# PHIL 201 L CRITICAL THINKING

# Spring 2017, University of Victoria Department of Philosophy

Course website: available on <a href="http://coursespaces.uvic.ca">http://coursespaces.uvic.ca</a>

Instructor and Contact Information

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Office hours: Fri 2:45 3:35 (or by appt.)
Office: CLE B330

Meeting Times & Place
Tue Wed Fri 10:30-11:20
Human & Social Development
Building A240

#### Course Description

Every day each of us is bombarded by attempts to persuade us of the truth of some claim, often with a view to influencing our actions and behavior. Regardless of whether it is politicians, scientists, lobbyists, advertisers, corporations, or even acquaintances or friends doing the persuading, we often wish to make up our own minds; we often a sour duty as free thinking citizens to do so. But how do we adjudicate these myriad arguments? How do we figure out which are good arguments and which merely appear to be? This course attempts to provide you with some of the skills, methods and criteria for evaluating the arguments you may encounter in daily life. The goal of the course is to enable you not only to make up your own mind about whether an argument is good or bad, but to do so in a rationally defensible, systematic and rigorous way.

#### Course Texts

Required: Vaughn, Lewis & MacDonald, Chris. The Power of Critical Thinking: Canadian 4th Edition

## (4) Class Participation/ Attendance

There is no grade for class participation and I will not be taking attendance. The lecture slides for each class will be posted online on CourseSpaces

I expect you to attend the lectures and strongly encourage you to do so for a more expansive and detailed understanding of the concepts you will be reading about.

### Course Grading

Grades will be assigned in percentage points. The final grade for the course will be converted to a letter grade according to the follow table.

Grades

# Policy on Late or Missed Assignments

Late problem sets will not be accepted and the student will receive a zero for the assignment. Missed tests can be made-up only if

failure to sit the test; otherwise, students will receive a zero for the missed test. The previous policies do not apply to students with documented disabilities; all attempt will be made to accommodate such students including, but not restricted to, providing make-up assignments and tests.

### Course Schedule

Dates & Topics	Assignments
Week 1: What is Critical Thinking?  Jan 4 & 6	Reading: Chapter 1 Problem Set #1 due Jan 8
Week 2: The General Nature & Kinds of Arguments  Jan 10, 11 & 13	<b>Reading: Chapter 3</b> Problem Set #2 due Jan 15
Week 3: Patterns of Argument & Diagramming Jan 17, 18 & 20	<b>Reading: Chapter 3</b> Problem Set #3 due Jan 22
Week 4: Conflicting Claims: Expertise, Experience & Persuasion Jan 24, 25 & 27	Reading: Chapter 4  **In-class test #1 on Jan 24**  Problem Set #4 due Jan 29
Week 5: Falladous " A rguments" Jan 31; Feb 1 & 3	Reading: Chapter 5
Week 6: Fallacious " A rguments" Feb 7, 8 & 10	Reading: Chapter 5 Problem Set #5 due Feb 12
Week 7: *Reading Break* Feb 13-17	No reading.

Dates & Topics	Assignments
Week 8: Categorical Logic Feb 21, 22 & 24	Reading: Chapters 6  **In-class test #2 Feb 21**  Problem Set #6 due Feb 26
Week 9: Categorical Logic Feb 28; Mar 1 & 3	<b>Reading: Chapter 6</b> Problem Set #7 due Mar 5

Week 11: Propositional Logic Mar 7, 8 & 10