

# PHIL 201 A02: Critical Thinking

TWF 12:30 1:20

Instructor  
Office  
Office Hours  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Course Description



## Requirements

Assignment	Due Date	% of final grade
2 Pod Meeting Report	variable (see below)	2.5% each
9 Weekly Homeworks	Sundays at 11:00pm	3% each
3 Tests	Oct 2, Oct 27, and Nov 27	15% each
Group Project	Nov 13 at 11:00pm	3%
News Analysis	Dec 15, 11:00pm	20%

### 1. Pod Meeting Report

Every week one member of your Pod writes up a brief report of your discussion and posts it to a Discussion Forum on Brightspace. Each Pod member is required to write a report once throughout the semester. Reports are graded pass/fail. Each report is worth 2.5% of the final grade. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be posted on Brightspace.

### 2. Weekly Homework

Starting in the second week, each week will have a homework assignment. This is usually (but not always) a 10-12 question online quiz (usually a mix of short-answer, T/F, and M/C).

You are required to submit *nine* (of a total of 10) assignments throughout the semester.

## 5. News Analysis

The final requirement is a short, written analysis of an argumentative news item (typically an opinion piece) of your own choosing, which accounts for 20% of the final grade and is due on December 15. In this assignment you will apply the skills you have acquired in this course in a real-life context.

This course does **not** have a final exam.

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Reading
1	Sep 9, 11	Introduction, Chp. 1: The Power of Critical Thinking
2	Sep 15, 16, 18	Chp. 3: Making Sense of Arguments <i>Homework 1 due Sep 20 at 11:00pm</i>
3	Sep 22, 23, 25	Chp. <i>Homework 2 due Sep 27 at 11:00pm</i>
4	Sep 29, 30, Oct 2	Chp. 4: Reasons for Belief and Doubt Oct 2: Test #1 <i>Homework 3 due Oct 4 at 11:00pm</i>
5	Oct 6, 7, 9	<i>Homework 4 due Oct 11 at 11:00pm</i>
6	Oct 13, 14, 16	Chp. 5: Faulty Reasoning <i>Homework 5 due Oct 18 at 11:00pm</i>
7	Oct 20, 21, 23	Chp. 7: Deductive Reasoning: Propositional Logic <i>Homework 6 due Oct 25 at 11:00pm</i>
8	Oct 27, 28, 30	Chp. 7 Oct 27: Test #2 <i>Homework 7 due Nov 1 at 11:00pm</i>
9	Nov 3, 4, 6	Chp. 8: Inductive Reasoning <i>Homework 8 due Nov 8 at 11:00pm</i>

11	Nov 24, 25, 27	Chp. 9: Inference to the Best Explanation Nov 27: Test #3 <i>Homework 10 due Nov 29 at 11:00pm</i>
12	Dec 1, 2, 4	Chp. 10: Scientific Reasoning <i>Homework 11 due Dec 6 at 11:00pm</i>
	Dec 15	News analysis due at 11:00pm

### Lectures and Lecture Notes

Online lectures will present and explain the course material. Students are expected to attend and/or watch these lectures *after* doing the assigned readings, as the lectures explain and elaborate on the readings. Each lecture uses slides that will be made available along with the lecture.

It is crucial to your success in this course that you take notes on the lectures. Research shows that taking good notes helps your learning. By taking your own notes (and this does *not* mean copying the lecture word for word) you process the material more thoroughly than you otherwise would and make later reviewing easier for yourself. A good way (but by no means the only useful way) of taking notes is to annotate the lecture slides.

### Intellectual property of materials on

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the LMS website (including lecture recordings) are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

### Discussion Forum

The course website features two discussion forums, one for Pods (Pod Discussions) and one for the class as a whole (Class Discussion). Use these to ask questions, reach out to other students or bring problems to my attention. I monitor and occasionally comment on discussion posts.

### Office Hours

I hold weekly office hours for one-on-one or small-group meetings with students. Office hours will be held via Zoom and/or Brightspace Chat. They are drop-in – no sign-up needed. I encourage you to make use of them. I especially encourage you to come to office hours if there is

wait! The sooner you bring up such issues, the better I am usually able to help you.

There are two TAs in this course who will hold additional office hours during the week before a test and on an as-needed basis.

### Announcements and Email

I will regularly communicate course- in *Brightspace*. Please ensure that you read these announcements. You can configure your

*Brightspace* page so that you get notified (by email or text) when a new announcement is posted. Occasionally, I will also email you.

your contact information. It is your responsibility to make sure that this information is current and to check this email address at least once a day.

If you contact me via email, I will make every effort to respond in a timely manner, which generally will be within 48 hours (longer on weekends). To make sure your email does not end up in my spam folder, I encourage you to put the course number in the subject line (i.e. PHIL 201) and/or use your UVic email address.

If you have a question about assignments, due dates, or other course policies, the syllabus should be your first resource. *I will not respond to any emails that ask questions which are answered in the syllabus.* Your second resource should be the discussion board, which is accessible through the course website. You are encouraged to use this feature to discuss questions about course mechanics as well as course content.

### Online Student Conduct

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to this experience, and the responsibility to help create, such an environment. The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Please be advised that by logging into learning systems and interacting with online resources you are engaging in a university activity.

All interactions within this environment are subject to the university expectations and policies.

Any concerns about student conduct, may be reviewed and responded to in accordance with the

To report concerns about online student conduct: [onlineconduct@uvic.ca](mailto:onlineconduct@uvic.ca)

### Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

*The responsibility of the institution:* Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

*The responsibility of the student:* Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a   
tand the

Please see [UVic's \(revised\) academic integrity policy](#) for further details.

Significant Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Tue., Sept. 22: last day for 100% reduction of fees

Fri., Sept. 25: last day to for adding first-term courses

Tues., Oct. 13: last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees. 100% of tuition fees will be assessed for courses dropped after this date.

Sat., Oct. 31: last day for withdrawing from second-term courses without penalty of failure

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you need an academic accommodation you will need to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning

(

### Course Experience Surveys (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is