

PHI 171: Critical Thinking
Winterlude Session, 2020—2021: Aug. 31st—Dec. 9th
9:30-10:50am, Watson
Instructor: Dante Dauksz
Email: ddauksz@syr.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 4:00-5:00 PM, via zoom & by appointment

Course Description: Critical thinking involves making informed judgments about important issues. The main goal of this course is to introduce students to the basic methods of critical thinking. In this course, students will learn how to articulate their beliefs clearly and concisely, to critically analyze and evaluate arguments, construct and defend their own positions, and reason persuasively. By developing these skills students will be better able to make informed judgments on issues they encounter in every facet of their lives, such as ethical and political issues; they will also learn to evaluate information and determine whether the reasoning it contains is correct or incorrect, whether that information comes from a teacher, politician, employer, book, advertisement, magazine article, movie or television program.

Required Texts: Students are required to purchase the following text for the course:

Think, 5th Edition, Judith Boss (McGraw-Hill).

I recommend that you purchase the online version of the text directly from McGraw-Hill through the following link: www.mcgrawhillconnect.com. The online version of the textbook is *considerably* cheaper than a hard copy. If you prefer to read a hard copy, there are copies available online at Amazon. You will need to have an access code to Connect online. All of the assignments will be done through this program. I have attached instructions as to how to access this program through blackboard under the 'information' tab on the blackboard page for the course.

Contacting the Instructor: If you have a question about the course, the material in the textbook, or an assignment, you should contact me directly by email at ddauksz@syr.edu (please include "PHI 171" in the subject line).

Assessment: The total number of points available for the course is 650. There are three exams. Each exam is worth 100 points. The three exams are collectively worth 300 points. There are also 10 homework assignments, each worth 30 points, for a total of 300 points. A total of 50 points will be allotted for classroom participation. Your final grade will be determined on the percentage of this numerical grade according to the standard university grade scale.

A:	93%—100%	C+:	77%—79%
A-:	90%—92%	C-:	74%—76%

B+: 87%—89%	C: 70%—73%
B: 84%—86%	D: 69%—60%
B-: 80%—83%	F: 59%—Below

Homework: Much of what you learn in this course you will learn by doing the exercises. It will be difficult to do well in this course without considerable, mostly successful, work on the exercises. Turning in the exercises will also make it possible to find out about your mistakes before the exam rather than after. All of the homework assignments must be submitted by the due date (see below). I will not accept late assignments unless there are extenuating circumstances and you can provide supporting documentation. In addition, you are only allowed to submit a completed homework assignment once: there are no resubmissions allowed.

Exams: The exams will consist of both true/false questions, multiple choice and problem sets. Each exam will only ask you questions from the assignments in that unit: exam #1 will only contain questions from chapters 2—6; exam #2 will only contain questions from Chapter 8; and exam #3 will only contain questions from chapters 7 & 9—13.

Schedule: This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and on blackboard.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Reading/Assignment:</u>
Aug 31:	Introduction Syllabus; Purchase Online-Textbook
Sept 2:	<i>Think</i> , Ch. 1 “Critical Thinking: Why Its Important,” pp. 1-32
Sept 9:	Class Cancelled

Unit #1

Sept 14:	<i>Think</i> , Ch. 6 “Recognizing, Analyzing, and Constructing Arguments,” pp. 168-203
Sept 16:	<i>Think</i> , Ch. 6, Continued
Sept 21:	<i>Think</i> , Ch. 6, Continued Complete Assignment #1
Sept 23:	<i>Think</i> , Ch. 3 “Language and Communication,” pp. 64-95

- Sept 28: *Think*, Ch. 3, Continued
- Sept 30: *Think*, Ch. 3, Continued
Complete Assignment #2
- Oct 5: *Think*, Ch. 2 “Reason and Emotion,” pp. 36-63
Think, Ch. 4 “Knowledge, Evidence and Errors in Thinking,” pp. 100-133
- Oct 7: *Think*, Ch. 5 “Informal Fallacies,” pp. 134-167
- Oct 12: *Think*, Ch. 5, Continued
Complete Assignment #3
- Oct 14: **Exam #1**

Unit #2

- Oct 19: *Think*, Ch. 8 “Deductive Arguments,” pp. 238-266
- Oct 21: *Think*, Ch. 8, Continued
- Oct 26: *Think*, Ch. 8, Continued
- Oct 28: *Think*, Ch. 8, Continued
Complete Assignment #4
- Nov 2: *Think*, Ch. 8, Continued
- Nov 4: *Think*, Ch. 8, Continued
Complete Assignment #5
- Nov 9: *Think*, Ch. 7 “Inductive Arguments,” pp. 204-237
- Nov 11: *Think*, Ch. 7, Continued
- Nov 16: *Think*, Ch. 7, Continued
Complete Assignment #6
- Nov 18: **Exam #2**
- Nov 23: **Thanksgiving Break**
- Nov 25: **Thanksgiving Break**

Unit #3

- Nov 30: *Think*, Ch. 9 "Ethics & Moral Decision making," pp. 268-301
Think, Ch. 10 "Marketing and Advertising," pp. 302-330
Complete Assignment #7 & #8
- Dec 2: *Think*, Ch. 11 "Mass Media," pp. 332-359
Complete Assignment #9
- Dec 7: *Think*, Ch. 12 "Science," pp. 360-393
Think, Ch. 13 "Law and Politics," pp. 394-423
Complete Assignment #10
- Dec 9: **Exam #3**

Technical Support: If you have any difficulties accessing or using the links to the weekly readings and assignments, please call McGraw-Hill Digital Care Toll-Free Number: 1 (800) 331-5094 Available: Sunday 12-11 PM; Monday-Thursday 8 AM to 11 PM; Friday 8 AM to 6 PM; and Saturday 10 AM to 4 PM. Please remember that the instructor and other people in the Philosophy Department office cannot help you with technical issues; you must contact McGraw-Hill directly. I know these sorts of difficulties can be frustrating, but please remain calm, don't panic, call the number above and they will help you. If you are not able to submit an assignment by the due date because of technical problems, just email me to explain what happened, and when I am able to I will contact McGraw-Hill and be sure that the problem is fixed and allow you to submit the assignment at a later date. I will not penalize you for technical problems you experience, so please remember to be patient and remain calm.

Disability-Related Accommodations: If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498, TDD: (315) 443-1371 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS and review those accommodations with me. Accommodations, such as exam administration or permission to use a laptop computer in class, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>.

Religious Observances Policy: SU religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes and by the submission deadline for flexibly formatted classes.

Academic Integrity: Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university policy. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first offense by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of Academic Integrity Policy. The standard sanction for a first offense by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

That said, it is OK to work with others in doing the homework exercises. But you should actively participate in all work that you hand in. Copying answers worked out by someone else violates academic ethics. In addition, you won't learn very much that way. In examinations it is against academic regulations to copy from the work of others, or to copy from or consult prepared materials other than those provided with the examination. It is equally unacceptable to provide help to others, and you are expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent copying of your work. Academic dishonesty is an extremely serious offense, and may result in expulsion from the University. It is important that examinations be free of cheating, and it is almost as important that everyone be confident that this is so. For this reason it is not enough that you should avoid cheating; you should also take care that no sane person can believe that you are cheating. During exams, do not sit near anyone you know, and do not talk to anyone. This will help to prevent any appearance of collaboration.

Academic integrity is taken very seriously by me, and any suspected violation will be investigated and sanctions imposed if a violation is determined to have

occurred. Intentional violations will typically result in a “Disciplinary F” for the course.