

UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY

PHILOSOPHY 100

REASONING

DR JEFFREY MORGAN

Winter 2010 (AB2)

Monday: 11:30 am – 2:20 pm

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OFFICE HOURS:

**Monday & Wednesday: 10:00-11:00 am
Or by appointment**

COURSE TEXT: Vaughn, L. and C. MacDonald (2008). *The Power of Critical Thinking*. Canadian Edition. Oxford.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The principal intention of this course is to help you develop your ability to think critically about the many claims, arguments and explanations you will encounter throughout your lives. As such, it might well be one of the most valuable courses you take in your educational career. Two things about which we can all be certain are, firstly, that we shall be compelled to think throughout our lives; and secondly, that there is no one who could not develop her or his ability to

think well. By the end of this course you ought to be significantly more developed with respect to the following objectives:

1. You ought to be a more discerning reader. Good reading involves much more than merely understanding printed words on a page. It also demands the careful examination of arguments, the educated assessment of claims, the detection of unreasonable forms of persuasion, and the informed evaluation of explanations.
2. You ought to be more aware of the criteria for clear thought, for good inferences and plausible explanations.
3. You ought to be more guarded in your acceptance of claims, arguments and explanations made by advertisers, politicians, teachers, social commentators, as well as anyone else who attempts to get you to do something through persuasion, as opposed to through brute force.
4. You should be able to present your views more effectively, both orally and in written form.

EVALUATION:

Three Quizzes (25% each)	75%
Take Home Final Exam	25%

- There will be four quizzes. Only the best three marks will count toward the final grade.
- Quizzes will be on any assigned reading as well as any additional material we cover in the class.
- Do not miss quizzes. In exceptional cases, with appropriate documentation, you will be permitted to rewrite a missed quiz. (If you miss without an excuse, you will receive a zero for that quiz. However, note that I do not count your lowest quiz score, so you could still receive an excellent mark for the course.)

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC/EVENT</u>	<u>READING</u>
Jan 11	Introduction	Course text website: http://www.oup.com/ca/he/companion/vaughnmacdonald/st_index/
Jan 18	The Power of Critical Thinking	pp. 2-32
Jan 25	The 'Environment' of Critical Thinking	pp. 33-64
Feb 1	Problems of Meaning QUIZ 1	
Feb 8	Making Sense of Arguments	pp. 65-120
Feb 15	Midterm Break	No Class
Feb 22	Making Sense of Arguments (cont.) QUIZ 2	
Mar 1	Reasons for Belief and Doubt	pp. 122-169
Mar 8	Faulty Reasoning QUIZ 3	pp. 170-208
Mar 15	Categorical Logic	pp. 244-276
Mar 22	Categorical Logic (cont.) Inductive Reasoning	pp. 277-330
Mar 29	Inductive Reasoning (cont.) QUIZ 4	
April 5	Easter Holiday	No Class
April 12	Evaluating Longer Arguments	