PHI 2108-0M01: Critical Thinking
Fall 2015, Mondays, 6:00 p.m.- 7:15 p.m., PSY226

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Office hours:  M/W  3:45-5:45 and by appointment. Chat times online also available.
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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

The message below is from The Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs:

“As of Fall 2014, all faculty 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 following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course.... Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.”

Required Academic Activity:

Take the “Attendance Verification Quiz”, in Quizzes area of course website. This quiz will not count toward your course grade. It opens Monday, August 24, and closes Friday, August 28.

Course Description
This course is intended to introduce students to critical thinking, reasoning and analysis, from a broad perspective that includes common biases and barriers, highlights from cognitive studies, some formal elements of logic, as well as a review of common fallacies, and other topics. As an “M”, or mixed-mode course, much of the content of this course is taught online, with limited face-to-face time. In this course mode, it is not possible for me to convey all that you will need to learn during the weekly face-to-face meetings; much of that will need to be done from the online sources. Please try to reserve class meeting time for questions and for reviewing the most difficult material. You are also welcome and encouraged to see me during office hours for any questions you may have or any additional help you may need. From time to time, I will also hold optional, online chats, through the course website.

Required Texts
You are not required to purchase any materials for this course. All required reading materials are available free, electronically through the course website. Note that many of these materials are subject to copyright restrictions, and are only to be used for the purposes of this course. They are not to be sold, shared, or otherwise disseminated except for the purposes of this course.

Preparation
Students are required to carefully read and prepare the assigned materials and remain current with all the assigned lessons, readings, tests, announcements, practice quizzes, lectures, and other
components of this course. Checking your email regularly is very important, as I will send course announcements to you this way (see notes about e-mail, below). With respect to the material itself, critical thinking is a subject that requires a sustained and cumulative effort. New lessons build on previous material; therefore, you are well-advised to keep up with the new material as it is released. Failure to read your assignments and work through the lessons in a timely fashion will make it increasingly difficult to regain lost ground.

**Makeups**
I do not treat makeups as a matter of routine; I grant them only when clearly justified and documented. If I do grant a makeup, depending on the circumstances, your makeup may be at the end of the course, and will likely be more difficult than the original test. Occasionally, when a makeup isn’t practical, I may re-average your existing tests, though, again, only with adequate justification for your absence. You should generally assume that missed tests will receive a score of “0” and will count. On the other hand, if you know ahead of time that you will need to miss a test, see me well in advance of the test date, and, if possible, I will arrange for you to take the test early. Cases of extreme or extended duress will be handled on a case-by-case basis, at the instructor’s discretion, provided the student discusses the issue with me in a responsible and timely fashion and can provide some documentation of the difficulty. (For example: E-mailing me late in the semester to tell me you missed three tests because you were sick or otherwise unable to take a test is neither responsible nor timely). Remember: Your lowest test grade will be dropped, so a single missed test isn’t cause for panic, assuming you do well with the rest.

**Grades**
I use the plus/minus grading convention (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F)
- Best 4 of 5 Tests (20% each, drop lowest/keep 4 best test scores): 80%
- Final Exam: 20%. Cannot be dropped.

**E-mail**
E-mail is an essential part of this course, and you are responsible for its contents. The university requires that student’s use their Knight’s e-mail account for all official university communication, such as course communications. Please make sure to check it, as you are responsible for anything I send via e-mail. Please note that I use regular e-mail [Jennifer.Mundale@ucf.edu or embodiedmind@earthlink.net], not Canvas email, because I find regular e-mail more reliable and convenient. Please use the following guidelines in your correspondence:

- Use proper grammar and punctuation in your e-mail messages. Don’t use casual e-mail-ese, and don’t write as if it were a text message. We all make a few errors from time to time, but I will not respond to messages that are excessively sloppy. Have enough respect for yourself and your words to write them carefully; if you don’t, others likely won’t either.

- Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply, not counting weekends.

- Include descriptive "Subject" headings: something that is descriptive and relevant to the subject of your e-mail. If you just hit reply to my last message, be sure to change the subject; otherwise, it bespeaks lack of proper attention to what you are attempting to say, and it won’t readily catch my attention.
- Do not discuss grades or anything confidential in e-mail. Likewise, I am prohibited from sending your your grades or test scores in e-mail, as per UCF’s privacy rules and regulations. If you ask for your grades or scores in email, you will not receive a reply.

- Include your name and your class on your e-mail messages (I might have hundreds of students in a given semester, and surely more than one class, so it is wise to identify yourself).

**Technical Resources**
- Learning Online - [http://learn.ucf.edu](http://learn.ucf.edu) This URL also includes access to information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.
If your own equipment fails, there are many computer labs on campus and virtually every public library offers Internet access.

**Academic Dishonesty**
Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty are a disgrace. If caught, I will punish cheaters to the fullest extent allowed through the Office of Student Conduct. If you don’t have enough integrity to do your own work, drop the class now and re-examine your purpose in life and at UCF. The official UCF guidelines can be found here for your reference: [http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu](http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu).

**Important UCF Dates, Fall 2015:**
- August 24 Classes Begin
- August 27 Drop/Swap Deadline on myUCF
- August 28 Add Deadline on myUCF
- September 7 Labor Day Holiday (no classes)
- November 2 Withdrawal Deadline
- November 11 Veteran’s Day Holiday (no classes)
- November 26-28 Thanksgiving Holiday (no classes)
- December 7 Last Day of Class
- December 8 Study Day (no classes)
- December 9-15 Final Exam Period
- December 18-19 Fall Commencement
# Course Calendar, Fall 2015, PHI 2108, Critical Thinking

Note: Lessons and Practice quizzes may open early, but the calendar below tells you where you should be by every class meeting and also tells you when you will be tested over which lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Meeting Dates</th>
<th>Schedule of Lessons, Readings, and In-Class Tests</th>
<th>Practice Quizzes</th>
<th>Special Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lessons and Readings are online, and to be studied on your own during the week. With the exception of the first class meeting, please have readings completed before class.</td>
<td>These are online, for practice and review only (not part of your final grade). Only In-Class tests count toward your final grade, unlike the online practice quizzes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Review Syllabus, begin preview of Lessons 1 and 2. Be sure to take the <a href="#">Attendance Verification Quiz</a> before end of Friday, August 28</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #2 Over Lessons 3-4</td>
<td>Th., Aug. 27, 11:59 p.m., is Drop/Swap Deadline, and Fri., Aug. 28, 11:59 p.m., is Add deadline.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Lessons 1 and 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Lessons 3 and 4 (No class meeting, but continue reading on your own).</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #3 Over Lessons 5-6</td>
<td>Monday, Sept. 7, is Labor Day Holiday.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Review and Discuss Lessons 1- 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td><strong>TEST 1 (In Class)</strong> Over Lessons 1, 2, 3 and 4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #3 Over Lessons 5-6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>October 12</td>
<td><strong>TEST 2 (In Class)</strong> Over Lessons 5 and 6</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #4 Over Lessons 7-8</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>November 2</td>
<td><strong>TEST 3 (In Class)</strong> Over Lessons 7 and 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Withdrawal Deadline Nov. 2 (ends at 11:59 p.m.)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>Lessons 9 and 10</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #5 Over Lessons 9-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 16</td>
<td><strong>TEST 4 (In Class)</strong> Over Lessons 9 and 10</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving Holiday, November 26 &amp; 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 23</td>
<td>Lesson 11</td>
<td>Practice Quiz #6 Over Lessons 11-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>Lesson 12</td>
<td></td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>December 7 Last Day of Classes</td>
<td><strong>TEST 5 (In Class)</strong> Over Lessons 11 and 12</td>
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**FINAL EXAM WEEK:** Wednesday, December 09, 2015 - Tuesday, December 15, 2015
The Final Exam for this class was not automatically assigned a time because it is a “W” course. I requested a final exam time just before the start of the semester and will provide that when the Registrar assigns it to me.
Lesson Topics

1 – Personal Barriers, Enculturation, Ego Defenses, Attribution Errors, other Common Thinking Errors

2 – Salience and Attribution

3 – Context Dependence: Contrast Effects, Primacy vs. Recency Effects, Halo Effect


5 – Language: Structuring of Thought, Linguistic Determinism Debate, Metaphor, Connotation vs. Denotation

6 – Informal Fallacies and Sample Deceitful Techniques

7 – Basic Logical Concepts

8 – Validity and Counterexample

9 – Categorical Syllogisms

10 – Mood (not what you think), and Figure (also not what you think) in Categorical Syllogisms

11 – Venn Diagrams

12 – Validity, Invalidity, and Venn Diagrams

Extra Credit (Optional) Two lessons, at end of course – Critical Thinking Optional Lesson Part I and Part II. The material from these two optional lessons introduces Propositional Logic, and will be included in Extra Credit questions on the final exam. **This material will only appear as extra credit on the final exam, and is not required.** There is also a practice quiz for this material, and that practice quiz is also optional, and included just for review.

Advisory Note: Many students find the material in the second half of the course (Lessons 7-12) more difficult than the material from the first half of the course. Please be aware of this, and do not allow yourself to start missing class, to neglect the material, or to fall behind at that point in the semester. This is a natural progression in the material itself, so please be mindful of it, and see me if you find you are having difficulties. I will be happy to assist you during office hours or by appointment.