



## PHIL 120 99C 2025W2 – INTRO TO CRITICAL THINKING

Winter Term 2: Jan. 5 – Apr. 10, 2026, Credits: 3

Instructor: Dr. Alexandre Korolev

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### Course Description:

The course is a basic introduction to logic and critical reasoning. It is designed to equip the students with the tools and concepts needed to deal with both everyday and more technical arguments, as well as the skills to analyse, and resolve, everyday confusions, ambiguities, and fallacies. The course is divided into 3 major parts:

- **Informal Logic.** Topics covered in informal logic include the analysis of arguments and resolution of ambiguities; the study of fallacies; the justification of belief.
- **Formal Logic.** Topics covered in formal logic include the distinction between deductive validity and inductive strength of arguments; elementary classical propositional logic (syntax, semantics, proof theory); Aristotelian/Term logic; intro to non-classical logics (relevance, modal, and many-valued logics).
- **Applying Logic to Arguments.** This includes discussion of inductive logic, scientific reasoning, and issues in the philosophy of logic.

This course will be of interest not only to philosophy students, but to all students interested in sharpening their logical skills and exploring the nature of reasoning.

### Required Text:

J. Woods, A. Irvine and D. Walton, *Argument: Critical Thinking, Logic and the Fallacies*, 2nd ed., Pearson Canada, 2004 (ISBN 0130399388). Available in bookstore as a course pack.

### Prerequisites:

No formal prerequisites, though basic logical skills are assumed. This course is restricted to students with fewer than 90 credits. It is intended as a precursor to Phil 220 (a core element in the honours and major programs) as well as a sequence of third-year logic courses (Phil 320, 321, 322, 323 and 324).

### Online Class Format:

The general format of the class is a mixture of textbook readings, online lecture notes readings, home exercises, online group discussions, online quizzes, review of assignments, and the final exam. All activities in this course are online, including the remotely proctored final exam; you don't have to be physically situated in Vancouver or even in North America.

Course Website: [www.canvas.ubc.ca](http://www.canvas.ubc.ca) → PHIL 120 99C 2025W2

## Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Analyze arguments critically. This entails both the recognition of good arguments and the identification of fallacies (logical errors).
- Use classical propositional logic as the simplest tool for analysis of arguments.
- Identify alternatives to classical propositional logic from the philosophical literature and from applications to reasoning tasks.
- Apply analytical tools to reasoning in a variety of real-life contexts.

## Evaluation:

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Online Discussion Activities | 20% |
| Online Quizzes               | 40% |
| Online Final Exam            | 40% |

- **Discussion Activities:** We'll have 10 online group discussions, one per each module. Every student will be assigned to one of several small (up to 10 students) groups, within which he or she will be expected to take part in all of these group discussions. More detailed instructions on the group discussions will be given within the first week of classes. The weight of all the (equally weighed) group discussions is 20% of your final grade.
- **Quizzes:** We'll have 10 online quizzes, one per each module. The quizzes will typically be a mixture of short-answer, multiple-choice questions, simple problem solving, or longer problem-solving type, similar in form and content to the corresponding group discussion questions. The total weight of all the quizzes is 40% of your final grade.
- **Final Exam:** There will be an online, 2.5-hour long, cumulative final exam during the examination period weighing 40% of your final grade in this course. The online Final Exam will be remotely proctored using a UBC approved online remote invigilating tool (Zoom, LockDown Browser, or similar).
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** In order to access all the material from the course website and take assessments (DAs, Quizzes, Final Exam) you are required to have access to a regular computer (Windows/Mac computer or laptop). **You cannot take the assessments from mobile devices (e.g., iPhone, iPad, Android device, etc.).** For the remotely invigilated Final Exam you will need a working webcam and microphone. You must also install the Google Chrome web browser & the required extension.

Doing the textbook exercises and participation in discussions are the key ingredients to the success in this course. **I highly recommend doing all the assigned problems (starred and unstarred) and actively participating in the discussions** as the real quiz problem may closely resemble them, both in format and content. All starred problems have answers at the back of the textbook.

### Course Activity / Assignment Schedule:

| Week #  | Lesson   | Assessment Task        | Due date                                  |
|---|--|------------------------|---|
| <b>Week 1<br/>(Jan. 5)</b>                          | Module 1   | Discussion Activity 1  | Sat, Jan. 10, 12pm (noon)                 |
|   |  | Quiz 1                 | Mon, Jan. 12, 11:59pm (end of day)        |
| <b>Week 2<br/>(Jan. 12)</b>                         | Module 2   | Discussion Activity 2  | Sat, Jan. 17, 12pm (noon)                 |
|   |  | Quiz 2                 | Mon, Jan. 19, 11:59pm (end of day)        |
| <b>Week 3<br/>(Jan. 19)</b>                         | Module 3   | Discussion Activity 3  | Sat, Jan. 24, 12pm (noon)                 |
|   |  | Quiz 3                 | Mon, Jan. 26, 11:59pm (end of day)        |
| <b>Weeks 4, 5<br/>(Jan. 26 &amp;<br/>Feb. 2)</b>    | Module 4<br><i>(2 weeks)</i>                         | Discussion Activity 4  | Sat, Feb. 7, 12pm (noon)                  |
|   |  | Quiz 4                 | Mon, Feb. 9, 11:59pm (end of day)         |
| <b>Week 6<br/>(Feb. 9)</b>                          | Module 5   | Discussion Activity 5  | <b>FRI, Feb. 13, 12pm (noon)</b>          |
|   |  | Quiz 5                 | <b>SAT, Feb. 14, 11:59pm (end of day)</b> |
| <b>Feb. 16 –<br/>Feb. 20</b>                        | <b>BC Family Day and Mid-Term Break. No classes.</b> |                        |   |
| <b>Weeks 7, 8<br/>(Feb. 23 &amp;<br/>Mar. 2)</b>    | Module 6<br><i>(2 weeks)</i>                         | Discussion Activity 6  | Sat, Mar. 7, 12pm (noon)                  |
|   |  | Quiz 6                 | Mon, Mar. 9, 11:59pm (end of day)         |
| <b>Week 9<br/>(Mar. 9)</b>                          | Module 7   | Discussion Activity 7  | Sat, Mar. 14, 12pm (noon)                 |
|   |  | Quiz 7                 | Mon, Mar. 16, 11:59pm (end of day)        |
| <b>Weeks 10, 11<br/>(Mar. 16 &amp;<br/>Mar. 23)</b> | Module 8<br><i>(2 weeks)</i>                         | Discussion Activity 8  | Sat, Mar. 28, 12pm (noon)                 |
|   |  | Quiz 8                 | Mon, Mar. 30, 11:59pm (end of day)        |
| <b>Week 12<br/>(Mar. 30)</b>                        | Module 9   | Discussion Activity 9  | <b>TUE, Apr. 7, 12pm (noon)</b>           |
|   |  | Quiz 9                 | <b>WED, Apr. 8, 11:59pm (end of day)</b>  |
| <b>Week 13<br/>(Apr. 6)</b>                         | Module 10  | Discussion Activity 10 | <b>FRI, Apr. 10, 12:00pm (noon)</b>       |
|   |  | Quiz 10                | <b>FRI, Apr. 10, 12:00pm (noon)</b>       |
| <b>Exam Period<br/>(Apr. 14 –<br/>Apr. 25)</b>      |  | Final Exam             | Exact time and location TBA               |

## **Academic Concessions, Missed Assignments, and Grade Changes:**

According to the revised University Academic Concession policy taking effect on Sep. 1, 2019, students must contact me, the instructor, via email as soon as you are aware you may need an in-term concession. I will adjudicate your first request. You need to include a Student Self-Declaration form, found on the Arts Advising website at

<https://www.arts.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2019/10/Student-Self-Declaration-Form-1.6-Arts.pdf>

Please note that, according to the new policy, for all consecutive concessions (second, third, etc.), you must make your request directly to your appropriate Faculty Advising Office. The official guidelines of what types of academic concessions are available to you and what procedures you need to follow to request them can be found at the following page:

[students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/academic-performance/help-academic-concession/](https://students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/academic-performance/help-academic-concession/)

As a rule, there'll be no make-ups for the graded activities because the answer keys for the assignments with the explanations are typically revealed to the class after the assignment deadline. If you do have a University valid excuse for missing them (see above about Academic Concession), I will transfer the weight of what you have missed to the weight of your final exam. It also applies to the cases when you miss any assignment due to late registration to the course.

If you wish to have a grade reconsidered, write a brief note stating your reason. Typically, the note will outline what you take to be the requirements of a good answer and point out where you believe you met these requirements.

## **Learning Analytics:**

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. This course will be using the Canvas Learning Management System, capturing data about your activity and providing information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For the final exam, this course will use Proctorio, an online remote invigilating tool, which will record your webcam, your computer screen, or other actions during the exam session and share that information with your instructor. The recorded information meets British Columbia's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Overall, in this course, I may use analytics data to

- View overall class progress
- Track your progress in order to provide you with personalized feedback
- Review statistics on course content being accessed to support improvements in the course
- Track participation in discussion activity forums and in the course in general.

## University Policies:

- **UBC General Policies:**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the UBC Senate website at [senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success](https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

- **UBC Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. A link about Academic misconduct is as follows:

[www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959)

- **Students with special needs:**

Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with the Disability Resource Centre at Brock Hall, Room 1203, 1874 East Mall or visit their website at [you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/campus-community/students-disabilities](https://you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/campus-community/students-disabilities)

## **Statement regarding online learning for international students**

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit the following website <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>.

### **Copyright:**

All materials of this course (lecture slides, assessments, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline.

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