



Picture of Josiah Royce

*We are to use our reason as best we can;
for philosophy is an effort to think out
the reasons for our opinions. We are not
to praise blindly, nor to condemn
according to our moods.*

-Josiah Royce

Syllabus for Philosophy 110, section 8
Critical Thinking and Composition, Schedule # 2257, PSFA-300
Brandon Edwards-Schuth
Spring 2015
MWF 8:00am-8:50am

Description from 2014-15 and level Graduate Bulletin: *PHIL 110. Critical Thinking and Composition (3). Prerequisites: Satisfaction of the English Placement Test and Writing Competency requirements and Africana Studies 120 or American Indian Studies 120 or Chicana or Chicano Studies 111B or English 100 or Linguistics 100 or Rhetoric and Writing Studies 100 or 101.* Introduction to critical thinking and writing. Evaluation and development of correct reasoning and effective style and organization in argumentative writing. Critical appraisal of evidence. Construction of rebuttals and counter-arguments.

Course Objectives: This course is an introduction to critical thinking and philosophy. Concerns of this course will include, but not limited to: What is the difference between a belief and an argument? How might being bias affect our positions in argumentation? What are erroneous ways of reasoning, such as by means of fallacies? Are there any “good” arguments for the existence or non-existence of God? What are some different ethical theories and how they may be applied to environmental issues? How does critical thinking play a role in political and everyday matters? Students will also be required to develop their own positions regarding some of these themes, using what they have learned throughout the semester.

Student Learning Outcomes (assessments in parentheses): By the end of the semester, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Distinguish arguments from non-arguments. **(Exercises, Written Assignments and Exam)**
- Distinguish deductive arguments from inductive arguments. **(Exercises and Exam)**
- Correctly identify and understand the errors of several types of fallacies. **(Exercises, Written Assignments, and Exam)**
- Demonstrate the ability to argue a specific philosophical and/or controversial position using various logical reasoning skills. **(Written Assignments and Term Paper)**
- Demonstrate application and importance of critical thinking skills in various contexts. **(Written Assignments, and Term Paper)**

Required Texts★:

- Morrow R. David, Weston Anthony. *A Workbook for Arguments*. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. , 2011.
- There will also be several readings that will be made available on Blackboard.

Optional Texts - *(Not required, but extremely useful for all fields of study. These may not be available at the SDSU bookstore, however, they can be found easily online):*

- Baggini, Julian, and Peter S. Fosl. *The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Harvey, Gordon. *Writing with Sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998.

★Note: Renting books is acceptable. Some texts may have previous (or newer) editions and are, therefore, *potentially* acceptable. It is your responsibility to check prior editions' compatibility with the instructor. Some answers/questions may be different than the assigned edition(s).

Movies: We will watch and analyze several movies throughout the semester. These movies will be shown in class and if you miss a screening of it, it is your responsibility to watch it outside of the classroom. There will be no re screenings. I cannot let you borrow a copy, however the SDSU library *may* have the movies available to watch. You need to be there to view them! After each movie there will be written reflection assignments that are due the following week -- see written assignments section below. The movies we will watch in class are:

- *Thank You For Not Smoking (2005)*.
- *Evolution Vs. God: Shaking the Foundations of Faith (2013)*.

- *Futurama: Into the Wild Green Yonder (2009).*

Contact Information:

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Office Hours for Spring 2015

Fridays, 9:30-12pm @ AL-430/The Agora; other meetings by appointment.

These times may be subject to change.

Exam: There will be one exam. It may include (but not limited to) any combination of: Multiple Choice, Pair Matching, Fill in the Blank, Argument Construction, and/or Short Answer questions.

- In total, the Test is worth 100 points.

Textbook Exercises: There will be five textbook exercises assignments (20 points each). These are *incredibly valuable exercises, please do them!* They are to be turned in during class. The problems will mostly be the odd numbered questions, which mean that the answers will be in the back of the book. This is to your benefit so that you can double check your work, **not** to cheat. Doing these exercises will better ensure a higher grade on the departmental required essay (see below). We will go over some of the problems and answer any questions regarding them in class as well.

- Textbook Exercises are due in class on Mondays.
- In total, the Textbook Exercises are worth 100 points.

Written Reflection Assignments: There will be four written reflection assignments regarding both readings and movies throughout the semester. The grading rubric and expectations will be discussed in class and made available on Blackboard. “Turnitin” may also be used.

- The assigned questions for the written reflection assignments regarding the readings and the movies will be posted and turned in on Blackboard. You may also be asked questions regarding prior material throughout the entire semester.
- Four Written Reflection Assignments are worth 100 points each.
- In total, Written Assignments are worth 400 points.

Term Paper: There will be a final term paper where you will logically argue a position of a controversial topic of your choice. The term paper will be 5-7 pages long, double spaced, 12

point, 1 Inch Margins, Times New Roman font. More details regarding the term paper will be presented later on in this course. In general however, **You must use at least 3 sources**. The format for your citations in the essay can be of your choosing, however you must use a single type (MLA, Chicago, etc.). You should make a clear, good, fallacy-free essay defending a specific position. **This will include discussing counterexamples to your argument and defending your paper from them as best you can**. More details will be announced later in the semester. “Turnitin” may also be used.

There are three important dates (see course schedule below for specific dates) regarding the term paper as follows:

- You Topic Outline is due by **Friday, Feb 20th** in class (worth 50 points). Turn it in typed, 2 page max. Your Topic Outline needs to include:
 - The topic your term paper (gun control, god, free speech, basic income, etc.).
 - What position you will take (for or against -- **NOT BOTH**).
 - Why you’ve chosen your topic.
 - Some sources you might use (You’ll need at least 3 for the final, *remember to get good sources...*)
 - At least two significant potential counter arguments you will defend against. (if your paper was on abortion then a potential counter argument you could address would be the fetus being considered alive.)
 - You Topic Outline must include all five of these things to get the full points.
- Rough Draft is due by **Wednesday March 25th** (worth 100 points). Turn this to me in class, I will grade it and return it to you promptly for you to use towards your final draft.
- Final Draft is due by **Friday May 1, 11 pm** on Blackboard (worth 100 points).
- In total, the Term Paper is worth 250 points.

Department Required Essay: The department has required that all Philosophy 110 students write an argumentative essay of 1200-1500 words. You will receive the prompt for this essay later in the term. It will take the form of a final, specifically, a written in-class essay. This exam will measure your ability to construct an argument, not necessarily about your knowledge of the specific topic that the prompt will be about. Again, **It is about correctly formulating an argument, not how much you know about free will, ethics, etc. The other writing assignments I have assigned for this course will evaluate your knowledge of the material.** Following the department’s requirements, this essay is to be worth 10% of the student's final grade (so 100 points for this class). Unfortunately, I am not allowed to accept drafts or give feedback on drafts, but I can discuss the essay with all of you. This essay will be assigned a grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, etc. The scoring rubric for this essay is included at the end of this syllabus.

- In total, the Department Required Essay is worth 100 points.

Participation (and potential pop quizzes): Participation is of great importance and value in any class. Because of this, participation will be an aspect of the course that will be graded. If students are not participating, I will not hesitate to call on students to contribute. These points also function as discretionary points when determining the final grade. In addition, there are potential pop quizzes that could be given at the beginning of class regarding recent course material. *If you aren't present in the classroom, how can you participate or take pop quizzes?*

- In total, Participation/Quizzes are worth 50 points.

Extra Credit: There will be opportunities for extra credit. They will be announced both in-class and on blackboard later on in the term.

- In total, there will be a possible 50 extra credit points.

Late Work: Is generally not accepted, unless there is a *dire emergency*. Examples of this could be: I was dying, family/friend was dying, pet was dying, I was so sick I had to go to the hospital because I felt like I was dying, etc.. In such case, proof is therefore required.

Total Course Points:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Value in Total</u>
One Exam	100
Four Written Assignments	400
Five Textbook Exercises	100
Term Paper	250
Department Required Essay	100
Participation/Quizzes	50
<u>Total Possible Course Points:</u>	<u>1000</u>
<i>Extra Credit Points</i>	<i>50</i>

Course Organizational Notes:

- Classes are held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00 AM-8:50 AM in PSFA-300.
- Unless otherwise stated, assigned readings should be completed *before* class. Workbook Exercises should be turned in by the Friday of the specific week.

- You should bring your textbook to class every meet. Readings found on Blackboard should be printed out or able to be examined in class (such as a laptop).
- I will hold on to all assignments that are turned in. However, we can discuss them during office hours if you would like.

Tentative Schedule*:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings**</u>	<u>Textbook Exercises</u>
Week 1: Jan 21- 23	Introductions and Sources	<i>Workbook Pgs: 87-97.</i>	
Week 2: Jan 26-30	Definitions, <i>Idols of Bacon</i> , and Plato's Cave/Ideology Present 1st Written Reflection Assignment	<i>Workbook Pgs: 251-261.</i> "Idols of Bacon" "Plato's Cave"	11.1: 1,3,5,7,9 11.2: 1,3,5,7,9
Week 3: Feb 2-6	Intro to Arguments 1st Written Reflection Assignment due Friday Feb 6 on Blackboard, 11pm.	<i>Workbook Pgs: 3-31</i>	1.1: 1,3,7 1.2: 3,5 1.4: 1,3 1.5: 1,5 1.6: 1
Week 4: Feb 9-13	Induction, Causality	<i>Workbook Pgs: 38-61; 106-123</i>	2.1: 2,4 2.2: 1,7 2.4: 1,5 5.1: 1,3 5.2: 1,3
Week 5: Feb 16-20	Deductive Arguments Topic Outline due in class Friday, Feb 20th	<i>Workbook Pgs: 124-141; 148-155</i>	6.1: 1,3,5,7 6.2: 1,3 6.3: 1,3 6.5: 1,3
Week 6: Feb 23-27	Fallacies	<i>Workbook Pgs: 222-249</i>	10.1: 1,3,5,7 10.2: 1,3,5,7 10.3: 4, 9
Week 7: Mar 2-6	In class Test on Monday, Mar 2. Watch <i>Thank You For Not Smoking.</i> Present 2nd Written Reflection Assignment.	Study for the test!	

Week 8: Mar 9-13	Arguments for the Existence of God 2nd Written Reflection Assignment due Friday March 13 on Blackboard, 11pm.	“Anselm and Guanilo” “Paley’s Watch”	
Week 9: Mar 16-20	Arguments against the Existence of God	“Problem of Evil”	
Week 10: Mar 23-27	Watch <i>Evolution Vs. God</i> Present 3rd Written Reflection Assignment. Term Paper Rough Draft due in class on Wednesday March 25th.		
Week 11: Mar 30- Apr 1	<u>SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS!!</u> 3rd Written Reflection Assignment due Friday April 1st on Blackboard, 11pm.		
Week 12: Apr 6-10	Ethics: Relativism, Utilitarianism	<u>TBD***</u>	
Week 13: Apr 13-17	Ethics: Deontology, Terrorism	<u>TBD***</u>	
Week 14: Apr 20-24	Environmental Ethics/Eco-Terrorism Watch <i>Futurama: Into the Wild Green Yonder</i> movie Present 4th Written Reflection Assignment.	“Deep Ecology” “People or Penguins”	
Week 15: Apr 27- May 1	Political Theory, Test Review Final draft due on Blackboard by Friday May 1, 11pm.	<u>TBD***</u>	
Week 16: May 4-8	In class Written Essay on Friday, May 8th at 8:00 am - 10:00 am 4th Written Reflection Assignment due Friday May 8th on Blackboard, 11pm.		

* Schedule (and syllabus) could change depending on how much time is spent for in-class discussions and/or other reasons; students would be notified if so.

**Readings that are not designated as *workbook* are available on Blackboard under course documents.

*****TBD** = Readings will be determined nearer to such date (depending on pace of course/schedule). Students will be notified in class and on Blackboard.

Use of Electronic Devices: The use of laptop computers is allowed, but students should be mindful that flickering screens are generally very distracting to those around them; please refrain from using a computer for activities other than note taking. No one is required to be attentive or interested in classroom activities, but all students are expected to behave as if they were interested in order not to disturb or to distract students who are making the effort to be attentive. Use of cell phones should be restricted to non-distraction usage. Please put them on vibrate or silent.

Attendance: Attendance is expected, and absence does not excuse a student from completing any assignment or from the material covered in the missed class(es). If it is true that learning occurs as a result of interactive experience, students should not expect to gain much from this course if they do not at least allow for the possibility of that experience.

Because active participation is expected from each student, participation requires presence, so students cannot expect to “make-up” any missed classes. Nevertheless, if a student foresees being absent and communicates this to the instructor before the class meeting, the material from any missed class(es) may be reviewed at a time mutually convenient for the student and the instructor. Make-up classes are a privilege, not a right. Otherwise, in extraordinary circumstances (illness, death, other catastrophe) the student may request upon returning to campus to have a make-up session.

By university policy, students who must miss a class meeting due to a scheduled religious holiday and/or participation in an SDSU sponsored event (athletics, marching band, etc.) must inform the instructor within the first 2 weeks of classes so that any necessary accommodations may be made. Failure to notify the instructor before the first two weeks of class alleviates the instructor’s obligation to provide any accommodation. If a student foresees any time conflicts due to work, family, or personal concerns, that student is advised to withdraw and to take another course.

Grades: Grades will be posted on blackboard. The following are how written assignments and the term paper will be scored. Also given is the exact same grading template that I will use to determine how essays will be evaluated for a grade. Therefore, it is to your benefit that you use this during your writing process. Workbook exercises will be graded as either 0, 10, or 20 points; depending on if it was not completed, not all problems were all attempted, or they were completed in whole, respectively.

- Scores for most of the course work will be made according to the following grading scale:

The Grading Scale:	89.9%-87%	B+	79.9%-77%	C+	69.9%-67%	D+	
100%-94%	A	86.9%-84%	B	76.9%-74%	C	66.9%-64%	D
93.9%-90%	A-	83.9%-80%	B-	73.9%-70%	C-	63.9%-60%	D-

- Grading criteria for written assignments and the term paper (not the department required essay):

To earn an F, you do nothing or your paper does not fulfill any of the conditions listed below.

To earn D or lower, your paper does not fulfill each of these conditions:

- Your name or other form of identification is on each page (even if submitted electronically).
- Pages are numbered and in order.
- All pages are mechanically attached (unless paper is submitted electronically).
- You identify by name an author and the author's work.
- You use a standard method (e.g., MLA or APA) to refer to all external sources for your work.
- You use an author's words and/or you paraphrase an author's ideas.
- You correctly cite and give credit each time you use the author's ideas or words.

To earn C or higher, your paper must fulfill all conditions noted above as well as all of these:

- *You use the minimum number of sources required.
- The sources (if applicable) are appropriate (e.g., from scholarly periodicals or the list on the syllabus).
- Any summary given of any source is correct.
- A thesis statement or main idea is clearly and identifiably expressed.
- Special and/or new terms are clearly defined.
- You use appropriate terms to identify concepts and ideas in context.
- Your writing is relatively free from spelling and grammatical errors.

To earn B or higher, your paper must fulfill all conditions noted above as well as some of these:

- You show evidence of using logical analysis by putting arguments into standard form or by referring to argument forms (e.g., modus tollens or modus ponens).
- You use original examples to illustrate points, either your own or to develop someone else's.
- *You use more than the minimum number of sources required (when applicable).
- *A thesis statement or main idea is clearly expressed and well supported by argumentation.
- A thesis statement or main idea is clearly supported by textual evidence.
- *You apply an idea developed in the time period to some contemporary problem (e.g., you discuss Hume's or Descartes' notion of the mind/body split in terms of contemporary neuroscience).
- * Your reflection question answer(s) are answered thoroughly and with much insight.

To earn an A, your paper fulfills B level requirements as well as some of these:

- Your work is interesting to read (e.g., your style is easy to follow or humorous or you use very original or new examples to support or to illustrate your point).
- *Your work either suggests a new idea and/or it applies the concepts of the time period studied to situations that were unforeseen by the philosopher (e.g., you apply Leibniz' notion of indiscernibles to cloning).
- *You go beyond the assignment by posing a pertinent question – one supported by the text(s) involved – and then propose possible solutions to the question (e.g., how might Descartes respond to contemporary neuroscientific brain studies?)
- *Your reflection question answer(s) use multiple examples of everyday life and logically/creatively connect them to the material presented in the course. You also discuss how the material can, or has been personally put to practical use beyond the classroom.

** Not all conditions apply to all assignments. Those marked with an asterisk refer only to some assignments for some courses.*

Other: Students may learn how to avoid plagiarism by completing an on-line tutorial sponsored by Love Library at: <http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism>. The tutorial takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. The library also offers help with citation styles. Go to: <http://library.sdsu.edu/guides/sub.php?id=258>.

All students are expected to follow the administrative rules and standards of conduct detailed in the *San Diego State University Catalogue*. Students are expected to submit only their own work on papers. It is the student's responsibility to know and observe all the SDSU rules concerning academic integrity and plagiarism. Students should become familiar with SDSU Academic Senate Policy on Plagiarism found at <http://senate.sdsu.edu/policy/pfacademics.html>. Here are some highlights:

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Cheating shall be defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to (a) copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination; (b) discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor; (c) obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor; (d) using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition; (e) collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor; (f) falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data; (g) submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course; (h) altering or interfering with the grading procedures; (i) plagiarizing, as defined; and (j) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above.

2.2 Plagiarism shall be defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the University as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to (a) submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; (b) omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; (c) omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; (d) close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another; (e) submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; and (f) submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies.

Some course material (study guides, notes, powerpoints, etc.) may be made available to students on Blackboard.

Student Disability Services: If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class [e.g., additional time for an exam, sign language interpreter, oral texts rather than printed ones], it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Students who have concerns that might prevent them from otherwise doing well in this course should discuss this with the instructor so that arrangements may be made to accommodate their conditions.

Students who are enrolled in this course agree to the following conditions via tacit consent and are thusly obligated everyday to the following:

Course Contract - Spring 2015 Semester - SDSU Phil 110

I acknowledge that I have read the whole syllabus and understood all the policies of the class and what will be expected of me.

I understand that if I fail to uphold any of the criteria of the class, I will be liable for any penalties that may incur.

I understand that I am to respect both my fellow peers and the instructor. Failure to do so (e.g. distractions and disruptions) may lead to myself being asked to leave the classroom. Being asked to leave may be from the instructor or campus security, it is the instructor's discretion.

I understand that I will not cheat on any of the course materials (exams, essays, quizzes, written assignments, etc.)

I understand that I am expected to come to class with an open mind about all positions for the sake of learning, as this contributes towards a more optimal learning environment for myself and all of my peers.

I understand and agree to the use of Blackboard, "Turnitin", and the movies/videos used in this course, even those materials that are not included on the tentative course schedule found in this syllabus.

I also understand that the instructor reserves the right to change any of the policies in the syllabus or any of the lectures in the course schedule due to unforeseen circumstances that may have an adverse effect on the flow of the course.

~ End of syllabus ~

Rubric for Department Required Essay:

	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4
	Craft well-reasoned arguments for specific audiences. (Although arguments may contain characteristics of content, structure, evidence, audience awareness, and language representing more than one level of proficiency, classification should be based on the preponderance of the characteristics.)	Analyze a variety of texts commonly encountered in the academic setting.	Situate discourse within social, generic, cultural, and historical contexts.	Assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of arguments and supporting evidence.
Beginning (1)	Content: Provides a basic or largely incoherent case, focused on a single issue or no discernible issues. Structure: Organizes argument in a rudimentary or confusing fashion. Evidence: Marshals minimal support, with few quotations and specific examples from appropriate texts. Audience: Demonstrates a lack of awareness of audience. Language: Communicates in an inappropriate register or with frequent errors or distractions that obscure meaning.	Attempts rudimentary analysis and mentions rhetorical concepts, but primarily summarizes and paraphrases.	Begins to explore the relationship between texts (and the arguments they make) and contexts (whether social, generic, cultural, historical, or issue- or controversy-based).	Mentions arguments and evidence, but not to a clear or useful purpose.
Developing (2)	Content: Provides an elementary or minimal case, perhaps with significant inconsistencies, that is narrowly or over generally focused. Structure: Organizes argument in a mechanical and/or occasionally unclear fashion. Evidence: Marshals incomplete support, providing insufficient and/or mismanaged quotations and examples. Audience: Addresses a general audience or misconstrues the specific audience. Language: Communicates with frequent errors and distractions.	Applies concepts and models in order to support analytic passages, but relies more heavily on summary, paraphrase, and perhaps repetition.	Locates texts (and the arguments they make) within specific contexts, minimally addressing ways texts are shaped by and shape other variables.	Marshals relevant evidence, but without careful assessment or consideration of multiple positions. Careful attention to audience is absent.
Proficient (3)	Content: Presents a coherent case addressing multiple issues. Structure: Organizes argument clearly and appropriately. Evidence: Marshals sufficient support, integrating specific quotations and examples from appropriate texts into analysis of their own making. Audience: Demonstrates an awareness of the audience's specific expectations and values. Language: Communicates competently , with minimal significant errors or distractions.	Competently analyzes arguments, applying concepts and models to answer relevant "how" and "why" questions.	Locates texts (and the arguments they make) within a variety of specific contexts, demonstrating significant ways texts are shaped by and shape other variables.	Assesses the relationships among multiple positions (including strengths and weaknesses) with respect to audience, but may weigh some evidence incompletely or unpersuasively.
Advanced (4)	Content: Presents a solid case addressing a range of relevant issues and considerations. Structure: Organizes argument to meet the specific needs of the content. Evidence: Marshals ample support, successfully integrating specific quotations and examples from appropriate texts into analysis of their own making. Audience: Accommodates multiple expectations and premises of the audience. Language: Communicates effectively , with relatively few errors or distractions.	Successfully analyzes arguments, applying specific concepts and models in order to produce significant insights.	Successfully locates texts (and the arguments they make) within a variety of contexts, demonstrating complex ways texts are shaped by and shape other variables.	Successfully assesses the relationships among multiple positions (including strengths and weaknesses), with respect to audience, avoiding simplistic judgments and demonstrating, where appropriate, how the preponderance of the evidence supports specific positions over others.