LA Mission College Mark Pursley
Spring 2013 364-7677
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Philosophy 6: Logic in Practice

Section 0413, M W, 12:15-1:40, INST 2004

Course Description

Philosophy 6 improves skills in critical reasoning and in the writing of critical essays. Classroom discussions, small group presentations, and individual assignments provide practical techniques for evaluating and constructing arguments.

Course Objectives

By successfully completing this course you will be better equipped to confront the complex issues that each of us faces as working professionals and citizens. You will learn to identify fallacious arguments, to reveal the underlying logical structure of complicated chains of reasoning, to analyze argument patterns using Venn diagrams and truth tables, and to construct cogent arguments of your own.

Student Learning Outcomes for Philosophy 6

1. Identify the structure of an argument.
2. Evaluate deductive arguments for validity and inductive arguments for strength.
3. Differentiate among various informal fallacies.
4. Design and create cogent arguments.

Required Texts

Invitation to Critical Thinking, 6th ed. Vincent Barry and Joel Rudinow.
Philosophy 6 Handouts. Bookstore or download from my website.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation in class discussions; reading and homework assignments; critical exchange presentation (team debates on contemporary social controversies); two analytic essays; three written exams.

Evaluation

Class participation and homework: 10%
Argumentative essays: 30%
Exam 1: 15%
Exam 2: 15%
Final Exam: 20%
Critical Exchange Presentation: 10%

Credulous acceptance of baloney can cost you money.... But it can be much more dangerous than that, and when governments and societies lose the capacity for critical thinking, the results can be catastrophic.... **Carl Sagan**

SCHEDULE

2/4 Ch. 1 What is critical thinking? Barriers to critical thinking.

2/6 Ch. 2 Functions of language; In class homework exercise: p.43, Self-deception, Authority (1.11; 1.16) Facts and values. For discussion: What role should reason and critical thinking play in resolving moral disputes?

2/11 Ch. 3, Arguments, premises and conclusions.

2/13 Argument analysis. Group exercise in identifying arguments. Quiz.
[2/18- last day to drop without a "W" 2/18- last day to drop for refund]

2/20 Ch. 4, Casting arguments. Ch. 5, Reconstructing arguments. Exam review.

2/25 **Exam 1**

2/27 Ch. 6, Deduction, validity , and soundness.

3/4 Categorical Logic and Venn Diagrams.

3/6 Venn Diagram review. "Tag-Team" Venn Diagrams.
Essay 1 due: Argumentative essay on a contemporary moral or social issue 2-3 pages. Minimum of two sources required, one that agrees and one that disagrees with your position.

3/11 Introduction to Truth Functional Logic, Ch 7.

3/13 Truth Tables. Collaborative exercises in deductive logic.

3/18 Ch. 8,9, Induction.

3/20 Ch. 10, Evaluating Premises.

3/25 Exam Review

3/27 **Exam II**

4/8 12 Angry Men 1

4/10 12 Angry Men II

4/15 Informal Fallacies **1**
Essay 2 due: Critically analyze an argument found in a printed editorial.
(2-3 pages, provide a copy of the passage critiqued. Same issue as essay 1).

4/17 Informal Fallacies 2

4/22 Fun with fallacies!

4/24 Small group prep. for critical exchange presentations

4/29 Small group prep. for critical exchange presentations

5/1 Critical Exchange Presentations
[5/3- last day to drop with a “W”]

5/6 Critical Exchange Presentations

5/8 Critical Exchange Presentations

5/13 Ch. 13 Argumentative Composition

5/15 SLO assessment

5/20 Critical Thinking exercise

5/22 Exam review.

6/3 Final exam, 12:30-2:30 (No work accepted after this date!)

LAMC students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. All assignments submitted in fulfillment of course requirements must be the student's own work. All assignments except those designated as "group" are meant to be individual efforts. Group efforts are meant to be equal efforts of all group members.

Extra credit assignments: (1) Argument Journal- Find examples in printed media of an inductive argument, a deductive argument, an argument with a premise signal word, an argument with a conclusion signal word, an argument that has no signal words, and map an argument found in a newspaper or magazine. (Identify premise(s) and conclusion of each argument. (2) Fallacy journal- Find examples in printed media of seven fallacies discussed in the course. Provide a brief explanation of each example.

LA Mission College expects each student to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. All assignments submitted in fulfillment of course requirements are meant to be the student's own work. Group activities are to involve the efforts of each group member equally.

Cheating- unauthorized material used during an examination (including electronic devices), changing answers after work has been graded, taking an exam for another student, forging or altering attendance sheets or other documents in the course, looking at another student’s paper/scantron/essay/computer or exam with or without their approval is considered cheating. Any student caught cheating will receive a zero for the assignment/exam and referred to the Department chair and/or Student Services for further disciplinary action.

Plagiarism- Plagiarism is defined as the act of using ideas, words, or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own, without giving proper credit to the original sources. This includes definitions found online on Wikipedia, materials from blogs, twitter, or other similar electronic resources. The following examples are intended to be representative, but not all inclusive:
- failing to give credit by proper citations for others ideas and concepts, data and information, statements and phrases, and/or interpretations and conclusions.
- failing to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or a part thereof
- Paraphrasing the expressions or thought by others without appropriate quotation marks or attribution
- Representing another's artistic/scholarly works such as essays, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculptures or similar works as one's own.

First offense, you will receive a zero for the assignment in question. Any further offenses may result in expulsion from the class, as determined by the disciplinary action from the Office of Student Services.

Recording devices in the classroom- Section 78907 of the California Education Code prohibits the use of any electronic audio or video recording devices, without prior consent of the instructor. (including cell phones, laptops, MP3 players, and more)

Reasonable Accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and require accommodations, please send me a private email. The sooner I am aware of your eligibility for accommodations, the quicker I will be able to assist the DSP&S Office in providing them. For students requiring accommodations, the DSP&S Office at Mission College provides special assistance in areas like: registering for courses, specialized tutoring, note-taking, mobility assistance, special instruction, testing assistance, special equipment, special materials, instructor liaisons, community referrals and job placement. If you have not done so already, you may also wish to contact the DSP&S Office in Instructional Building 1018 (phone 818/364-7732 TTD 818/364-7861) and bring a letter stating the accommodations that are needed.