

The University of Findlay: College of Liberal Arts

SYLLABUS

*The Mission of the University is to equip our students
for meaningful lives and productive careers.*

Philosophy 101.01: “Introduction to Critical Thinking”

- ◆ 3 Semester Hours
- ◆ MWF 10:00-10:50am
- ◆ No Prerequisites

Instructor: Dr. Rich Smith
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Office Hours: T TH 8:45-9:30 & 12:15-1:30
(Mon, Wed, Fri, and other times by appointment)

Course Description:

- ◆ This course provides an introduction to the principles and methods of critical thinking and the distinctions between opinion, knowledge, and belief. It includes techniques of conceptual analysis as well as some introduction to informal fallacies of reason.

Overarching Purpose of the Course:

- ◆ To further the university’s mission to equip students for meaningful lives and productive careers.
- ◆ To further the mission of the university’s general education program to offer students a broad-based foundation of knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners as members of a profession as well as members of the global society.
- ◆ To further the mission of the philosophy department to help students cultivate self-knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, complement other specializations, and strengthen career preparation.

Specific Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- ◆ Intelligently discuss and apply important concepts and principles of logic to the process of critical thinking.
- ◆ Analyze and evaluate arguments and presentations of the kind found in everyday situations, e.g. in textbooks, speeches, reports, advertisements, magazine articles, and so on.
- ◆ Present arguments clearly and persuasively. Students will get practice in constructing arguments for use in papers, reports, and speeches.
- ◆ Otherwise demonstrate effective critical thinking abilities. Students will gain practice in evaluating arguments, recognizing logical fallacies, and utilizing the basic tools of logic for testing personal judgments and attitudes.
- ◆ Discuss how concepts, principles, and skills learned in the study of critical thinking are relevant to a wide range of meaningful issues in politics, ethics, education, and other practical areas.

The Following General Education Learning Outcomes Will Be Addressed:

- ◆ Students will take courses which expose them to a range of basic religious beliefs and diverse ethical perspectives and which encourage them to develop their own perspectives on global issues.
- ◆ Students will become familiar with the historical, scientific, literary, and/or philosophical content of a range of disciplines.
- ◆ Students will acquire and practice skills for reading, writing, speaking, listening, abstract inquiry, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and using computers and related technology.
- ◆ Students will develop an appreciation for and means of analyzing art, literature, music, communication, science and/or theatre.
- ◆ Throughout their general education experience, students will analyze and reflect upon the challenges facing our global society as well as the importance of being a life-long learner and responsible citizen.

Required Textbook:

- ◆ Bruce Waller, *Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict*, 5th Edition, Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005 (ISBN: 0-13-189666-0).

Instructional Strategies:

- ◆ Multiple teaching strategies will be used, including but not limited to traditional lecture, Socratic questioning and class discussion/debate, videos, along with reading and writing assignments. A conscious effort will be made to foster an enthusiastic, exciting, and active learning environment.

Methods of Assessment:

- ◆ Attendance/Participation Reflective Writing Assignments
- ◆ Exams Journaling

Grades Will Be Determined on the Following Basis:

- ◆ Three Short Written Assignments (Drop the Lowest Score) 20% (10% each)
- ◆ Three In-Class Exams (Drop the Lowest Score) 40% (20% each)
- ◆ Final Paper (Details Will be Given) 20%
- ◆ Final Exam (During Finals Week) 20%

Course Grading Scale:

A	92-100	A-	90-91		
B+	86-89	B	82-85	B-	80-81
C+	76-79	C	72-75	C-	70-71
D+	66-69	D	62-65	D-	60-61
F	Below 60				

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Final Exam Date: Thursday, April 30 (12:00-1:50pm).

Honor Code:

- ◆ *I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie or commit any act of plagiarism during my academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University's Honor Code, I may, in my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.*

Attendance And Exam Policies:

- ◆ Attendance is important not only in pursuit of one's own individual learning but also as a contribution to the learning of others in the class. Active participation means completing daily assignments on time, having the textbook and other study materials ready at hand, and joining in discussions attentively and in a critical spirit, both as a respectful listener and as a speaker.
- ◆ Class attendance will be taken and students are expected to participate voluntarily in class activities. Attendance and participation will influence course grades in borderline cases, e.g. 89-90, 79-80, etc. Active participation and fewer than four absences (for any reason) will be considered positive.
- ◆ Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Make-up exams will be given only if the instructor determines that the circumstances of absence are legitimately excusable.

Special Services:

- ◆ If you are a student with a disability it is your responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services and your instructor at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

(Schedule of Assignments & Exams Will Be Provided the First Day of Class)