

## Philosophy 130: Logic and Reasoning

### Fall 2018

#### **Basic Information**

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Section: **001H**

Instructor: Dr. Greg Lusk

E-mail: [greglusk@msu.edu](mailto:greglusk@msu.edu)

Office: 509 S. Kedzie Hall

Office hours: [Office Hours TBA]

Class Meeting Time and Place: Tues/Thurs 8:30-9:50AM 104 Berkey Hall

#### **Text**

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R.J. Fogelin & W. Sinnott-Armstrong. *Understanding Arguments: An Introduction to Informal Logic*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Cengage Learning, 2015.

- For the parts of the text that we shall cover see the course calendar document.
- Other readings may be assigned but will be provided.
- *I endeavor to keep the textbook costs for this course low. Speak with me if costs are a concern for you. Please do not buy the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the text (even if it is cheaper).*

#### **Course Outcomes**

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Logic and reasoning is crucial to self-growth and participation in a larger society. The ability to look inwards and assess one's evidence for actions and beliefs must be done according to some rules, otherwise, assessment risks arbitrariness. When explaining why we, as a society, should take certain actions, one must give compelling reasons that such actions achieve the goals of society. Logic and reasoning establishes guidelines for these interactions, while encouraging those in such interactions to communicate effectively and be intellectually humble, respecting the arguments of others. This course will set the foundation for these kinds of interactions.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify and reconstruct arguments in everyday life (e.g. those found in newspapers, science articles, political speeches, etc.).
- Distinguish between different kinds of arguments, particularly different types of inductive and deductive arguments.
- Specify ways that arguments might fail, and in particular, informal fallacies that are often committed.
- Construct good arguments.
- Identify and evaluate non-argumentative attempts at persuasion.

## **Required Work**

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**Exams – 40%**

**Homework Assignments (6) – 30%**

**In Class Assignments (6) – 30%**

**Exams:** Your average on the two exams is worth 40% of your final grade. The questions asked on the exam will be similar to class practice exercises, text exercises and exercises on homework and the in-class assignments. The midterm will cover Chapters 1-5, and will be given in class (check the calendar for the date). The final exam will cover all subsequent material and will be held Tuesday, Dec 11 2018 7:45am - 9:45am in 104 Berkey Hall.

**Homework Assignments:** There will be six homework assignments in addition to the reading required for class. Your average grade on these homework assignments will be worth 30% of your final grade. To relieve some anxiety, your lowest grade among the six homework assignments will be dropped from your homework average. An assignment not turned in at the beginning of class is counted as late.

**Six In-Class Assignments:** We will break into groups and work on exercises and projects that must be turned in by the conclusion of class. Assignments of this kind may be unannounced, **and they may not be made up if a student fails to turn in their assignment by the end of class.** Your average grade on these assignments will count towards 30% of your final grade, however, the lowest of grade of the six assignments will be dropped and will not count.

## **Policies**

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**Respect: All course policies, and course discussion, must flow from a fundamental commitment to respect one another.** I aim to treat my students with respect, and I expect students to treat me and fellow students with respect. In a discussion-based classroom, this translates to listening charitably, speaking thoughtfully, and taking responsibility for your actions. The following policies have been crafted with this kind of respect in mind.

**Inclusion: In university, we take on the challenge of examining our core values and beliefs, but in order to do so we must foster an inclusive, safe classroom environment.** All of us, myself included, need to feel safe before exposing or questioning our core values and beliefs. We need not always agree, but we must respect one another, allow one another to make mistakes, and—when appropriate—extend a helping hand. **If you ever feel excluded by me or a classmate, please talk to me or find some way to let me know. I will try to do better.**

**Attendance:** This is an honors section of the course, and thus I assume you all want to get the most out of it as you can. This means attending class. Therefore, I do not take attendance. Unsurprisingly, I have found that those who do not attend class have lower grades and leave the course dissatisfied with what they have learned. Students who miss class are responsible for missed announcements and getting their own notes. If a student misses an in-class assignment without a valid excuse they earn a zero on that assignment.

**Lateness:** It is best to turn in your homework assignments on time. The grade of any homework assignment not turned in on time without a valid excuse will be penalized by 25% of the assignment grade per calendar day it is late. Failure to complete in class assignments results in a grade of zero, as does failure to take an exam without a valid excuse.

**Valid Excuses:** Exams, homework assignments, and in class assignments may only be made up if the student has a valid excuse for their absence/failure to complete work. If the student is an athlete travelling, otherwise representing MSU at an event, or must miss class due to foreseen circumstances, they must contact me at least two weeks before their absence so that we can agree upon a plan for carrying out work in an alternate fashion. Late homework will only be excused in the event that the student can demonstrate that the duration of their sickness or illness was sufficiently prolonged to prevent them from completing the assignment (i.e. a doctor's note saying one visited the health center is not sufficient). Sickneses and illnesses will only be accepted as valid excuses with authentic documentation.

**Communication:** Please contact me only from your MSU.EDU email address or directly in D2L. You **MUST put PHIL130 in the beginning of the subject line** and then describe the issue (I run filters on my email, and this will ensure your email gets seen in the proper way). I endeavor to reply within 2 business days. Grades and non-textbook readings will be posted on D2L.

**Grading:** Grades on assessments and exams will be on a 100-pt. scale. Your final grade will be first determined on a 100-pt. scale, and then converted to a 4.0 scale according to the below tabulations. For example, a final grade of an 83% corresponds to a 3.0 and a 77% corresponds to a 2.5.

4.0=90% and above  
3.5=85--89%  
3.0=80--84%  
2.5=75--79%  
2.0=70--74%  
1.5=65--69%  
1.0=60--64%

**Accommodation and Special Consideration:** **Students needing accommodation or special consideration should contact me as early in the semester as possible.** This includes Students with Disabilities, athletes, or others requesting accommodation. Students with Disabilities requesting accommodation should register with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. RCPD is in 120 Bessey Hall and may be reached at 353-9642.

**Academic Honesty:** Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Philosophy Department adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, *Protection of Scholarship and Grades*; the all-University Policy on *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades*; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide* and/or the MSU Web site: [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu).) Therefore, unless authorized by me, you are expected to complete all course

assignments, including homework and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact me if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html> )

### **Class Time**

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Class time will be primarily spent going over text exercises, and reviewing or expanding on key points from the reading. It is imperative that students keep up with the rigorous pace of the course by doing the assigned readings in a timely manner, and by doing enough of the relevant practice exercises to get a feel for one's level of understanding BEFORE coming to class. Class time is your opportunity to clear up those things that you find mysterious or troublesome. So, coming to class unaware of what you don't know is not the best way to use class time. Frequently, we'll break up into groups, work on exercises, and then reconvene to compare answers and to discuss matters that arise.

Date	Topic	Readings For Class	Assignments
Thu, Aug 30,	Introduction		
Tue Sep 4	Language and Argument	Chapter 2 <i>The Web of Language</i>	
Thu Sep 6		Chapter 2 <i>The Web of Language</i>	
Tue Sep 11		Chapter 3 <i>The Language of Argument</i>	
Thu Sep 13		Chapter 3 <i>The Language of Argument</i>	
Tue Sep 18	Arguments and Their Uses	Chapter 1: <i>Uses of Arguments</i>	<b>Homework Assignment #1 Due</b>
Thu Sep 20		Chapter 4: <i>The Art of Close Analysis</i>	
Tue Sep 25	Argument Reconstruction	Chapter 5: <i>Deep Analysis</i>	
Thu Sep 27		Chapter 5: <i>Deep Analysis</i>	
Tue Oct 2		Chapter 5: <i>Deep Analysis</i>	
Thu Oct 4		Chapter 5: <i>Deep Analysis</i>	
Tue Oct 9	Midterm Review	Review	<b>Homework Assignment #2 Due</b>
Thu Oct 11	Mid-Term Exam	<b>Exam in Class (Covers Language and Argument, Arguments and Their Uses, and Argument Reconstruction)</b>	
Tue Oct 16	Deductive Logic	Chapter 6: <i>Propositional Logic</i>	
Thu Oct 18		Chapter 6: <i>Propositional Logic</i>	
Tue Oct 23		Chapter 6: <i>Propositional Logic</i>	<b>Homework Assignment #3 Due</b>
Thu Oct 25		Chapter 6: <i>Propositional Logic</i>	
Tue Oct 30		Chapter 6: <i>Propositional Logic</i>	
Thu Nov 1	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Tue Nov 6		Chapter 6: Propositional Logic/Review	<b>Homework Assignment #4 Due</b>
Thu Nov 8	Informal Fallacies	Chapter 13: <i>Fallacies of Vagueness</i>	
Tue Nov 13		Chapter 15: <i>Fallacies of Relevance</i>	
Thu Nov 15		Chapter 15: <i>Fallacies of Relevance</i>	
Tue Nov 20	Class Debate	Prep for In class Debate	<b>Homework Assignment #5 Due</b>
Thu Nov 22	FALL BREAK	FALL BREAK	NO CLASS
Tue Nov 27	Bullshit and Lies	Harry G. Frankfurt, <i>On Bullshit</i> . Princeton University Press (2005)	
Thu Nov 29		TBA	
Tue Dec 4		Review for Final	<b>Homework Assignment #6 Due</b>
Thu Dec 6	Conclusions	Wrap up	
Tue Dec 11	FINAL EXAM	<b>Tuesday, Dec 11 2018 7:45am - 9:45am in 104 Berkey Hall</b>	