

# PHI 171 Critical Thinking

TuTh 12:30PM - 1:25PM

Lyman Hall 132

## Instructor:

Erica Shumener

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Office: Hall of Languages (office 530)

## Teaching Assistants:

Shiyu Chen

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Office Hours: TBA in section

Bertram Probyn

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Office Hours: TBA in section

**Course Description and Objectives:** When are you justified in accepting a claim as true? What constitutes adequate evidence for a claim, and when is such evidence needed? What standards should be used for assessing sources of information?

The purpose of this course is to answer the above questions and to improve your critical thinking and writing skills. In studying critical thinking, you enhance your ability to draw logically correct conclusions from the evidence available, learn concepts and principles that can be used to decide whether a conclusion follows from the reasons given for it, and build skills of persuasive writing. You also learn to express your views with clarity and support, to consider and assess alternative points of view, and to structure your writing in a way that is appropriate to your logical goals.

**Course Textbook:** Govier, Trudy. *A Practical Study of Argument* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition, enhanced).

How should you acquire this book?

- I suggest renting an E-Textbook for the semester through [Cengage's website](#). There is no need to rent the "Cengage Unlimited" option.
- You can also rent the book through [Amazon](#), but that option is slightly more expensive. Amazon also has new and used paperback copies for sale, but they are also more expensive.
- Another website, "[Vital Source](#)" also has a rental option that comes with a "read aloud" feature if that's of interest (It is slightly more expensive than Cengage, but comparable to Amazon's e-rental).
- I will place a version of the textbook on reserve at Bird Library. I will inform the class once the reserve copy becomes available.

## Course Assessment:

<u>In-Class Exam 1:</u> 20%
<u>In-Class Exam 2:</u> 20%
<u>Take-Home Final Exam 3:</u> 25%
<u>Blackboard Quizzes:</u> 25% Quizzes will be found on the main Blackboard site under "Quizzes". There will be at least 10 quizzes throughout the semester (Please see Blackboard for the Quiz Schedule)

The quizzes will be due at 11:59pm EST on their due date.

A practice quiz is available on Blackboard. Once we have started discussing chapter 1, I suggest that you take it.

Attendance and Participation in recitation section: 10%

(Please consult Bertie or Shiyu for more details)

#### Notes:

- Your lowest quiz score from the semester will be dropped.
- The structure and nature of the exams will be discussed closer to the exam dates.
- While attendance in lecture is not mandatory, you should treat any material discussed in the lecture (regardless of whether it appears elsewhere) as eligible for inclusion in quizzes and exams.

**Late Policy:** Late quizzes will **never** be accepted. And late exams will not be accepted in general. But if you have an emergency and will not be able to turn in your exam or quiz on time, please contact both me and your T.A. as soon as possible.

#### Grading Scale:

94% - 100%. A

90% - <94% A-

87.5% - <90% B+

83.5% - <87.5% B

80% - <83.5% B-

77.5% - <80% C+

73.5% - <77.5% C

70% - <73.5% C-

67.5% - <70% D+

63.5% - <67.5% D

60% - <63.5% D-

<60%. F

There will be no curve. The rounding policy is as follows: There will be no rounding during the semester. For your final grade, scores ending in .5 and above will be rounded up to the next percentage point, scores ending below .5 will be rounded down. For example, if your final grade is 89.8, it will be recorded as a 90% (A-). If your final grade is 89.2, it will be rounded to 89 (B+).

**Email Policy:** Feel free to email me at any time with questions or concerns. I aim to respond to emails sent Monday-Friday within 24 hours (and I aim to respond to emails sent Friday-Sunday on Monday). If those windows elapse without a response, then I kindly request that you send me a follow-up email to make sure I received your previous email.

### **SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY STUDENT POLICIES & SERVICES**

#### **University Attendance Policy**

(Attendance will not be taken in lecture, but it will be taken in recitation section)

Attendance in classes is expected in all courses at Syracuse University. Students are expected to arrive on campus in time to attend the first meeting of all classes for which they are registered. Students who do not attend classes starting with the first scheduled meeting may be academically withdrawn as not making progress toward degree by failure to attend. Instructors set course-specific policies for absences from scheduled class meetings in their syllabi.

It is a federal requirement that students who do not attend or cease to attend a class to be reported at the time of determination by the faculty. Faculty should use “ESPR” and “MSPR” in Orange Success to alert the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Financial Aid. A grade of NA is posted to any student for whom the Never Attended flag is raised in Orange Success. More information regarding Orange Success can be found [here](#), at <http://orangesuccess.syr.edu/getting-started-2/>.

Students should also review the University’s religious observance policy and make the required arrangements at the beginning of each semester.

**Syracuse University Policies:** Syracuse University has a variety of other policies designed to guarantee that students live and study in a community respectful of their needs [and those of fellow students](#). Some of the most important of these concern:

**Diversity and Disability** (ensuring that students are aware of their rights [and responsibilities](#) in a diverse, inclusive, accessible, bias-free campus community) can be found [here](#), at: <https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibilitydiversity/>.

**Religious Observances Notification and Policy** (steps to follow to request accommodations [for the](#) observance of religious holidays) can be found [here](#), at: [http://supolicies.syr.edu/studs/religious\\_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/studs/religious_observance.htm)

**Orange Success** (tools to access a variety of SU resources, including ways to communicate with advisors and faculty members) can be found [here](#), at: <http://orangesuccess.syr.edu/getting-started-2/>

**Disability-Related Accommodations:** Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to meet with me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit Center for Disability Resources. Please call (315) 443-4498 or email [disabilityresources@syr.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@syr.edu) for more detailed information.

CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process. <https://disabilityresources.syr.edu/>

### **Academic Integrity Policy:**

Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The 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 work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. Under the policy, students found in violation are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. SU students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice.

**Course Schedule (Subject to change. Readings may be added or removed)**

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
January 16	Introduction and Syllabus	No Reading	
January 18	What is an Argument?	Chapter 1 Pgs. 1-9	Practice Quiz (not required)
January 23	What is an Argument?	Chapter 1 Pgs. 9-17	
January 25		Chapter 1 Buffer Day	
January 30	Pinning Down Argument Structure	Chapter 2 Pgs 22-30	Quiz 1 Due
February 1	Pinning Down Argument Structure	Chapter 2 Pgs. 31, 34-41	
February 6	Pinning Down Argument Structure	Chapter 2 Pgs. 41-48, 51, 54-55	Quiz 2 Due
February 8		Chapter 2 Buffer Day	
February 13		Chapter 2 Buffer Day	Quiz 3 Due
February 15	Good Arguments	Chapter 4, pgs. 87-93	
February 20	Good Arguments	Chapter 4, pgs. 94-100	Quiz 4 Due
February 22	Good Arguments	Chapter 4, pgs. 103-106, 108-112, Review for exam	
February 27		Exam 1	In-Class Exam 1
February 29 (Leap Year!!)		Chapter 4 Buffer Day	
March 5		Chapter 4 Buffer Day	Quiz 5 Due
March 7	Looking at Language	Chapter 3, pgs.57-62, 65-69	
March 12 (Spring Break)		No Class	

March 14 (Spring Break)		No Class	
March 19	Looking at Language	Chapter 3, pgs. 72-79	Quiz 6 Due
March 21	Looking at Language	Chapter 3, pgs. 81-84	
March 26	Looking at Language	Chapter 3 Buffer Day	Quiz 7 Due
March 28	Looking at Language	Chapter 3 Buffer Day	
April 2		Review for Exam	Quiz 8 Due
April 4		Exam 2	In-Class Exam 2
April 9	Premises: What to Accept and Why	Chapter 5, pgs. 116-124	
April 11	Premises: What to Accept and Why	Chapter 5, pgs. 124-135	
April 16	Premises: What to Accept and Why	Chapter 5 Buffer Day	Quiz 9 Due
April 18	Working on Relevance	Chapter 6, pgs. 148-152	
April 23	Working on Relevance	Chapter 6, 155-163	Quiz 10 Due
April 25	Working on Relevance	Chapter 6, pgs. 163-167, 170-174	
May 1		Final Exam due (to T.A.s)	Take-Home Exam