

**University of Central Florida**  
**PHI 2108: Critical Thinking**  
**Syllabus, Summer 2016, v. 20160515**



**Course Information**

- Title: Critical Thinking
- Course/number: PHI 3323/50950
- Credit hours: 3.0
- Term: Summer Session A, May 16 – June 24, 2016
- Mode: Web

**Instructor Information**

- Name: Luis H. Favela, Ph.D. (Please refer to me as “Dr. Favela” or “Professor Favela”)
- Department website: <http://philosophy.cah.ucf.edu/staff.php?id=1017>
- Contact: Send messages via Webcourses Conversations. Unless otherwise stated, allow 24 hours for a response.
- Office hours: By appointment. Message me and we can arrange a meeting via Skype. I will generally be available to schedule meetings between 10:00 am – 4:00 pm EST, Monday – Friday.

**Course Description**

- Catalogue description: The logic of conversation, informal fallacies, and reasoning about human action.
- Detailed description: This is an introductory course in critical thinking. It assumes that the student does not have prior knowledge of different types of reasoning, methods of interpretation, or forms and fallacies of argument. The primary objective of the course is to help the student be a better thinker both in their schoolwork and in their lives outside the classroom. Although the student will have some exposure to formal logic, how people think, or how to win a debate. What this course will expose the student to are general rules of argumentation, how to organize one’s position in regard to a topic, and argumentative fallacies. Upon completion of the course, the student ought to have improved their ability to clearly and coherently express their thoughts and identify arguments and fallacies. Everyday thoughts, discussions, and decisions do not have to be called “arguments” to be such. The ability to pick the good ideas and opinions from the bad ones is a skill that can be learned. These are the skills you will begin to learn in this course.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- Students will be able to *define* concepts related to critical thinking.
- Students will be able to *identify* errors of reasoning.
- Students will be able to *explain* criterion for good arguments.
- Students will be able to *articulate* the relation of language to clear thinking.

**Notes Regarding Web Format and Time Commitment**

- Web format: Although the material you learn in this web-based course is the same as a face-to-face course, there is one major difference. The major difference is that this course is largely independent and requires a high degree of time management on your part. It is your

responsibility to login to Webcourses multiple times per week and keep track of assignment availability and due dates.

- Time commitment: This is a three-credit course over a six-week period and is designed to cover the same amount of material as would be covered over a typical 16-week semester. The expectation of a three-credit course over a 16-week semester is that there will be three hours of class time each week (48 hours for semester) and two hours (minimum) of study time for every hour of class time (96 hours for semester), for a total of 144 hours devoted to each class. Although a web-based format, this course will require *at least 24 hours per week* of your time over the six-week period. These 24 hours (minimum) will include “class” time in the form of students reading textbook and slides (8 hours per week) and study time in the form of reviewing notes, etc. (16 hours per week).

### Course Materials

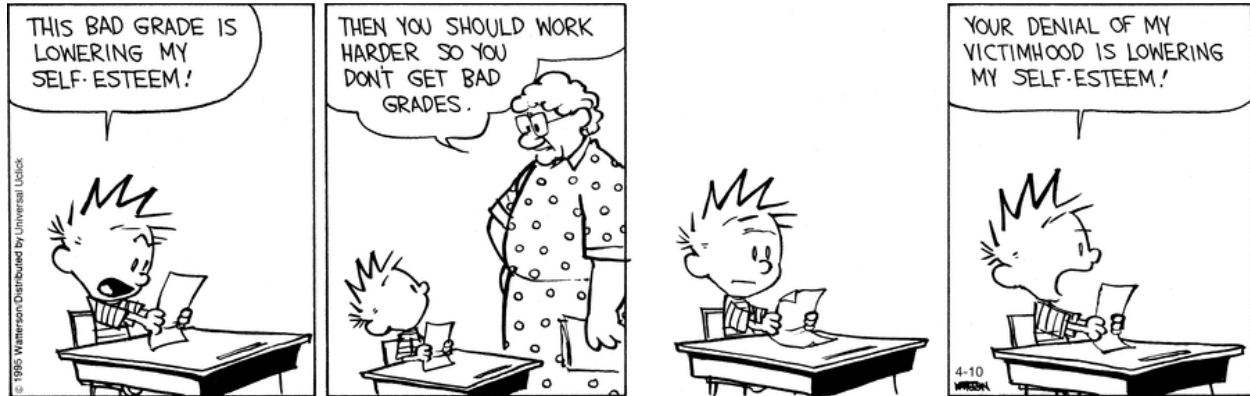
- Required textbook: Tittle, Peg. (2011). *Critical thinking: An appeal to reason*. New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN# 9780415997140
- All other required readings will be available via Webcourses.
- Recommended reading: If you have not been exposed to argumentative structure or argumentative fallacies—which is fine because this is an introductory level course—and you want additional sources to help you understand the course material, then I recommend the following book: Weston, Anthony. (2009). *A rulebook for arguments* (4th edition). Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing. ISBN# 9780872209541

### Course Requirements

- **Required Academic Activity**
  - All instructors 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.
  - Activity: Signed syllabus:
    - After you read the syllabus, sign the last page as an indicator that you understand the expectations and policies of this course.
    - Options for signing and submitting page—it is your responsibility to figure out which option works best for you:
      - Print, fill out, scan and send via Webcourses as message attachment.
      - Print, fill out, take a photo and send via Webcourses as message attachment.
      - Separate last page of syllabus PDF, fill out, add electronic signature, and send via Webcourses as message attachment.
    - Available 8:00 am EST, Monday, May 16
    - Due 4:00 pm EST, Friday, May 20
- Quizzes
  - There will be 10 quizzes.
  - Quiz questions will be based on material from the textbook and slides.
  - Quiz questions will be similar to textbook practice and review questions.
  - Students will have a 48-hour window to take each quiz.

- Exams
  - There will be two exams: Exam 1 will cover about the first half of the course material and Exam 2 will cover about the second half of the course material.
  - Exam questions are based on practice and review questions from the textbook.
  - Students will have a 48-hour window to take each exam.
- Note: You are responsible for all reading assignments. Unless stated otherwise (e.g., “optional” readings), anything assigned to you is potential quiz or exam material.

## Grading



- Quizzes
  - 10 quizzes, 30 points each, 300 points total
  - Combined 50% of total grade, each quiz 5% of total grade
- Exams
  - Exam 1, 150 points, 25% of total grade
  - Exam 2, 150 points, 25% of total grade
  - Combined both exams are 50% of total grade
- Total
  - 600 points
    - 540 – 600 = A
    - 480 – 539 = B
    - 420 – 479 = C
    - 360 – 419 = D
    - 000 – 359 = F
  - The following example demonstrates how +/- are assigned:
    - B- = 80, 81, 82%
    - B = 83, 84, 85, 86%
    - B+ = 87, 88, 89%
  - Grades are *not* rounded, for example: 80.1 = B-, 86.6 = B, 89.9 = B+.
  - There are no A+ or F+ grades.
- Grade distributions: The final grades will not be curved.
- Extra credit: There is no extra credit.
- “Incomplete” grades: The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected

emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. As the instructor for this course, I am the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the “I” will automatically be recorded as an “F” on your transcript.

- Extensions and late assignments
  - In general, no extensions will be allowed or late assignments accepted. (Really.)
  - However, extensions and late assignments will be considered for exceptional circumstances (e.g., family or medical emergencies) if appropriate documentation can be provided (e.g., doctor’s note, funeral program, etc.).
  - If an assignment is accepted late, then it will be deducted 5% of the total possible point value of the assignment for every 12-hour block of time, including weekends. For example, if an assignment is due Monday at 11:59 pm and it is submitted on Tuesday at 12:01 am, then that assignment will lose 5%; if it is turned in on Tuesday at 1:00 pm, then it will lose 10%; and so on.
- Grade dissemination: You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. If you need help accessing myUCF Grades, see: <http://registrar.ucf.edu/access-student-records>.

### Course Policies

- Contact procedures
  - Contact instructor by sending messages via Webcourses Conversations. Unless otherwise stated, allow 24 hours for a response.
  - Professionalism: I strongly believe that the university is a professional environment and that you and I are in a professional relationship. As such, be professional when you message me—for example, begin your message with “Hello Dr. Favela” and not “Hey you, can I have...” In addition, write complete sentences, be clear and concise, and reread messages before sending them. I will give one warning and then stop responding to your messages if they are unprofessional and/or discourteous.
  - In-person contact: I am not available for in-person meetings. However, if an issue comes up such that you prefer to talk instead of exchanging messages, then contact me and we can arrange to meet via Skype. I will generally be available to schedule meetings between 10:00 am – 4:00 pm EST, Monday – Friday.
- Academic integrity and plagiarism
  - As reflected in the UCF creed (<http://creed.ucf.edu>), integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University’s Rules of Conduct (see [www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu](http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu)).
  - Plagiarism: Many incidents of plagiarism result from students’ lack of understanding about what constitutes plagiarism. However, you are expected to familiarize yourself with UCF’s policy on plagiarism. All work you submit must be your own scholarly and creative efforts. UCF’s Golden Rule defines plagiarism as follows: “whereby another’s work is used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student’s own.”

- **Course accessibility:** It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities that may impact learning in this class. If anyone believes the design of this course poses barriers to effectively participating and/or demonstrating learning in this course, please meet with me—with or without a Student Accessibility Services (SAS) accommodation letter—to discuss reasonable options or adjustments. During our discussion, I may suggest the possibility/necessity of your contacting SAS (Ferrell Commons 185; 407-823-2371; sas@ucf.edu) to talk about academic accommodations. You are welcome to talk with me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk at least one week prior to the need for any modifications.
- **Syllabus adjustments:** The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to all parts of the syllabus during the course. If any adjustments are made, the instructor will inform students of such changes.

**Important Dates** < <http://calendar.ucf.edu/2016/summer> >

- Classes begin: May 16
- Academic activity: May 16 – 20
- Drop deadline: May 19
- Withdrawal deadline: June 9
- Classes end: June 24
- Grades available: July 1

**Reading Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Readings: Chapters (page numbers)</b>
1	May 16 – 22	- Syllabus - 1: Critical thinking (2-16) - 2: The nature of argument (22-65)
2	May 23 – 29	- 3: The structure of argument (82-94) - 4: Relevance (109-151)
3	May 30 – June 5	- 5: Language (169-206)
4	June 6 – 12	- 6: Truth and acceptability (218-274)
5	June 13 – 19	- 7: Generalization, analogy, and general principle (284-306)
6	June 20 – 26	- 8: Inductive argument: Causal reasoning (324-358)

**Assignment Schedule**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Material</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Quiz 1	Syllabus and chapter 1	12pm W 5/18 – 12pm F 5/20
Quiz 2	Chapter 2	12pm F 5/20 – 12pm Su 5/22
Quiz 3	Chapter 3	12pm W 5/25 – 12pm F 5/27
Quiz 4	Chapter 4	12pm F 5/27 – 12pm Su 5/29
Quiz 5	Chapter 4	12pm W 6/1 – 12pm F 6/3
Quiz 6	Chapter 5	12pm F 6/3 – 12pm Su 6/5
Quiz 7	Chapter 5	12pm W 6/8 – 12pm F 6/10
Exam 1	Chapters 1 – 5	12pm F 6/10 – 12pm Su 6/12
Quiz 8	Chapter 6	12pm W 6/15 – 12pm F 6/17
Quiz 9	Chapter 7	12pm F 6/17 – 12pm Su 6/19
Quiz 10	Chapter 8	12pm W 6/22 – 12pm F 6/24
Exam 2	Chapters 6 – 8	12pm F 6/24 – 12pm Su 6/26

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Please fill out and sign this sheet once you have read the syllabus, detach this page, and turn it in during the first week of class (or your first day if you transferred in late).

I have read the syllabus. I understand and agree to follow all course policies in the syllabus.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_