

Syllabus

Fall 2016

PHI 2101

Instructor Contact

- Instructor: William Butchard, Ph.D.
- Office Hours: Correspondence via course messaging system
- E-mail: Please contact me through the course messaging system rather than regular email.

Course Information

- Course Name: Formal Logic I
- Course ID: PHI 2101, section OW61
- Credit Hours:3
- Semester/Year: Fall 2016
- Location: Online

Course Description

This course is an introduction to formal logic. The word ‘formal’ contrasts with ‘informal’. Informal logic is the study of arguments as they occur in natural languages, such as English. Formal logic, on the other hand, constructs a precise artificial language and casts arguments in terms of the rules of syntax for the language (syntax being the rules for combining symbols, as opposed to the semantics, i.e., meaning of the symbols). Formal logic, then, abstracts away from the actual content of arguments and analyzes them in terms of their form or structure. Formal logic, though it doesn’t capture all there is to good reasoning, supplies a precise, illuminating model of an important aspect of good reasoning as it occurs in natural language, namely, its formal structure.

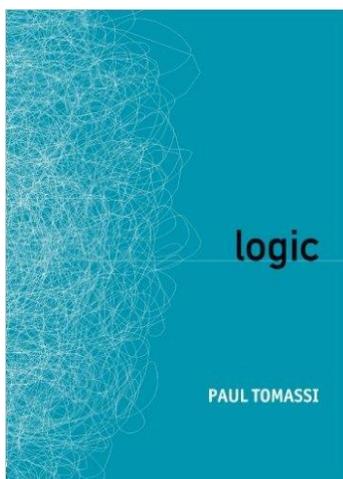
Course Objectives

If you are successful in the course, you will learn:

- To assess arguments for validity
- To produce formal proofs
- To evaluate and produce philosophical arguments
- To identify philosophically interesting features of language

Required Textbook

Paul Tomassi. Logic. Routledge (1999). ISBN-10: 0415166969



Course Requirements

There are three types of assignments in the course:

- Weekly Reading Quizzes
- Weekly Small-group Discussions
- Weekly Proof Sets

Course Scheduling

Every week has the same schedule:

- **Friday is a reading day. Start reading on Friday. You are less likely to digest all of the material in time for the quizzes if you wait until Monday.**
- **Reading quizzes are always due on Monday by 11:59 PM. They are open-book quizzes, but it is very important that you not try to complete the quizzes as you are reading a selection for the first time.** That approach is anxiety inducing and you will not have time to do well.
- Small group discussions have two parts. **The first part is always due on Tuesday by 11:59 PM, and the second part is always due on Thursday by 11:59 PM.** Don't expect to be able to complete Part 2 (which is commentary on your group mates' Part 1) as soon as you post Part 1 on Tuesday, as your group mates have until the deadline to complete Part 1. **Usually you will have to wait until Wednesday to complete Part 2.**
- **Proofs Sets are always due on Thursday by 11:59 PM.**

The first week is an exception to the regular schedule. There is a syllabus quiz due on Friday, by 11:59 PM. There is assigned reading for you to start on Friday. It is not in the textbook and will be provided to you by the end of the first week--it will help you prepare you for Week 2. Week 2 will follow the scheduling outlined above and the assignments that week will be based on the readings assigned during the first week.

There is a "Weekly Assignment Schedule" file under Files. It would be a good idea to print this and keep it in a place that will make it serve a reminder. Be especially careful about forgetting to complete Part 2 of the small-group discussions.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups

Missing a deadline is not something that can be taken lightly because of fairness and assignment security. **You should consider it very unlikely that you will be able to make up a missed assignment.** I can allow such make-up work only if your circumstances are truly extraordinary and you provide proper documentation in a reasonable amount of time. Excusable failures to meet deadlines include documented medical emergencies, deaths in the family, and some university sponsored activities. Telling me that you were sick or having a roommate write a note will not count as documentation. A conflict with prior travel plans, etc. or other personal commitments does not constitute an excuse. **All due dates are specified in Eastern Time, so if you are not in this time zone it your responsibility to compensate for the time difference.**

Since this is an online course, you need to have a well-functioning computer and decent internet. The weekly quizzes cannot be retaken if you have an electronic issue in the middle of one and as a result cannot complete the quiz. This rarely happens, but because of the possibility, **your two lowest quizzes will be dropped.** If you find yourself having computer problems, it is best to take care of it right away instead of dropping two grades and hoping it doesn't happen again.

It is the student's responsibility look to **verify that an attempt to submit a small-group discussion post was successful.** You should be able to see your comments once you submit them.

Attendance and Participation

There is no class to attend, since this is an online course. However, punctuality, participation, and civility still apply. I strongly encourage you to be a full participant in the class discussions. Don't worry about getting something wrong. If something is unclear to you, it is probably unclear to several other people, and your input may well help us focus in on the difficulty. Voicing your opinion, putting an idea on the table for examination, or just asking a question can be very helpful in a class discussion. Always remember to be civil towards people who have different beliefs from yours.

Small-group discussions are integral to this course. Your group mates' completion of these assignments depends on your timely submission of your individual post. Moreover, if you submit something on time but your submission lacks substance, you give your group mates little to work with, which affects their ability to do good work. **For this reason, any small-group discussion submission that is either late or lacks substance will receive no credit. Every discussion has two parts, and lateness or no substance with respect to either part earns you a 0 for that part. There is no partial credit for discussion submissions for which you submit something late or insubstantial. At least two replies to your group mates are required for Part 2, and if you submit only one reply or one of your replies lacks substance you will receive a 0 for**

Part 2. Please note that if you don't submit Part 1 you will not have access to the discussion in order to complete Part 2, which means a 0 for both parts. If you fail to submit Part 1 on time you can submit it late (for no credit) so that you can complete Part 2.

You are expected to have a meaningful (i.e., sincere and contentful) dialogue with the members of your small group in response to a prompt. Expressions of agreement, disagreement, or praise are insufficient. You are not commenting on writing style and effectiveness or the psychological impact a post had on you. You are not assessing your group mates' performance on the assignment. Focus on philosophical content. Examples of insubstantial comments are:

- Great post! Your example really cleared up the reading for me!
- I like your post, but it would have been better if you had provided an example.
- Your post is really similar to mine -- I guess we think alike!

Sometimes your group mates will reveal a failure to understand something important or make a leap that is not clearly justified. To point this out would be to engage them on a matter of substance. Also, a group mate's example might not really show what he or she thinks it does. To point this out with an explanation (and perhaps modify the example to make it work better) would be to engage your group mate on a matter of substance.

Keep in mind that your goal is to be helpful!

Grade Determination

There are 100 possible percentage points for the course. This percentage will be displayed in the course grade book throughout semester as you complete the assignments. The grade scale is as follows:

Letter Grade	Points
A	90 – 100%
B+	87 – 89%
B	80 – 86%
C+	77 – 79%
C	70 – 76%
D+	67 – 69%
D	60 – 66%
F	59% and below

The grade scale is subject to change at the instructor's discretion, depending on the final grade distribution. A change in the grade scale would only increase grades -- no grades would be reduced. Please do not contact the instructor at the end of the semester to ask whether you could be "bumped up" to a higher grade because you came so close or because you really need the grade. To do so is to ask someone to do something unethical.

There are three types of assignments for you to complete. Each category of assignment is worth a percentage of your final grade:

Assignment Group	Percentage of Grade
Weekly Textbook Quizzes	30%
Weekly Proof sets	35%
Weekly Small-Group Discussions	35%

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the [Office of Student Conduct](#) for further action. See the [UCF Golden Rule](#) for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Plagiarism includes copying and submitting as your own a passage from a text, the work of a fellow student; handing in a paper prepared by another as your own; using sources for writing your paper and not citing them in the paper. Plagiarism does cover materials found on web-sites. Note that it is possible to plagiarize even if you cite your sources, if, e.g., the wording is too close to the cited text.

If, in writing a paper, you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism or how to avoid plagiarism, please discuss the paper with me before turning it in.

Diversity and Inclusion

This class is an educational safe zone. It welcomes and respects the viewpoints of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities as well as all races, ethnicities, religions and abilities. All members of the learning community are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with [Student Disability Services](#), Ferrell Commons, 7F,

Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Important Notice for Financial Aid Recipients

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the academic activity below. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Activity: Complete the Syllabus Quiz.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.