COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Number: PHIL G125  TITLE: Critical Reasoning and Writing

ORIGINATOR: Noah Levin  EFF TERM: Fall 2016
FORMERLY KNOWN AS:  DATE OF
CROSS LISTED COURSE:  OUTLINE/REVIEW: 03-15-2016

TOP NO: 1509.00
CID:

SEMESTER UNITS: 3.0  
HRS LEC: 54.0  HRS LAB: 0.0  HRS OTHER: 0.0
CONTACT HRS TOTAL: 54.0
STUDY NON-CONTACT HRS RECOMMENDED: 108.0

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
An introduction to the critical analysis and rational evaluation of argument and other forms of expression. Covers the uses of language, distinctions between deductive and inductive reasoning, and practice in detecting formal and informal fallacies. Develop tools for distinguishing between and evaluating beliefs, opinions, claims, explanations, and arguments. A strong emphasis is instruction in writing which models the critical thinking knowledge and skills examined in the course.

JUSTIFICATION FOR COURSE:

PREREQUISITES:
- ENGL G100: Freshman Composition with a minimum grade of C or better
  or
- ENGL G100H SUSPENDFALL18: Freshman Composition, Honors with a minimum grade of C or better
  or
- ENGL C100: Freshman Composition with a minimum grade of C or better
  or
- ENGL A100: Freshman Composition with a minimum grade of C or better

COREQUISITES:

ADVISORIES:

ASSIGNED DISCIPLINES:
Philosophy

MATERIAL FEE: Yes [ ] No [X] Amount: $0.00
CREDIT STATUS: Noncredit [ ] Credit - Degree Applicable [X] Credit - Not Degree Applicable [ ]
GRADING POLICY: Pass/No Pass [X] Standard Letter [X] Not Graded [ ] Satisfactory Progress [ ]
OPEN ENTRY/OPEN EXIT: Yes [ ] No [X]
TRANSFER STATUS: CSU Transferable[ ] UC/CSU Transferable[X] Not Transferable[ ]

BASIC SKILLS STATUS: Yes [ ] No [X] LEVELS BELOW TRANSFER: Not Applicable
CALIFORNIA CLASSIFICATION CODES: Y - Not Applicable
NON CREDIT COURSE CATEGORY: Y - Not applicable, Credit Course

OCCUPATIONAL (SAM) CODE: E

REPEATABLE ACCORDING TO STATE GUIDELINES: No [X] Yes [ ] NUMBER REPEATS:
REQUIRED FOR DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE: No [ ] Yes [X]
GE AND TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS MET:
IGETC Area 1: English Communication
   1B: Critical Thinking-English Composition
CSU GE Area A: Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking
   A3 - Critical Thinking

PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:
Employ critical thinking and analytic skills to better evaluate and understand arguments in many disciplines.

COURSE LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:
1. Write analytical and argumentative prose, specifically developing their abilities to:
   Delimit a topic idea appropriate to the length of the essay.
   Clearly state the central claim to be examined.
   Select and clearly articulate facts, examples, data, or evidence in support of the central claim.
   Develop an essay outline to clearly state the central claim and coherently structure the supporting evidence.
   Choose tone and voice appropriate to the character and level of essay audience and purpose of the essay.
   Execute the outline with grammatical, well connected sentences.

2. Effectively read and critically analyze (primarily) argumentative prose, and:
   Distinguish different uses of language, forms of discourse, verbal disagreement from substantive disagreements, assertions of fact from assertions of opinions.
   Distinguish arguments from explanations, descriptions, and unsupported claims.
   Recognize and articulate stated and implied assumptions.
   Distinguish inductive from deductive reasoning.
   Recognize biased, emotive, persuasive, and propagandistic language.

3. Evaluate arguments and statements and will develop the skills of:
   Determining valid and invalid, sound and unsound deductive arguments.
   Determining cogent, strong and weak inductive arguments.
   Distinguishing more acceptable from less acceptable unsupported statements.
   Recognizing and decisively criticizing formal and informal fallacies of reasoning, problems of vagueness and ambiguity, and problems of meaning and definition.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. Use logical techniques to determine and assess the structural features and claims of arguments.
2. Critically evaluate and generate the elements of various types of arguments, especially inductive and deductive.
3. Write an argumentative paper with good formatting, persuasive reasoning, valid logical structure, and a sensitivity to the relevant objections to the arguments presented.

COURSE CONTENT:
LECTURE CONTENT:

A. Introduction
   1. Definition of terms and concepts
      a. logic
      b. argument
      c. proposition
      d. inference
      e. judgment
      f. deduction
      g. induction
      h. validity and cogency
      i. sound and strong arguments
   2. Exercises in reasoning
   3. Arguments
   4. Distinguishing deductive and inductive arguments:
      a. validity and soundness invalidity and unsoundness (deduction)
      b. cogency and strength (induction)
      c. truth and its role in argumentation
      d. distinction of proof from verification--certainty and probability
   5. Diagramming technique for representing general structure of an argument
   6. Argument forms

B. Writing critical essays for critical thinking
   1. Two refined critical essays assigned
   2. Instruction in essay writing in critical thinking including a developmental process taking students through a series of steps to develop essential skills for writing the essay

C. Language: meaning and definition
   1. Cognitive and emotive meaning
   2. Functions of language: language games
   3. Definitions: types and purpose
   4. Techniques of defining
   5. Criteria for framing definitions

D. Fallacies: mistakes in reasoning
   1. Classification of fallacies
   2. Fallacies of evidence
   3. Fallacies of weak induction
   4. Fallacies of ambiguity and grammatical analogy
   5. The detection of fallacies in ordinary language
      a. ambiguity distinguished from vagueness
      b. introduction of linguistic concepts of “semantics” and “syntax”
      c. introduction to types of meaning change that can generate ambiguity

E. Deductive arguments
   1. Forms of argument
   2. Validity and soundness
   3. Statements

F. Inductive arguments
   1. Analogy
   2. Moral reasoning
   3. Legal reasoning
   4. Statistical reasoning
   5. Causality and scientific reasoning

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A. Lecture:
B. Online:
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES:
Lectures, question and answer, classroom discussion, oral and written exercises, classroom problem presentations, written assignments for work outside the classroom, and exercises in fallacy identification.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:
  Reading Assignments
  Assigned Textbook Reading
  Analysis of Current Events and Contemporary Issues in Philosophy
  Analysis of Written Arguments
  Evaluation of Faulty and Persuasive Information Presented in the Media

  Out-of-class Assignments
  Research for course writing assignments, homework exercises, class presentations, and projects.

  Writing Assignments
  The student will demonstrate the development of writing skills for analytical and argumentative prose through two sets of critical thinking written assignments, as well as essays written during class. A total of 6,000 to 8,000 words in substantial essay assignments (not including revisions) will be required of each student. Written work will be evaluated for both content and form.

METHODS OF STUDENT EVALUATION:
Midterm Exam
Final Exam
Short Quizzes
Written Assignments
Essay Examinations
Objective Examinations
Projects (ind/group)
Problem Solving Exercises
Oral Presentations
Skills Demonstration

Demonstration of Critical Thinking:
1. Assessments critiquing the arguments of others, demonstrating an ability to analyze the argumentation presented on opposing sides of an issue.
2. Assessments which identify, differentiate, and apply critical thinking concepts, such as the scientific method and inductive versus deductive arguments.
3. Writing assignments free of formal and informal fallacies, demonstrating the ability to critically analyze, evaluate, and advocate ideas on important issues.
4. Substantial essay assignments evaluating acceptability and consistency of premises, use of fallacies, and other rhetorical devices.
5. Class presentations demonstrating oral communication skills and the ability to effectively, accurately, and persuasively present knowledge on important topics.
6. Diagram and formally organize arguments that have been previously presented in prose or oral form.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration:
The student will demonstrate the development of writing skills for analytical and argumentative prose through two sets of critical thinking written assignments, as well as essays written during class. A total of 6,000 to 8,000 words in substantial essay assignments (not including revisions) will be required of each student. Written work will be evaluated for both content and form.

TEXTS, READINGS, AND RESOURCES:
TextBooks:

**LIBRARY:**

- **Adequate library resources include:** Print Materials
- Online Materials
- Services

**Comments:**

**Attachments:**

[Attached Files](#)