

SYLLABUS
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

CRITICAL THINKING

Fall 2007, 3 Credit Hours

Philosophy 262W.02 (CID-4689), MWF 3:00-3:50, LDB-216.

Instructor: James R. Chandler

Office: Bldg. Lee Drain, Room 332 L

Office Phone: 936-294-3694, **Fax Number:** 936-294-3798

Office Hours: MWF 12:30-12:50, 2:00-2:50, and by appointment.

Contact: jrc012@shsu.edu

Course Description: PHL 262 Critical Thinking is designed to improve students' ability to think critically. The course covers the fundamentals of deductive reasoning, the identification of common fallacies, and an introduction to inductive reasoning, as well as sensitizing the students to some of the ways information is distorted, e.g., by advertising and news management. Credit hours, 3.

Course Objectives: In this course, students will:

- Learn some basic concepts used in the analysis and evaluation of deductive and inductive logic,
- Give each student practice in analyzing such reasoning, and
- Learn to recognize and avoid informal fallacies in reasoning.

Required Text: Bruce N. Waller, *Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict, Fifth Edition* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005). It is the student's responsibility to obtain this text and to bring it to class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I. Tests, and Final Exam

There will be three tests. Each of the three tests will be worth 20 percent of your final grade. In addition there will be a final exam, which will be cumulative and will be worth 25 percent of your final grade. The tests and final exams will consist of a multiple-choice section, plus a short essay section. The questions will come from material in the textbook and material covered in class. You should bring a scantron to each of the tests and the final exam.

Any student who is absent on test dates should be prepared to take a make-up of the missed test on the first day of returning to class. Students will not be assessed a penalty for a make-up test if the student has an acceptable written and dated excuse (doctors note or death in the immediate family). All other make-up tests will be assessed at least a 10 point penalty. The final exam cannot be made-up unless there are dire circumstances.

II. Participation

Participation will account for 15 percent of your final grade. This will include your record of attendance, participation in class, and homework. More details will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

III. Extra Credit

Occasionally there will be an opportunity to earn extra credit. These opportunities will be announced in class and documented on Blackboard. Up to a possible 3 points added to your final grade can be earned. No extra credit will be awarded after November 30.

IV. Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and class participation is strongly encouraged. In accordance with University regulations, a record of each student's attendance will be kept. If you do not attend class, you must drop the course before the deadline (Oct. 10); otherwise, you will receive an F.

V. Instructor Evaluations: You are encouraged to provide me with feedback (what you like, what you don't like) at any time during the semester. You will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester. I use these evaluations to make changes in the future.

VI. Grading

Grading Scale

A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	0%-59%

Final Grade Breakdown

Participation = 15%
Tests = 60% (20% for each of the three)
Final Exam = 25%
Total = 100%

VII. Calendar

The following calendar is tentative. Any changes will be announced in class. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of changes.

Date	READING	SUBJECT	CATEGORY
Aug. 20		Introduction/Syllabus	Introduction
22		What is philosophy?	
24	Ch 1	Introduction	The Argument
27	Ch 2	Terms	
29	Ch 2	Terms	
31	Ch 3	What's the Question?	
Sep. 3	Labor Day		
5	Ch 4	Relevance	
7	Ch 4	Relevance	

	10	Review		
	12	TEST 1		
	14	Ch 5	The Burden of Proof	
	17	Ch 5	The Burden of Proof	
	19	Ch 6	Analyzing Arguments	
	21	Ch 6	Analyzing Arguments	
	24	Ch 7	Necessary and Sufficient	Types of Arguments
	26	Ch 7	Necessary and Sufficient	
	28	Ch 7	Necessary and Sufficient	
Oct.	1	Ch 9	Arguments about Classes	
	3	Ch 9	Arguments about Classes	
	5	Ch 9	Arguments about Classes	
	8	Review		
	10	TEST 2		
	12	Ch 15	Arguments by Analogy	
	15	Ch 15	Arguments by Analogy	Fallacies
	17	Ch 10	Ad Hominem Arguments	
	19	Ch 10	Ad Hominem Arguments	
	22	Ch 10	Ad Hominem Arguments	
	24	Ch 11	Appeal to Authority	
	26	Ch 11	Appeal to Authority	
	29	Ch 11	Appeal to Authority	
	31	Ch 12	The Truth	
Nov.	2	Ch 12	The Truth	
	5	Ch 12	The Truth	
	7	Ch 13	Strawman, etc.	
	9	Review		
	12	TEST 3		
	14	Ch 13	Strawman, etc.	
	16	Ch 14	Begging the Question	
	19	Ch 14	Begging the Question	
	21	Thanksgiving		
	23	Thanksgiving		
	26	Ch 16	Scientific Reasoning	Scientific Arguments
	28	Ch 16	Scientific Reasoning	
	30	Ch 17	Statistics	
Dec.	3	Ch 17	Statistics	
	5	Review		
	12	5:00-7:00 pm	FINAL EXAM	

VIII. Standard Policies

Each student should be familiar with the standard policies published on my Blackboard and contained in the University's Academic Policy Manual. Please consult these documents for a complete description and ask me if you have any questions. I have extracted from the full statement a few key elements as a reminder of these policies:

(1) NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. There will be no retroactive accommodations. (2) ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. (3) CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. No use of cell phones (they are to be turned off) or headphones are allowed during class. Laptop computers are to be used for taking notes only, not for surfing the Internet. (4) VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM: It is at the instructor's discretion whether or not he/she will be allowed to remain. (5) ABSENCE ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS: A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s).