does mean that there is a correct method. The puzzle is how can single correct method of argument lead to contradictory answers? Part of this course is to examine this puzzle.

**Text:** There is no textbook purchase for this course. All course material is available on Canvas.

Course Assignments: Read Canvas material and daily material from newspapers, magazines, etc.

Daily in-class quizzes

Exams (three short answer/essay)

Paper (argumentative essay written out of class)

Final Exam

**The Quizzes:** Sometime during each class meeting there will be one, or sometimes two, very brief questions based on the reading assignment for that meeting, or on a front-page issue that has led to public arguments on that question, or perhaps an in-class group assignment. They will be worth 10 points each, no partial credit and if missed, cannot be made up. They can be answered from the reading assignment or from your reading of the daily local papers, or the work you do in class.

One way to earn quiz credit is have a letter to the editor published in one of the regional papers.

**The Exams:** There will be three short answer/essay exams during the semester and one paper. The three exams will be on-line and returned to me by the established deadline; the fourth assignment will be a take home paper. They will be graded on completeness, accuracy, clarity, language skills, and relevance to the questions. All examinations are open book. This means you may consult notes, and previous assignments.

The semester's exams will require you to do the following:

\* Summarize stating the main points.

\* Explain Making clear, interpreting some point or idea by putting the point in your own words.

- \* Define Giving the meaning of a term or concept.
- \* Discuss Considering something from several points of view. Presenting opposing views
- \* Criticize Stating your opinion on the correctness of something and evaluating the opinion of others.
- \* Evaluate Determining the strength of an argument.
- \* Justify Giving good evidence, showing reasons for an evaluation.
- \* Prove Establishing the truth of something by justifying correctly.

It is not possible to schedule individual make up exams. If an individual misses an exam, there is the option of replacing the grade, (0), by taking that section(s) of the final.

A tentative grade based on the four assignments and the quiz total will be posted before the final. Letter grades will be converted to numerical equivalence and averaged. Decimals less than whole numbers will be ignored. One then may elect to retake some or all the four assignments as a final exam. The grade received on the final(s) will replace the grade(s) received on the earlier exam. To take the final, you must say which exam(s) you want to replace.

**Grades:** The four assignments (three exams and one paper) will be 100 points each. The quiz total is calculated at 100 points as well. The total possible points (500) will be averaged for a letter grade. Letter grades usually reflect the normal distribution; As in the 90% and above, Bs between 80% and 90%, Cs between 70% and 80%, D's between 60% and 70%, not passing below 60%.

Daily Quizzes; 20% (100 points)  
Exams; 60% (300 points)  
Paper; 20% (100 points)

**Absences and Attendance:** Attendance is not specifically graded but will be reflected in the quizzes. However, I will drop students who miss the first week of class or who have not participated in any of the graded assignments (quizzes and exams). It is the student's responsibility to initiate a drop procedure in any other circumstance.

**Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Resources (527-4278), Analy Village - C, as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are provided.**

**Reading requirement:** Students will be expected to have read the material in the Canvas Module that is to be covered on a specific class session (see outline that follows). Time spent on any of the outside activities is up to the individual, but there is the expectation that these activities be completed. In addition, students will be expected to have read or be familiar important news events from the immediate period. This knowledge can be gained from reading the important news reports for that day, or hearing in depth reports from the various media outlets. The focus should be on the arguments that appear in the various sources. Sources can include Press Democrat, San Francisco Chronicle, Sacramento Bee; Broadcast media, National Public Radio on KQED 88.5 and 88.3, fm KRCB 91.1 fm; The News Hour on KQED, and KRCB TV; all-news station KCBS on 740 am. Reading these arguments will result in our being familiar with the important political, economic, and social questions of the day, e.g., national and state budget issues, questions relating to the problem of gun safety national and state elections, etc. Part of the requirement will be to read at least four opinion pieces regarding

these questions each week. The idea is to think about real life issues, encourage people to read arguments on these issues, and apply classroom exercise to the analysis and evaluation of these arguments.

**Goal:** To understand the nature of arguments. To teach practical, usable skills for analyzing, evaluating and constructing extended arguments in such areas as politics, economics, public concerns, business policy, value determination and perhaps personal matters; to enable the student to read, evaluate, and write quality arguments. A second purpose is to touch on and explain philosophical issues and methods as they occur in the semester's work.

**Assumptions:** The study of arguments requires the study of language. The use of language in arguments is governed by informal rules (identified as "language games" in recent philosophical discussions). In some areas philosophers have established formal rules that, when followed, form the necessary conditions for correctness and quality in arguments. These conditions are observable, public, and teachable and serve as the foundation for proper communication.

**Method:** Lecture, discussion, material on Canvas, analysis and exercises, daily quizzes, open book exams.

FIRST WEEK; August 17; Introduction to the Class. First Quiz (See Canvas Module) Quiz collected and discussed,

**Assignment for first week: Review and answer questions on the syllabus**

**Assignment for first week: Take Quiz 1**

**Assignment for second week: Read "What is meant by Critical Thinking; Argument Defined (Canvas Module)**

SECOND WEEK August 24 What is Critical Thinking? What is an argument? Arguments defined: practical and deductive (the Syllogism). The separation of arguments from non-arguments. Examples of arguments from the local media. Practical arguments and deductive arguments. Deductive arguments:

**Assignment for Third Week: "Introduction to the Syllogism."**

THIRD WEEK; August 31: The syllogism. Formal proofs in the syllogism. Translation to Categorical Proposition, Translation to Standard Form, Mood and Figure designation, Distribution, Rules for Validity.

**Assignment for Fourth Week: Practice Exercises in the Syllogism.**

FOURTH WEEK September 7: Complete Syllogism exercises. Prepare for the first exam in the Fifth Week.

FIFTH WEEK: 15, **First Exam Wednesday September 14.**

**Assignment for Sixth Week: "Handout on Extended Arguments"**

SIXTH WEEK; September 21. Discussion of the handout on extended arguments. Practical arguments--the study of arguments in the media. The analysis of extended arguments--evaluation and the structure of extended arguments. Assignment for next week: Analysis of arguments in handouts.

SEVENTH WEEK. September 28 Continue with analysis of extended arguments. Review of extended

arguments. Definitions of assurance, warrant, secondary thesis, counter argument, etc.

EIGHTH WEEK; October 5. Complete the discussion and analysis of handout on extended arguments. Prepare for exam in the Ninth Week.

NINTH WEEK; **October 12 Exam on Wednesday.**

**Assignment for tenth week: Read handout on Fallacies.**

TENTH WEEK; October 19; Study of defective arguments. Fallacies in arguments. Assignment for next week: The quiz for next week consists of selecting and handing in an argument that you regard as defective. You should briefly describe the nature of the problem in the example you hand in. Study of defective arguments continued. Assignment: continue with study of handouts.

ELEVENTH WEEK; October 26. Defective arguments continued. In class exercises on writing argument criticisms and evaluations. Application of the four criteria. Writing a critical evaluation.

TWELFTH WEEK; November 2 Final discussion of defective arguments. Prepare for exam November 17.

THIRTEENTH WEEK; November 11 PDA day, No Classes

FOURTEENTH WEEK; **November 16 Exam on Wednesday.**

FIFTEENTH WEEK: November 24. Return of exam. Writing original arguments. Organizing and outlining. Narrowing the issues. Structuring a written argument. Researching the topic.

Thanksgiving Holliday November 25-27

SIXTEENTH WEEK; November 30; Summary session on writing original arguments.

SEVENTH WEEK; December 1. **Original argument to be handed in by December 4 12:00 noon.** Papers turned in after the deadline will receive a 0.

EIGHTEENTH WEEK; December 7: Return of papers. Course review for those expecting to take final. Pre-final grades available on December 7. To take the final, you must indicate which exam(s) you want to replace. There will be place to indicate this on the pre-final grade sheet. Once you sign up, you are committed to taking the final. These grades will be posted on cupboard door in the room around the corner from my office in Emeritus 1513.

Final Exams start December 10. Time for section 1424 to be determined

Below is a section from the official course of record for Philosophy 3. For transfer purposes, this is what is expected to have been accomplished at the end of our work. We will review this as part of the year end course review.

## COURSE CONTENT

Outcomes and Objectives:

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

1. Identify arguments;
2. Distinguish arguments from explanations, and from statements of unsupported opinion;
3. Portray the structure of support within an argument;
4. Paraphrase arguments;
5. Distinguish inductive from deductive reasoning;
6. Apply appropriate standards for the evaluation of both inductive and deductive arguments;
7. Apply appropriate standards of informal argument evaluation (recognition of informally fallacious arguments);
8. Design and compose arguments that meet appropriate standards of evaluation.