

## PHI 2108-0M01 (Mixed Mode): Critical Thinking

Fall 2018, M/W 9:30 a.m.- 10:20 a.m., ENG2 203

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Mundale

**Office:** Dept. of Philosophy, Psychology Building, Room 230

**Office hours:** M/W 1:30-3:30, and by appointment. Chats as needed, or by request.

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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.”*

**To document your activity, take the “Attendance Verification Quiz”,** in the Quizzes area of course website. This quiz will not count toward your course grade. It is open the first week of class.

**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 routinely grant makeups. 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.

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). If you miss a test, you will receive a score of zero for the missed test. **Remember: Your lowest test grade will be dropped, so a 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, in class, cumulative, will not be dropped: 20%

### **E-mail (NOT THROUGH THE COURSE WEBSITE!).**

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, not Canvas email, because I find regular e-mail more reliable and convenient. If you send something to me in Canvas email, assume that I will not see it. Send it to my email address directly.

- 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 cannot send you your grades or test scores in e-mail, as faculty are prohibited from doing so by privacy rules and regulations.

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

### **Technical Resources.**

- UCF Home Page - a search will help find UCF resources - <http://www.ucf.edu>

- Helpdesk - <http://helpdesk.ucf.edu/> - You can also call the helpdesk at 407-823-5117.

- Techrangers -<https://techrangers.cdl.ucf.edu/> , or 407-823-3808

- Learning Online - <http://learn.ucf.edu> This URL also includes access to information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.

**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>).

**Extra Credit.** There will be occasional opportunities for extra credit. One major opportunity for extra credit comes at the end of course and draws from the modules labeled 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* only. There is also a practice quiz for this material, and that practice quiz, of course, is also optional.

**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.

#### **Important Dates on the UCF Academic Calendar.**

Last Day to Drop and Request Full Refund	Thursday, August 23, 2018
Drop/Swap Deadline on myUCF	Thursday, August 23, 2018 11:59 PM
Add Deadline on myUCF	Friday, August 24, 2018 11:59 PM
Withdrawal Deadline	Friday, October 26, 2018 11:59 PM
Classes End	Saturday, December 1, 2018
Final Examination Period	December 3-December 8, 2018
Grades Due From Faculty (at 12 noon)	Wednesday, December 12, 2018

#### **Holidays.**

Labor Day	Monday, September 3, 2018
Veterans Day	Monday, November 12, 2018
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 22, 2018 -Saturday, November 24, 2018

#### **Lesson Topics.** (Detailed schedule posted immediately under these topics).

- 1 – Personal Barriers, Enculturation, Ego Defenses, Attribution Errors, other Common Reasoning Errors
- 2 – Salience and Attribution
- 3 – Context Dependence: Contrast Effects, Primacy vs. Recency Effects, Halo Effect
- 4 – Selective Perception: Playing Card Experiments, Potent Expectations, The Dartmouth vs. Princeton Game, Hostile Media 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

### Course Schedule

- Listed readings are to be completed before their scheduled class in order to make best use of class time.
- Practice Quizzes and Sample Tests, online, are only for practice, and do not count toward your grade.
- All graded semester tests are taken in class, not online. (No quizzes or sample tests taken online count toward your grade).

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**Week 1**

M August 20: Review Syllabus, begin preview of Lessons 1 and 2.  
W August 22: Continue Lessons 1 and 2

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**Week 2**

M August 27: Lessons 1 and 2.  
W August 29: Lessons 1 and 2, cont'd.

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**Week 3**

M September 3: Labor Day Holiday  
W September 5: Lessons 3 and 4.

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**Week 4**

M September 10: Review Lessons 1 through 4. Complete Practice Quiz #1 over Lessons 1-4.  
W September 12: TEST 1, IN CLASS, over Lessons 1, 2, 3 and 4.

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**Week 5**

M September 17: Lessons 5 and 6.  
W September 19: Lessons 5 and 6, cont'd.

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**Week 6**

M September 24: Review Lessons 5 and 6. Complete Practice Quiz #2 over Lessons 5 and 6.  
W September 26: TEST 2, IN CLASS over Lessons 5 and 6.

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**Week 7**

M October 1: Lessons 7 and 8  
W October 3: Lessons 7 and 8, cont'd.

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**Week 8**

M October 8: Lessons 7 and 8, cont'd.  
W October 10: Review. Complete Practice Quiz #3 over Lessons 7 and 8.

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**Week 9**

M October 15: TEST 3, IN CLASS over Lessons 7 and 8.  
W October 17: Lessons 9 and 10.

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**Week 10**

M October 22: Lessons 9 and 10, cont'd.

W October 24: Lessons 9 and 10, cont'd

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**Week 11**

M October 29: Review. Complete Practice Quiz #4 over Lessons 9 and 10.

W October 31: TEST 4, IN CLASS over Lessons 9 and 10.

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**Week 12**

M November 5: Lessons 11 and 12

W November 7: Lessons 11 and 12, cont'd.

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**Week 13**

M November 12: Veteran's Day holiday.

W November 14: Lessons 11 and 12, cont'd.

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**Week 14**

M November 19: Review. Complete Practice Quiz #5 over Lessons 11 and 12.

W November 21: This class is one day before Thanksgiving. There will be class, but it will consist of an in-class extra-credit opportunity.

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**Week 15**

M November 26: TEST 5, IN CLASS over Lessons 11 and 12.

W November 28: Cumulative review for Final Exam.

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**FINAL EXAM, IN CLASS.** We were not assigned a standard exam time in the University schedule, so I requested an exam time from the Registrar. I will announce it when I receive it.

\*\*\* The final exam is cumulative, and will not be dropped. \*\*\*