

**Philosophy 4:** Critical Thinking, CSU-Sacramento, Fall 2020 (MWF 10:00-10:50am Douglass Hall 208)

**Instructor:** Shawn Miller, shawn.miller@csus.edu

**Office Hours:** Fridays, 8:30-9:30 am

**Office:** Office hours will be held on Canvas Chat

**Required Text:** Logical Reasoning, Bradley H. Dowden, free online at:

<https://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/4/logical-reasoning-archives/Logical-Reasoning-2020-05-15.pdf>

**Course Catalogue:** 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.

## General Education Requirements

This course meets the university's GE requirements for Area A-3, Critical Thinking (<https://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad/fsg00020.htm>).

In academic courses, students commonly engage in critical thinking. In courses meeting the criteria for inclusion in the Critical Thinking category, students not only engage in, but study about and consciously develop skill in critical thinking. Courses in this category shall be devoted to the pursuit of knowledge through logical analysis and the construction of argument. Instruction shall develop an understanding of logical relationships between premises and conclusion, and the ability to recognize the more common formal and informal fallacies. Throughout such courses, attention to logical processes and skills shall exceed attention, if any, to other content. Grading shall reflect this emphasis. The courses shall foster basic skills, applicable to a variety of academic subjects and to the intelligent fulfillment of such roles as citizen, consumer, leader, and moral agent. Such courses shall develop the following:

1. skill in evaluating the validity, strength, and relevance of arguments;
2. a sense of logical structure, of both inductive and deductive forms;
3. an awareness of uses and abuses of argument language, including connotation, ambiguity, and definition;
4. skill at handling a variety of arguments in a variety of contexts;
5. ability to argue fairly and to handle bias, emotion, and propaganda.

Students will be able to ([https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/general-education/\\_internal/\\_documents/area-a3\\_critical-thinking.pdf](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/general-education/_internal/_documents/area-a3_critical-thinking.pdf)):

- Identify and apply the elements of sound logical reasoning to compose and critique deductive and inductive arguments.
- Identify and critique fallacies, biases, and errors in reasoning.

- Identify and evaluate the use of facts and opinions as evidence in the construction of arguments.
- Identify and evaluate methods and reasoning appropriate to the discipline associated with the course.

## Philosophy Department Learning Objectives

([https://www.csus.edu/indiv/b/bellonc/philosophy%20course%20learning%20outcomes\\_final%20\(july%202015\).pdf](https://www.csus.edu/indiv/b/bellonc/philosophy%20course%20learning%20outcomes_final%20(july%202015).pdf))

1. Describe, explain and distinguish key concepts in critical thinking.
2. Identify an argument in a passage of ordinary text, including identifying the premises and conclusions and distinguishing them from extraneous information.
3. Identify errors of reasoning and explain what the error in reasoning is.
4. Engage with peers in cogent and respectful discussion.
5. Analyze specific arguments for consistency and credibility.
6. Apply good reasoning to issues and problems in professional and personal contexts.
7. Evaluate evidence and draw inferences from that evidence.
8. Determine what evidence is necessary to support a conclusion and identify and apply key strategies to find that evidence.
9. Construct and defend arguments in support of or in opposition to particular propositions.
10. Analyze and solve complicated strategic challenges in various areas of life.

## Other Course and University Policies:

**Etiquette/Netiquette:** All of us involved in this course should conduct ourselves in ways consistent with the [Hornet Honor Code](#).

**Academic Honesty:** Students should conduct themselves with respect for others and perform their work with intellectual integrity and honesty, which includes giving proper attribution to sources. Each instance of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on an exam, etc.) will result a score of 0 (not just a failing grade) for that assignment/test and, if necessary, referral to the department and college for disciplinary procedures consistent with the Academic Honesty Policies articulated in the University Policy Manual. Procedures for reporting and imposing sanctions are described in detail at: <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/stu-0100.htm>.

## Tech Requirements:

- **Canvas:** Most versions of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, and Safari, support the use of Canvas. To view specific Operating System and Browser compatibility with Canvas, please refer to: <https://community.canvaslms.com/>

[docs/DOC-10720](#).

- If you experience difficulties with your computer or connecting to the campus networks please contact the Information Resource Technology (IRT) Service Desk by e-mail: [servicedesk@csus.edu](mailto:servicedesk@csus.edu) or phone (916) 278-7337.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** Any student with a documented disability who requires assistance or academic accommodations should contact the Office of Services for Students With Disabilities (SSWD) (Lassen Hall 1008) immediately to discuss eligibility. An appointment can be made by calling 916-278-6955 (Phone) 916-278-7239 (TDD). You may also contact them by email: [sswd@csus.edu](mailto:sswd@csus.edu). For a complete listing of their services visit the SSWD website at: <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>. Please inform the professor of any necessary accommodations.

**Covid-19 Instructions and Support:** In general, see the university's website [COVID-19 Information and Resources at Sacramento State](#) , and if you are planning to come to campus, check the Sac State Mobile App for the latest COVID-19 protocols. If you are sick, stay home and do not attend class. Notify your instructor. If you are experiencing any COVID- like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, loss of smell or taste, nausea, diarrhea, or headache) or have had exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID contact Student Health & Counseling Services (SHCS) at 916-278-6461 to receive guidance and/or medical care. You are asked to report any possible COVID related illnesses/exposures to SHCS via this link [COVID-19 Illness/Exposure Report Form](#). Expect a call from SHCS within 24 hours.

**Student Health & Counseling Services:** Student Health and Counseling Services staff are available for virtual and in-person services. During this public health crisis and extended period of limited physical or social interaction, if you need counseling or other physical or mental health services, you should not hesitate to reach out to the Student Health and Counseling center. For helpful information and access to their services visit their website at: <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/>.

**Basic Needs Support:** If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away! The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student. Email the CARES office at [cares@csus.edu](mailto:cares@csus.edu) to speak with a case manager about the resources available to you. Check out the [CARES website](#).

**Other University Support and Services:**

- **Academic Advising:** <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/>
- **Dreamer Resource Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers->

- [programs/dreamer-resource-center/](#)
- **Martin Luther King Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/mlk-scholars/>
- **Multicultural Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversity-inclusion/multicultural-center.html>
- **Peer and Academic Resource Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/>
- **Reading and Writing Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html>
- **Student Success Center:** <https://www.csus.edu/college/health-human-services/student-success/>

## Important Dates

**Enrollment begins:** April 27, 2020.

**Semester begins:** August 28, 2020.

**Instruction begins:** August 31, 2020 and ends December 11, 2020.

**Census date:** September 28, 2020.

**Mandatory university closure holidays:**

Labor Day (September 7)

Veteran's Day (November 11)

Thanksgiving Holiday (November 26-27).

**Finals Week:** December 14-18, 2020.

**Grades Due:** January 4, 2021.

## Grading

- **Weekly writing assignments:** 45%
  - Each week, you will have a short, ungraded writing assignment due on Canvas. By 'ungraded' I mean that you will get credit if you complete the assignment and no credit if you don't. The purpose of these assignments is to get you thinking about the course material. You can miss one assignment without penalty.
- **Midterm:** 25%
  - The midterm will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and will be given via Canvas.
- **Final:** 30%
  - The final will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and will be given via Canvas. The final is not cumulative.

## Schedule & Readings

Note: It is preferable to complete readings for the week prior to that Monday's

class.

**Week 1**

Dowden, ch. 1

**Week 2**

Dowden, ch. 2 (pp. 24-39 only)

**Week 3**

Dowden, ch. 2 (pp. 40-68)

**Week 4**

Dowden, ch. 3

**Week 5**

Dowden, ch. 4

**Week 6**

Dowden, ch. 8

**Week 7**

Dowden, ch. 9

***Midterm on Wednesday, October 14***

**Week 8**

Dowden, ch 10; ch. 11 (pp. 355-61 only)

**Week 9**

Dowden, ch. 11 (pp. 361-85 only)

**Week 10**

Dowden, ch. 12

**Week 11**

Dowden, ch. 13

**Week 12**

Dowden, ch. 14

**Week 13**

Dowden, ch. 15 (pp. 532-49 only)

**Week 14**

Dowden, ch. 15 (pp. 550-78)

**Week 15**

***Final Exam on Friday, December 11***