

**Syllabus to Philosophy 110**  
**Critical Thinking and Composition, schedule #22571, Room #NE-175**  
**Instructor: John Kleeman, Spring 2016 T/Th 11:00-12:15**  
**email: [doyouwantmyemail@gmail.com](mailto:doyouwantmyemail@gmail.com)**

*This syllabus is intended to guide us through the semester. However, circumstances can change and so I reserve the right to change the syllabus as needed to ensure that we fulfill the objectives of the course. You will receive full and fair notification regarding any such changes.*

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

Ever hear an argument that you can feel is wrong but can't explain why? Have you ever felt that what you are being told by the media doesn't seem to be the whole truth even though their logic seems to make sense? Want to be able to argue with your friends in such a way that will convince them that your point of view is correct? Critical Thinking 110 is a class where we learn how to break out of the constraints that limit us in our ability to solve problems. It is also a class where we learn the tools that are necessary for not only arguing well but also for recognizing why certain arguments are bad, whether they come from our parents, our friends, the media, or even ourselves. Through the studying of visual media -such as games, movies, and tv- as well as the reading of writings of great philosophers, we will accomplish the goal of not only learning about philosophy but also becoming better critical thinkers.

Sounds like fun!

### **GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES**

Philosophy 110 is a lower division division three unit GE course which will fulfill CSU GE requirement: I. COMMUNICATION AND CRITICAL THINKING: 3. Intermediate Composition and Critical Thinking

After taking this class students will have the **9** abilities below.

1. Students can distinguish the difference between arguments and other kinds of discourses.  
*\*assessed through homework, participation, and papers.*
2. Student is able to demonstrate the ability to ascertain the truth value of propositions, their subjects and predicates as well as be able to ascertain what is not a proposition.  
*\*assessed through homework and tests.*
3. Students can explain and apply the basic concepts essential to a critical examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse (soundness, cogency, validity, invalidity, etc.)  
*\*assessed through homework and tests.*
4. Students can recognize assumptions and identify common informal and formal fallacies in human reasoning.  
*\*assessed through homework, participation, papers and tests.*
5. Students can point out how advertising and the media persuade audiences without offering reasons.

*\*assessed through homework, participation, tests and papers.*

6. Students can analyze and critique both inductive and deductive arguments using formal methods.

*\*assessed through homework, participation, tests and papers.*

7. Students can defend their positions against strong opposing evidence and counter-arguments

*\*assessed through, participation, and papers.*

8. Students are capable of writing a coherent, logical, critical paper on a philosophical idea.

*\*assessed through papers.*

9. Students can use investigative and analytical thinking skills to examine alternatives, explore complex questions, and solve challenging problems.

*\*assessed through participation, tests, and papers.*

## REQUIRED TEXTS

1. *A Workbook for Arguments: A Complete Course in Critical Thinking* by David R. Morrow and Anthony Weston, Indianapolis: Hackett 2011.
2. Supplemental material and readings will be handed out during the semester.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Your grade in this class will be based on 2 tests, 1 final, 2 papers, and completion of quizzes and your overall participation in this class. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are due or else will be considered late. There will be no extra credit, and the overall worth of these assignments is listed below.

- 10% Quizzes/Participation
- 20% First Test
- 20% Second Test
- 20% First Paper
- 20% Final Paper
- 10% Final Test

### Quizzes/Participation

**Quizzes** will be randomly given throughout the semester and will test to see if students have done the reading for the day. These quizzes will be given at the professor's discretion and will most certainly be given if he has the distinct impression that the majority of class has not been doing the readings or if there seems to be a large amount of empty seats in the classroom. **Participation** will be judged on not only the students' ability to finish the simple take home assignments that are given out, but also in the students' ability to engage in class discussion in a positive and respectful manner. This can be done by asking questions of clarification, summarizing the readings when asked, or giving their

opinion to a certain topic in a logical fashion when prompted by the professor. Participation can also be shown by showing up to office hours to discuss the class material with the professor.

#### **First Test**

The first test will be multiple choice and will cover all that has been gone over in both class and the book.

#### **Second Test**

The second test will be multiple choice and blue book and will cover all that has been gone over since the beginning of class.

#### **First Paper**

The first paper will be graded on the rubric that will be handed out, 3 to 4 pages.

#### **Final Paper**

The final paper will be graded on the rubric that will be handed out, 5 to 6 pages.

#### **Final Test**

The final will be a written test on a single topic where a case will be given where you will have to argue a position on that topic.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS.**

My policy on late assignments is **DON'T**. Each day a paper is late, you will lose a full 10% off the grade you would have received. You will be given plenty of time to finish these papers and part of going to university is learning how to schedule your time. On the off chance there is an emergency and the assignment cannot be done on time, I can be flexible as long as we discuss it in person 48 hours in advance. If it is a last second emergency, it will be judged on a case by case basis and some sort of documentation may be required.

Pertaining to test taking. There will be no late test taking allowed. On the off chance there is an emergency and the assignment cannot be done on time I can be flexible as long as we discuss it in person 48 hours in advance. If it is a last second emergency, it will be judged on a case by case basis and some sort of documentation may be required.

Pertaining to late assignments. If an assignment is not done on time you will not get the points. There will be no excuses allowed since they will take very little time to accomplish.

### **CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

You will be beholden to the university's code of conduct, definitions, and consequences outlined here: <http://senate.sdsu.edu/policy/pfacademics.html>. More importantly however, from my perspective, is that you do your own work honestly and with earnest effort because anything else is a waste of our time. Think about the kind of person you want to be and then act accordingly.

**OFFICE HOURS.**

**AL- 430, Tuesday, Thursday, 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm,** You'll do well to take advantage of them. If the times I've picked don't work out for you this won't be an excuse because I'm very able to schedule individual meetings with you if you take the initiative. Remember, if you haven't been able to speak up in class, then office hours are the time to show your participation.

**DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS.**

If you have any concerns here, please see me as soon as possible about them so that I can make the appropriate arrangements. If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at [\(619\) 594-6473](tel:6195946473). 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 I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated. Students who need special religious accommodations as well as students who are athletes should see me as well, as they are entitled to accommodations in many instances.

**RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

The University Policy File includes the following statement on Absence for Religious Observances: By the end of the second week of classes, students should notify the instructors of affected courses of planned absences for religious observances. Instructors shall reasonably accommodate students who notify them in advance of planned absences for religious observances. California Education Code 89320 states: The Trustees of the California State University shall require that each state university, in administering any test or examination, to permit any student who is eligible to undergo the test or examination to do so, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed. Please notify me by the end of the second week of classes if you plan to be absent for religious observance.

**COMPUTERS AND PHONES**

These won't be allowed even to take notes. Students observed using them will be asked to leave. "Why?" you ask. Doing well in this class is dependent on one's being fully engaged. Since there is very little that must be memorized what is most important is not only following along with the discussion but being part of it. Computers and phones aren't needed to accomplish this task. Therefore they aren't allowed.

**SCHEDULE**

Date	Topic	Due
Jan 26 Jan 28	How assumptions and perception affect our critical thinking skills.	
Feb 2 Feb 4	Understanding Cause and Correlation, and how the media abuse these concepts.	
Feb 9 Feb 11	Building blocks needed for critical thinking	
Feb 16 Feb 18	Invalid/Valid Strong/Weak a major reason why someone's argument smells fishy.	
Feb 23 Feb 25	Review	Review First test Feb 25
Mar 1 Mar 3	Fallacious arguments. Those arguments your parents made that drove you crazy	
Mar 8 Mar 10	Where's the Fallacy?	
Mar 15 Mar 17	Review	Review Second test Mar 17
Mar 22 Mar 24	Making a Paper	
Mar 29 Mar 31	Spring Break	
Apr 5 Apr 7	Argument Creation	Paper 1 is Due Apr 5
Apr 12 Apr 14	Counter Arguments	
Apr 19 Apr 21	Paper Writing	
Apr 26 Apr 28	Debate	
May 3 May 5	Final Thoughts	May 5 Final Paper Due
May 10	Final	Final
