PHIL3420 - CRITICAL THINKING
Course Outline

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Consultation hours: tba

Course Overview
Semester Semester 1 - 2008
Unit Weighting 10
Teaching Methods Lecture

Brief Course Description
One set of skills required in any occupation are those of critical thinking and of evaluating the logical status of arguments. How can we tell the difference between valid and invalid arguments? How do we go about constructing arguments which we can know to be valid? These are the questions that form the focus of the course. The course is specifically designed to impart to students skills tested in the Graduate Skills Assessment Test.

Contact Hours
Lecture for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Regular week by week exercises and answers will be provided by blackboard

Course Objectives
(1) To impart to students skills in critical thinking and problem solving.
(2) To impart to students skills in critically evaluating and appraising the arguments of others.
(3) To impart to students the ability to construct valid arguments of their own.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2008

CTS Download Date: 28.1.2008
Course Content
This course gives students skills in critical thinking about and evaluating ideas in a range of fields. Questions to be considered include: what makes an argument valid? How can we tell valid from invalid arguments? How can we construct valid arguments?

Assessment Items

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination:</td>
<td>Class: 2 by 1 hour tests, worth 19% each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examination:</td>
<td>Formal: A 2 hour examination at the end of semester, worth 62%</td>
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Assumed Knowledge
NIL

Callaghan Campus Timetable
PHIL3420
CRITICAL THINKING
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 – 2008
Lecture Wednesday 15:00 - 17:00 [MC102]

Plagiarism

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.
Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer following the instructions provided in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure - Policy 000641.

Note: different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

Please go to the Policy at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you.

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
- **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be received in the Student Hub no later than ten working days prior the first date of the examination period

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

- For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2008
- For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2008
- For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2008
- For Trimester 2 courses: 9 June 2008
- For Trimester 3 courses: 22 September 2008
- For Trimester 1 Singapore courses: 3 February 2008
- For Trimester 2 Singapore courses: 25 May 2008
Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs.

To check or change your enrolment online, please refer to myHub - Self Service for Students

https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au

Faculty Information

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students on campus.

The four Student Hubs are located at:

Callaghan campus
- Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Union Building
- Hunter Hub: Student Services Centre, Hunter side of campus

City Precinct
- City Hub & Information Common: University House, ground floor in combination with an Information Common for the City Precinct

Ourimbah campus
- Ourimbah Hub: Administration Building

Faculty websites

Faculty of Business and Law

Faculty of Education and Arts
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/

Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/

Faculty of Health
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/

Faculty of Science and Information Technology
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/

Contact details

Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.


STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability
Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - [http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm](http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm)

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Important Additional Information
Faculty of Education and Arts
School of Humanities & Social Science

PHIL 3420 Critical Thinking

Important Additional Information

All assessment for this course is by class tests and an examination

Special Circumstances

Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online. Refer - ‘Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items - Procedure 000641’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html

No Assignment Re-submission

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Re-marks & Moderations

A student may only request a re-mark of an assessment item before the final result - in the course to which the assessment item contributes - has been posted. If a final result in the course has been posted, the student must apply under ‘Procedures for Appeal Against a Final Result’ (Refer @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/).

Students concerned at the mark given for an assessment item should first discuss the matter with the Course Coordinator. If subsequently requesting a re-mark, students should be aware that as a result of a re-mark the original mark may be increased or reduced. The case for a re-mark should be outlined in writing and submitted to the Course Coordinator, who determines whether a re-mark should be granted, taking into consideration all of the following:

1. whether the student had discussed the matter with the Course Coordinator
2. the case put forward by the student for a re-mark
3. the weighting of the assessment item and its potential impact on the student’s final mark or grade
4. the time required to undertake the re-mark
5. the number of original markers, that is,
   a) whether there was a single marker, or
   b) if there was more than one marker whether there was agreement or disagreement on the marks awarded.

A re-mark may also be initiated at the request of the Course Coordinator, the Head of School, the School Assessment Committee, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee or the Pro Vice-Chancellor. Re-marks may be undertaken by:

1. the original marker; or
2. an alternate internal marker; or
3. an alternate external marker (usually as a consequence of a grievance procedure).

Moderation may be applied when there is a major discrepancy (or perceived discrepancy) between:

1. the content of the course as against the content or nature of the assessment item(s)
2. the content or nature of the assessment item(s) as against those set out in the Course Outline
3. the marks given by a particular examiner and those given by another in the same course
4. the results in a particular course and the results in other courses undertaken by the same students.

For further detail on this University policy refer - ‘Re-marks and Moderations - Procedure 000769' available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html

Return of Assignments

Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.


Student Representatives

Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

Refer - ‘Information for Student Representatives on Committees’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/committees/student_reps/index.html

Student Communication

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students

Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services is available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html

Additional Information provided by the Course Co-ordinator (add where applicable).

Assessment details
First class test, 1 hr, In week 6, worth 19%
Second class test, 1hr, In week 10, worth 19%
Examination at end of semester, 2hrs, worth 62%

Grading guide

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Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

A series of week by week exercises, and answers, will be placed on blackboard

(Additional information)

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES**

**WEEK ONE:**
The main purposes of the course.
Basic Concepts. General lay out of area.
*Argument and rhetoric
* The study of argument.
  *Pure Logic/Applied Logic
  *Formal Logic/Informal Logic
  *Deductive logic, inductive “logic”, abduction

The rudiments of logic: logical form
  *Analogy with mathematics. (Leibniz)
  *Translation in to logical form.

**WEEK TWO:**
Logical form. The logical connectives.
Some main concepts in the theory of argument:
*Common valid arguments
*Common fallacies
*Enthymemes
*Identifying enthymemes.
*Examples.

**WEEK THREE:**
Truth-Tables. The construction of truth-tables
  *Strengths of identifying valid arguments by truth-tables
  *Shortcomings of identifying valid arguments by truth-tables

**WEEK FOUR:**
Logical Deduction-I
The rudiments of logical deduction
  *The construction of enthymemes required to make an argument valid
  *Critical Analysis of arguments. Some worked examples.
WEEK FIVE
Logical Deduction - II
*Worked examples

Introduction to quantificational logic.
*The quantifiers
*Translation of English sentences into the language of quantificational logic.

WEEK SIX:
Revision Lecture
* Class Test *

WEEK SEVEN:
Quantificational logic - continued.
*Fallacies involving the quantifiers
*Ambiguities of scope

Modal concepts. The modal operators: Necessity and possibility. “□” and “◊”.
*Valid modal arguments
*Modal fallacies
*Applications to arguments.

WEEK EIGHT:
Worked examples

WEEK NINE:
Inductive Logic. Evidential support weaker than deductive support.
*Induction. Mill’s methods
*Probability. Failures of transitivity with probabilistic reasoning.
*Abduction. Inference to the best explanation
*Simplicity. Ockham’s razor
*Ad hocness
*Quine’s desiderata.

WEEK TEN:
Revision Lecture
* Class Test *
WEEK ELEVEN:
More argument forms and fallacies
  *Begging the question
  *Slippery slope arguments. The Sorites paradox.
  *Onus arguments. Disagreements about onus.
  *Appeals to authority
  *Arguments appealing to the motives or moral character of the arguer. Ad hominem arguments.
    *Reductio ad absurdum (in the informal sense).
    *The inference from “a reason” to “the reason”.

WEEK TWELVE:
More advanced worked examples.

WEEK THIRTEEN:
Rhetoric.
  *What is rhetoric?
  *The status of rhetoric
  *Common rhetorical devices
  *Identifying rhetorical devices