


Course Syllabus

 Edit

PHIL 3: Critical Thinking

Section 0370: M/W 1:30-3:00

FALL 2025

Emeritus 1518

Prof. Mulder Office:

Mon/Wed 12:30-1:30, Room 1515

Available Tues/Thurs 11:00-2:00 (except holidays)

To ZOOM with an APPOINTMENT

(message me in Canvas INBOX)

COURSE SYLLABUS

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

****AS SOON AS YOU ARE ENROLLED IN THIS CLASS, CLICK ON YOUR CANVAS ACCOUNT, click "NOTIFICATIONS," and make sure notifications are turned on for "ANNOUNCEMENTS" and for "CONVERSATION**

MESSAGES” (see [INSTRUCTIONS HERE](#) 

(<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-manage-my-Canvas-notification-settings-as-a-student/ta-p/434>)

Communicate with Instructor through Canvas “Inbox.” Use the “Inbox” icon in the left margin, or along the bottom in the app.

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 \(tel:527-4278\)](tel:527-4278)).

Course Description

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

This is an introductory course in critical thinking and critical reading skills. In this course, you will learn how to identify, construct, analyze, and evaluate logical arguments and reasoning. These skills will increase your comprehension of material you read in other courses and material from the media. These skills will also make your writing clearer and more persuasive. We will cover the different kinds of argument and various methods for evaluating arguments. We will also work on critically reading argumentative ("persuasive") essays and writing short argumentative passages. You will develop your ability to distinguish good arguments from bad arguments and, your ability to reason and write well. We will study fallacies, language, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, and arguments involving probability and statistics. We will also give special attention to advertising, the news media, political rhetoric, fake news,

and science vs. pseudo-science.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

- **CT:** A Series of PDF files on Critical Thinking will be provided free, plus ...
- **TO BUY:**
- **TR:** *Thinking and Reasoning: A Very Short Introduction*,
(https://www.google.com/books/edition/Thinking_and_Reasoning/43QzDwAAQBAhl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Thinking+and+Reasoning:+A+Very+Short+Introduction&printsec=frontmatter)
by Jonathan Evans. Oxford University Press, 2017. [Click here to buy an e-book or paperback directly from Oxford University Press](#) ➞
(<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/thinking-and-reasoning-9780198787259?q=Evans%2C%20Jonathan&lang=en&cc=us>)
- **SR:** *Science and Religion: A Very Short Introduction* ➞
(https://www.google.com/books/edition/Science_and_Religion_A_Very_Short_Introduction/9780198831020?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Science+and+Religion:+A+Very+Short+Introduction&printsec=frontmatter)
, 2nd edition, by Thomas Dixon. Oxford University Press, 2022. [Click here to buy e-book or paperback from Oxford University Press](#) ➞
(<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/science-and-religion-a-very-short-introduction-9780198831020?prevNumResPerPage=100&prevSortField=1&resultsPerPage=100&subjectcode1=01>)
- **SRJC Bookstore** ➞ (<https://www.bkstr.com/santarosastore/>)
- **Recommended** additional resource free online: [A Student's Guide to Critical Thinking \(pdf\)](#). (<https://dimparato.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/critical-thinking.pdf>)

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. Compose cogent written arguments.
3. Evaluate arguments to determine whether claims are adequately supported.

I recommend that you think of your education as you think of athletics, working out, or musical practice. The goal is health, fitness, or musical skills, not just getting a certificate. And the fitness you get out of it depends entirely on what you put into it. You can't get someone else to do your thinking for you, any more than you can benefit from someone else doing your exercise for you!

Important Dates:

[Phil 3 Section 0370, Course Information and Important Dates](https://portal.santarosa.edu/SRWeb/MVC.Core2/ScheduleOfClasses2/Section?termId=20257&SectionNumber=0370) 

[\(https://portal.santarosa.edu/SRWeb/MVC.Core2/ScheduleOfClasses2/Section?termId=20257&SectionNumber=0370\)](https://portal.santarosa.edu/SRWeb/MVC.Core2/ScheduleOfClasses2/Section?termId=20257&SectionNumber=0370)

Instructor Contact

Registered students must communicate through CANVAS, using the "INBOX" icon in the left or bottom margin.

Only for those NOT enrolled in the course - Email: [dmulder@ santarosa.edu](mailto:dmulder@santarosa.edu)

Office Hours: M/W 12:30-1:30, Emeritus 1515. Canvas messages ANY time. Available for Zoom meeting with an **appointment** T/Th from 11:00-2:00 except holidays.

I respond to messages M-Th 9:00-3:00 on the same day, except holidays.

Course Requirements

Academic Integrity. See [Policy on academic integrity](https://rightsresponsibilities.santarosa.edu/academic-integrity) 
(<https://rightsresponsibilities.santarosa.edu/academic-integrity>)

Grading Weights:

Class Participation: 20 points — 10%

Class Presentation: 20 points — 10%

5 Graded Homework Sets: 100 points total — 50%

Short Essay: 25 points — 12.5%

Final Exam: 35 points — 17.5%

Total: 200 points

Class Participation, in-person and Online (20 points: 10% of course grade)

In-person class discussions and activities. Additionally, you **MUST** be actively

engaged online **every week** of the term. There will be 2-3 **required** online activities (some graded, some marked completed/not completed) every week. These will include practice exercises, graded work, participation in online **discussion** boards, etc. Comments on discussion boards must be respectful and reasonable.

Class Presentation (20 points: 10% of grade)

PRESENTATION DATES FOR THIS ARE SPREAD THROUGH THE TERM BASED ON FIRST LETTER OF YOUR LAST NAME.

Your CLASS PRESENTATION will be either (**choose ONE**)

- A. a brief summary and explanation of an **article** from a sign up sheet on topics related to our course, **OR**
- B. a brief example of a “critical thinking lapse” or a “critical thinking success” from your own experience or someone you know. It must come from something you have a personal connection with, NOT FROM ANY PUBLIC MEDIA.

Online Practice (required completion)

There will be several online exercise sets in Canvas throughout the semester labeled "**Practice**." They can be repeated as often as you wish. Anything labeled “practice” will not, obviously, affect your course grade, but SEVERAL WILL BE **“COMPLETION REQUIRED”** FOR ACCESS TO GRADED EXERCISE SETS.

Graded Assignments:

Regular **reading assignments** from the textbooks and my own online materials IN CANVAS must be completed by the assigned date.

There will be Six (6) **graded homework assignments**, the lowest grade will drop after #4, leaving FIVE worth a total of 100 points: 50% of course grade) online in Canvas. Open books, open notes (of course). All homework will be CUMULATIVE, but emphasizing the most recent topics.

All homework must be completed and turned in online in Canvas. No email accepted. If it's not in your Canvas account, it doesn't count.

- Two submissions allowed; grade equals average of two scores. They will consist of fill-in the blank, multiple-choice, true-false, and matching. The material comes from the textbook, online notes and supplemental materials (videos, articles).
- No time limit other than the due date.
- Graded homework in Canvas will be available online for 96 hours, from **Thursday through Sunday. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED. Do NOT put it off** to the last minute. I will NOT accept late work just because you ran into some technical difficulties trying to submit within the last hour. I will tell you that you should have completed it early enough to deal with any technical glitches that might come up as you submit your work.

Short Paper:

There will be one 4-5 page paper assignment, worth 25 points, 12.5% of course

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Final Exam, Available in Canvas during SRJC Final Exam Week

There will be ***one online FINAL EXAM (worth 35 points: 17.5% of course)***

- ***COMPREHENSIVE, (Open books, open notes)***
- ***ONE SUBMISSION ONLY***
- The material comes from the textbooks, class lectures and supplemental materials.
- If you complete and PASS the final, your course letter grade will not go down from what it was before the final. A very good final, however, could raise some course grades.

Late Policy

All assignments are due at the designated time on the due date. Assignments will be open in Canvas for **96 HOURS**, so **no late work is accepted**.

NO LATE FINALS ARE POSSIBLE.

Grading Policy

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

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A: 90-100%

B: 79-90%

C: 67-79%

D: 55-67%

If taking Pass/No Pass you need at least a 67% overall average and must complete all assignments and the final exam to pass the class.

Grading Weights:

Online Participation: 20 points — 10%

Online Presentation: 20 points — 10%

5 Graded Homework (after dropping one): 100 points total — 50%


Short Essay: 25 points — 12.5%

Final Exam: 35 points — 17.5%

Total: 200 points

Required Software

The IT Department recommends Chrome browser for Canvas, but I haven't had any problems with other browsers.

Run this [computer readiness test](https://apps.3cm mediasolutions.org/oei/tools/computer-readiness.html)  (<https://apps.3cm mediasolutions.org/oei/tools/computer-readiness.html>) to check your browser for plugins and versions.

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

Instructors are required to drop all No-Show students immediately following the second class meeting. For classes that meet online, a No-Show is an enrolled student who has not logged on and initiated active participation by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time of the second day of the class.

Pass-NoPass (P/NP)


[You may take this class P/NP. You must decide before the deadline, and add the option online with TLC or file the P/NP form with Admissions and Records. With a grade of C or better, you will get P.

You must file for the P/NP by the due date. Once you decide to go for P/NP, you cannot change back to a letter grade. If you are taking this course as part of a certificate program, you can probably still take the class P/NP. Check with a counselor to be sure.]

Instructor Announcements and Q&A Forum

The instructor will post announcements on the Announcements page in Canvas throughout the semester. Canvas notifies students according to their preferred Notification Preferences. **SET YOUR NOTIFICATION PREFERENCES TO INCLUDE ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Standards of Conduct

Students who register in SRJC classes are required to abide by the SRJC Student Conduct Standards. **The exact same standards apply to ONLINE BEHAVIOR.** 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](http://student-conduct.santarosa.edu/).  (<http://student-conduct.santarosa.edu/>)

Collaborating on or copying of tests or homework in whole or in part will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and result in a grade of 0 for that test or assignment. Students are

encouraged to share information and ideas, but not their work.

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 \(tel:527-4278\)](tel:527-4278)).

List of assignments

To view all course content, go to *HOME* or *MODULES*.