

Logical Thought

PHIL 210
Mount Holyoke College
Fall 2016

GENERAL INFORMATION

- * Instructor: Arden Ali
- * Office location: 213A Skinner Hall
- * Office phone: (413) 538-2725
- * Office hours: Friday, 12:00–1:00pm
- * Email: ardenali@mtholyoke.edu

- * Class meeting times: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, 10:00–10:50am
- * Class meeting location: CLEV L1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course cultivates sound reasoning. Students will learn to see the structure of claims and arguments and to use those structures in developing strong arguments and exposing shoddy ones. We will learn to evaluate arguments on the strength of the reasoning rather than on the force of their associations and buzzwords. (From the course catalogue)

TEXT

- * The required textbook is: Govier, Trudy. *A Practical Study of Argument*. Seventh Edition. Wadsworth Cengage Learning (2010). ISBN-13: 9780495603405. (Abbreviation: *PSA*)
- * Copies of the required textbook have been ordered at Odyssey Bookshop in South Hadley, MA.
- * Notice that the pagination for assigned readings in *PSA* is taken from the seventh edition of the text. If you have purchased the seventh ‘enhanced’ version, the pagination may differ.
- * Additional readings will be posted on Moodle. (These are noted with an asterisk* in the schedule)

REQUIREMENTS

- * Attendance: You are required to attend every class session. In-class assignments will be collected occasionally in order to record attendance. Repeated failure to attend class will impact your final grade.
- * Participation: It is essential that you are active during class sessions. You can participate by asking questions, offering solutions, explaining material, helping other students, or simply voicing your confusion.
- * Problem sets: There are 10 take-home problem sets. See submission guidelines below.
- * Examinations: There is an in-class examination on October 21st and a final examination during the regular end-of-term examination period. You must complete both examinations.

COURSE POLICIES

- * Class preparation: You should complete course readings *before* the beginning of each class session. You do not need to bring the course text to class.
- * Communication: I send course updates via email. Please check your Mount Holyoke email account regularly. Email is also the best way to contact me outside of class.
- * Electronics policy: Please do not use laptops, cell phones, tablets, or other electronic devices during class, unless you are using these devices for taking notes or running software for an approved classroom accommodation.
- * Submission of work: Problem sets will be posted on Moodle. Please submit a hardcopy of your completed problem set at the beginning of the class session on the specified due date.
- * Extensions: One 24-hour extension on a problem set will be granted ‘no-questions-asked.’ To use an extension, email me before due date/time to inform me that you need an extension for this week’s problem set. The problem set must be turned in 24-hours later in the dropbox outside my office (213A Skinner Hall). No other extensions will be granted, except in unusual circumstances.
- * Late/Missing Work: In general, problem sets will not be accepted after their due date/time unless an extension has been arranged by the due date.
- * Mountain Day: If Mountain Day falls on a class day, the instructor will adjust the course schedule and may change the due date on problem sets. The revised syllabus and schedule will be posted on Moodle and it is the student’s responsibility to update their personal calendar.
- * Accommodations: To request accommodations for a disability, please contact AccessAbility Services, located in Wilder Hall B4, at (413) 538-2646 or accessability-services@mtholyoke.edu. If you are eligible, they will give you an accommodation letter, which you should give to me as soon as possible. We will work together to make sure all of the course content is accessible to you.

GRADING

- * Attendance and Participation: 15%
- * Problem Sets: 30%
- * In-class examination: 20%
- * Final examination: 35%

GETTING HELP

- * If you are having any difficulties in the course, talk to me! Come to office hours (no appointment needed) or send me an email to set up a different time to talk.
- * Jack Clancy is the teaching assistant for this course. Jack will comment on your problem sets and hold regular office hours. He can be reached at clanc23c@mtholyoke.edu.
- * The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program provides support for students whose first language is not English. For more information, visit <http://mtholyoke.edu/esol>.

- * The Counseling Service (see <http://mtholyoke.edu/counseling>) offers safe and confidential support for mental health concerns. Don't struggle alone; reach out for help when you need it.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

- * Pages 34–37 of the *Student Handbook* describe the College's policies with regard to academic honesty. It is your responsibility to review and adhere to these guidelines.
- * It is also your responsibility to complete *The Proper Use of Sources Tutorial* provided by the Dean of the College: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/lits/ris/Plagiarism/>
- * Academic dishonesty, e.g. plagiarism or cheating, may result in a failed mark on assignments, failure in the course as a whole, or more serious disciplinary measures.

SCHEDULE N.B. This schedule may change. The most up-to-date version is posted on Moodle.

PSA = Govier textbook; PS = problem set; *=available on Moodle

Part A What is an argument?

Week 1 Introducing the course; identifying premises and conclusions
Wed., Sept. 7: No assigned reading
Fri., Sept. 9: Read *PSA*, Chap. 1

Week 2 Identifying premises and conclusions (cont.)
Mon., Sept. 12: Read *PSA*, p. 22–40
Wed., Sept. 14: Read *PSA*, 41–56
Fri., Sept. 16: Review *PSA*, Chap. 2 (**PS 1 due**)

Week 3 Unstated premises and conclusions; standardizing arguments; clarity
Mon., Sept. 19: Review *PSA*, Chap. 2
Wed., Sept. 21: Read *PSA*, p. 57–69 & *PSA*, p. 170–171
Fri., Sept. 23: Read *PSA*, p. 72–79 (**PS 2 due**)

Week 4 Clarifying ambiguity; equivocation; use-mention; loaded terms
Mon., Sept. 26: Read *PSA*, p. 51–52
Wed., Sept. 28: No new reading
Fri., Sept. 30: Read *Walton, “Detecting Bias”

Part B Evaluating Premises

Week 5 Acceptability of premises
Mon., Oct. 3: Read *PSA*, Chap. 4
Wed., Oct. 5: Read *PSA*, Chap. 5
Fri., Oct. 7: Review Chapters 4 and 5 (**PS 3 due**)

Week 6 Deferring to authority; unacceptable premises
Mon., Oct. 10: No class—Mid-semester break
Wed., Oct. 12: Read *Walton, “Appeals to Authority”
Fri., Oct. 14: Read *PSA*, Chap 6

Week 7 Acceptability and review
Mon., Oct. 17: Read *PSA*, Chap 6 (**PS 4 due**)
Wed., Oct. 19: Review *PSA*, Chap 5 and 6
Fri., Oct. 21: IN-CLASS EXAMINATION

Week 8 Relevance
Mon., Oct. 24: Review *PSA*, Chap 6
Wed., Oct. 26: Read *PSA*, p.187–189. p. 178–186
Fri., Oct. 28: Read *PSA*, p.189–214

Part C Deductive Reasoning

Week 9 Translating into categorical form; Venn diagrams; categorical logic
Mon., Oct. 31: Read *PSA*, p.187–189. p. 178–186, p.189–214

Wed., Nov. 2: Review *PSA*, Chap. 7 (**PS 5 due**)
 Fri., Nov. 4: Read *Hughes & Lavery, “Deductive Reasoning”

Week 10 The categorical syllogism; natural language and propositional logic
 Mon., Nov. 7: Read *PSA*, p. 228–234
 Wed., Nov. 9: Review *PSA*, p. 228–234
 Fri., Nov. 11: Read *PSA*, p. 236–243 (**PS 6 due**)

Week 11 Natural language and propositional logic
 Mon., Nov. 14: Read *PSA*, p. 216–224
 Wed., Nov. 16: Read *Kelley “Propositional Logic—Arguments”
 Fri., Nov. 18: Review *PSA*, Chap. 8

Week 12 Natural language and propositional logic
 Mon., Nov. 21: Review Chap. 8 (**PS 7 due**)
 Wed., Nov. 23: No class—Thanksgiving Break
 Fri., Nov. 25: No class—Thanksgiving Break

Week 13 Validity in propositional logic; truth tables
 Mon., Nov. 28: Review Chap. 8 (**PS 8 due**)
 Wed., Nov. 30: No new reading
 Fri., Dec. 2: No new reading

Part D Induction

Week 14 The problem of induction; good inductive reasoning
 Mon., Dec. 5: Read *Hume, Excerpt from *Enquiry*, Sec. IV & V
 Wed., Dec. 7: Read *PSA*, Chap. 9 (**PS 9 due**)
 Fri., Dec. 9: Review *PSA*, Chap. 9

Week 15 Conclusion of the course
 Mon., Dec. 12: Review for final examination (**PS 10 due**)

Reading Week Dec. 14 – Dec. 16 at 7pm
 Finals Week Dec. 16 at 7pm – Dec. 20 at 12pm