

# critical thinking

California State University, Sacramento

Phil 4-07

Spring 2019

Tues Thurs 7:30 – 8:45

Douglass Hall (DH) 110

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**Instructor:** Jonathan Chen

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Office Hours

Mendocino Hall 3036

Tues Thurs

9:00 – 10:30am

**Website:** farewelljon.com/teaching

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## BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT

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*If you are experiencing challenges in the area of food and/or stable housing, help is just a click, email or phone call away! Sacramento State offers basic needs support for students who are experiencing challenges in these areas. Please visit our Basic Needs website to learn more about your options and resources available. <https://www.csus.edu/basicneeds/>*

## CATALOG DESCRIPTION

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Study of the basic skills of good reasoning needed for the intelligent and responsible conduct of life. Topics include: argument structure and identification, validity and strength of arguments, common fallacies of reasoning, use and abuse of language in reasoning, principles of fair play in argumentation. **Units:** 3.0.

## ABOUT THE COURSE

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Have you ever wondered whether or not you are the one directing your thoughts? It is without question that we exist in a diverse world ornamented with unique ideas and opinions, all of which stimulate our own way of seeing the world. Depending on our environment and circumstances, we might have been brought up in an affluent community or an impoverished one, a very religious one or an irreligious one, a well-educated one or an illiterate one, a loving one or a neglectful one. All of these conditions we're born into have some effect on us, but it's up to us to decide whether we will be passively swallowed up by them or whether we decide to exercise our autonomy and become conscious of our biases and inclinations. Like squirrels that stuff and store their mouths abundantly with food, we all too often stuff and store our minds with an inordinate amount of injurious ideas and opinions that aren't carefully thought out.

The role of critical thinking, then, is to help us reverse this process. Rather than consume more attitudes and viewpoints than we can manage, what we'll do instead is remove all that clutter that's been filling our minds and replace it with a healthy independent way of thinking. In doing so, it is important that we understand why we have the beliefs we do in order to critique them and strengthen them.

Because of the nature of this course, we will focus more of our attention on practicing our critical thinking skills rather than on lectures. While memorization is important, rote or mechanical learning is not the goal for this class. You will need to use every nook and cranny in your mind to figure out solutions to problems!

## GENERAL EDUCATION CRITERIA

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This course satisfies GE Area A3: Critical Thinking

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- **Competence in the Disciplines:** The ability to demonstrate the competencies and values listed below in at least one major field of study and to demonstrate informed understandings of other fields, drawing on the knowledge and skills of disciplines outside the major.
- **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World** through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts. Focused by engagement with big questions, contemporary and enduring.
- **Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including:** inquiry and analysis, critical, philosophical, and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving, practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance.
- **Personal and Social Responsibility, Including:** civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, foundations and skills for lifelong learning anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.
- **Integrative Learning, Including:** synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies.
  1. *To understand logic and its relation to language*
  2. *To learn basic inductive and deductive processes*
  3. *To understand formal and informal fallacies of language and thought*
  4. *To distinguish matters of fact from issues of judgment or opinion*
  5. *To develop the ability to analyze, criticize and advocate ideas*
  6. *To reason inductively and deductively*
  7. *To reach well-supported factual or judgmental conclusions*

## BOOK

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Dowden, *Logical Reasoning*. Free eBook here: <http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/4/Logical-Reasoning.pdf>

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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### Canvas & Announcements

We will be using *Canvas*, as a means of communication and assessment. Please log in by going to <https://my.csus.edu/>

- Always check your CSUS e-mail for class announcements.
- I respond to all e-mails within 24 hours. If I do not respond within that time, assume I did not receive your e-mail and resend it.

## Classwork

You will be given classwork throughout the semester. You will not be notified in advance as to when the classwork will be given, so missing a class could be detrimental to your grade.

## Quizzes

There will be 6 quizzes available via Canvas (see schedule below).

## Exams

The midterm and final exams will be available via Canvas (see schedule below).

## Assignments and Grading

Getting to Know You	20 pts	2%
Quizzes (6)	360 pts	36%
Classwork	220 pts	22%
Midterm Exam	200 pts	20%
Final Exam	200 pts	20%

**A** = 93 – 100, **A-** = 90 – 92, **B+** = 87 – 89, **B** = 83 – 86, **B-** = 80 – 82, **C+** = 77 – 79, **C** = 73 – 76, **C-** = 70 – 72  
**D+** = 67 – 69, **D** = 63 – 66, **D-** = 60 – 62.9, **F** = 0 – 59

## Late Assignments

You will be given a feasible amount of time to complete each assignment, and it is your responsibility to know when an assignment is due. Should you need to make up an assignment, the following penalties will be enforced:

- ✗ Classwork cannot be made up without an excuse.
- ✗ -5 points for each 24-hour period that the 'Who is You?' assignment is submitted late. No excuses accepted.
- ✗ -20 points for each additional class session that a quiz is taken late, unless you have relevant documents to account for your absence.
- ✗ -50 points for each 24-hour period that your Midterm Exam or Final Exam is submitted late. No excuses accepted.

For instance, if you submit a quiz 1 hour after the due date, you will be penalized -20 points. If you submit it 25 hours after the due date, you will be penalized -40 points.

Note: When submitting your assignment on *Canvas*, please make sure that it has been submitted properly. If you have any technical difficulties and cannot properly complete the assignment before the due date, the burden is still on you to show that you did complete the assignment on time. If you are unsure, you can always take screenshots and send me an e-mail with the screenshots attached (don't just send me an e-mail asking if I received the assignment posted on *Canvas*).

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

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**DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.** Any student caught intentionally plagiarizing will automatically receive an **F** in the class and be reported to Student Affairs and the department chair for serious disciplinary action.

"Plagiarism, as a form of cheating, is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporation of another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgement. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of rightful credit and gives credit to someone who has not earned it. Acknowledgement is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge."

If you are still unsure of what counts as plagiarism, please speak with me or read more at: <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/STU-0100.htm>

## DROP POLICY

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First 2 weeks - During the Fall and Spring semesters a student can add and drop classes using MySacState until the end of the second week of the semester.

Weeks 3-6 - During this period the student must describe the seriousness of the circumstances that necessitate dropping and get the approval of the instructor and department chair on a Drop Petition. Most departments require verifying documents, such as a letter from a doctor or supervisor. In weeks 3 & 4, drop forms are turned in to the department office and no grade is given. In weeks 5 & 6, forms are turned in to the Office of the University Registrar and "W" grades are assigned.

Week 7 through the last day of classes - It is more difficult to drop classes after the sixth week. The drop petition requires signatures from the instructor, the department chair, and the dean of the college which offers the class. Students are required to have a letter from a doctor or supervisor stating that a medical or work-related circumstance is beyond the control of the student. Turn in forms to the Office of the University Registrar; a "W" grade will be assigned.

Finals Week - No drops allowed.

**University's Drop and Withdrawal Policy:** "Although instructors may exercise their authority to administratively remove any student who during the first two weeks of instruction fails to attend, students should not assume they will be dropped by this procedure. Students will receive a final grade of "F" or "WU" in courses they fail to drop officially. 'Failure to attend' is defined as failure to attend any two class meetings (for courses that meet two or more times a week), one class meeting (for courses that meet once a week), or the initial meeting of those courses that require attendance at the first class meeting. Students should verify their registration to make sure they are enrolled in only the classes they are attending."

## ACCOMMODATIONS

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For students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations, please contact me before the end of the third week of the semester so that arrangements can be made. Late notifications may interfere with providing accommodations in a timely manner. Also, please provide disability documentation to SSWD (<http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>), Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-9655, so that they may facilitate the reasonable accommodations process.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

This is subject to change. You will be given at least a two-week notice if any changes are made.

All readings should be completed before coming to class.

Date	Lectures & Readings	Assignments Due
<b>WEEK 1</b>		
Jan 21 - 25	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> Read: <i>Ch. 1 How to Reason Logically</i>	<u>Due Tuesday at 11:59pm</u> <i>'Who is You?'</i>
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
Jan 28 – Feb 1	<b>CREDIBILITY</b> Read: <i>Ch. 5 Obstacles to Better Communication</i> <i>Ch. 4 How to Evaluate Information and Judge Credibility</i>	
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
Feb 4 – 8	<b>BEING CLEAR</b> Read: <i>Ch. 3 Appropriate Precision</i>	<i>Quiz #1 due Friday at 11:59pm</i> <i>(Available on Canvas)</i>
<b>WEEK 4</b>		
Feb 11 - 15	Read: <i>Ch. 2 Claims, Issues, and Arguments</i>	
<b>WEEK 5</b>		
Feb 18 - 22	Read: Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> (Available on Canvas)	<i>Quiz #2 due Friday at 11:59pm</i> <i>(Available on Canvas)</i>

	<b>WEEK 6</b>	
Feb 25 – Mar 1	Read: Plato, <i>Apology</i> (Available on Canvas) Plato, <i>Crito</i> (Available on Canvas)	
	<b>WEEK 7</b>	
Mar 4 - 8	Read: <i>Ch. 7 Defending Against Deception</i>	Quiz #3 due Friday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)
	<b>WEEK 8</b>	
Mar 11 - 15	Read: <i>Ch. 8 Fallacies</i>	Midterm due Friday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)
	<b>WEEK 9</b>	
Mar 18 - 22	<b>SPRING RECESS – NO CLASS</b>	
	<b>WEEK 10</b>	
Mar 25 - 29	Read: <i>Ch. 9 Deductive Reasoning</i>	
	<b>WEEK 11</b>	
Apr 1 - 5	Read: <i>Ch. 9 Deductive Reasoning</i>	Quiz #4 due Friday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)
	<b>WEEK 12</b>	

Apr 8 - 12	Read: <i>Ch. 9 Deductive Reasoning</i>	
<b>WEEK 13</b>		
Apr 15 - 19	Read: <i>Ch. 13 Inductive Reasoning</i>	Quiz #5 due Friday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)
<b>WEEK 14</b>		
Apr 22 - 26	Read: Essays (TBA)	
<b>WEEK 15</b>		
Apr 29 – May 3	Read: Essays (TBA)	Quiz #6 due Friday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)
<b>WEEK 16</b>		
May 6 - 10	Read: Essays (TBA)	
<b>WEEK 17</b>		
May 13 - 17	<b>FINALS WEEK (NO CLASS)</b>	Final Exam due Monday at 11:59pm (Available on Canvas)