



蘇州大學  
Soochow University

# PHL 134 Introduction to Reasoning and Critical

## Thinking

Winter 2024

**Course Credits:** 4

**Contact Hours:** 56 hours

**Instructor:** TBA

**Email:**TBA

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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This course introduces students to the fundamental principles and skills of reasoning and critical thinking. Students will learn how to identify and evaluate arguments, and how to reason logically and critically in various contexts. The course will also cover the principles of deductive and inductive reasoning, fallacies, and the scientific method.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

1. Apply reasoning and critical thinking skills to personal and professional decision-making processes
2. Evaluate arguments for their strength, validity, and soundness
3. Develop the ability to communicate ideas effectively and persuasively through written and oral communication
4. Recognize and evaluate ethical issues and dilemmas using reasoning and critical thinking
5. Enhance problem-solving skills by applying reasoning and critical thinking to practical problems

### **PREREQUISITES**

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N/A

### **GRADING**

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Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
Quizzes	20 Points
Midterm 1	15 Points
Midterm 2	15 Points
Papers	20 Points
Final Exam	30 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$ .

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Texts:

Lewis Vaughn, *The Power of Critical Thinking: Effective Reasoning about Ordinary and Extraordinary Claims*, 7th Edition, Oxford University Press.

### Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:

None

## COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 1: The Power of Critical Thinking Topic 2: Claims and Reasons Topic 3: Obstacles to Critical Thinking Topic 4: Preferring Available Evidence <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz#1



Module 2	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 5: Making Sense of Arguments Topic 6: Finding Missing Parts Topic 7: Reasons for Belief and Doubt Topic 8: Innumeracy and Probability <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz#2
Module 3	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 9: Media Manipulation: Fake News, Bias, and Advertising Topic 10: Internet Advertising Topic 11: Fallacies and Persuaders Topic 12: Appeal to Tradition, Ignorance, Emotion <b>Assessments:</b> Midterm#1 Paper#1
Module 4	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 13: Deductive Reasoning: Propositional Logic Topic 14: Deductive Reasoning: Categorical Logic Topic 15: Translations and Standard Form Topic 16: Inductive Reasoning <b>Assessments:</b> Midterm#2 Paper#2
Module 5	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 17: Being Misled by Coincidence Topic 18: Inference to the Best Explanation Topic 19: Judging Scientific Theories Topic 20: Critical Thinking in Morality <b>Assessments:</b> Final Exam

## ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.



2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

### **LEARNING REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (eg., note taking, reading course documents).

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**



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Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.