

UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY

PHILOSOPHY 100

REASONING

DR JEFFREY MORGAN

Fall 2011 (AB6)

Wednesday: 8:30 – 11:20 am

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OFFICE HOURS:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

COURSE TEXT: Vaughn, L. and C. MacDonald (2010). *The Power of Critical Thinking*. Second Canadian Edition. Oxford.

Calendar Description:

Have you ever tried to figure out why someone's reasoning wasn't quite right? Have you ever had your own cherished reasoning demolished? Have your essays, exams, or lab reports ever been torn apart for being illogical? If so, you need this course.

Good reasoning is the basis for successful thought and action. Good methods of reasoning help us to analyze an issue or problem, to assess various solutions, and to understand how to

find the correct answer.

In order to detect and avoid errors in our reasoning, we examine fallacies of reasoning, different forms of arguments, the concepts of truth and validity, proof and evidence, consistency and contradiction, definition and generalization, deduction and induction. Throughout the course, we apply our methods of reasoning to various issues, both practical and theoretical.

Learning Objectives:

1. To teach students the basic concepts and methods of sound reasoning.
2. To enable students to use these concepts and methods to analyze and evaluate arguments.
3. To develop the abilities of students to construct rational arguments in support of a conclusion.
4. To enable students to express their reasoning lucidly, both orally and in writing.
5. To engage students in reasoned discussion of contemporary public issues.

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.)

COURSE OUTLINE¹

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC/EVENT</u>	<u>READING</u>
Sept 7	Introduction	Course text website: http://www.oup.com/ca/he/companion/vaughnmacdonald/st_index/
Sept 14	The Power of Critical Thinking	pp. 2-32
Sept 21	The 'Environment' of Critical Thinking	pp. 33-64
Sept 28	Problems of Meaning QUIZ 1	
Oct 5	Making Sense of Arguments	pp. 65-120
Oct 12	Making Sense of Arguments (cont.)	
Oct 19	Reasons for Belief and Doubt QUIZ 2	pp. 122-169
Oct 26	Faulty Reasoning	pp. 170-208
Nov 2	Categorical Logic QUIZ 3	pp. 244-276
Nov 9	Categorical Logic (cont.) Inductive Reasoning	pp. 277-330
Nov 16	Inductive Reasoning (cont.)	
Nov 23	Evaluating Longer Arguments QUIZ 4	
Nov 30	Conclusion	

¹ I reserve the right to make changes as required.