



## PHILOSOPHY 1250 COURSE OUTLINE

D. Whitting



I. Text: Bierman & Assal, *The Critical Thinking Handbook*

### II. Course Content:

OCT 22 1998

- A. Sep.3: Ch. 1: "Linguistic Components of Arguments". Basic terminology which will be employed during the course. Assignment: Be sure to carefully read all the exercises and be prepared to answer them during the next class. A quiz is not beyond the realm of possibility.
- B. Sep.8: Ch.2, Part I: "Elements of Arguments (pp.33-56)". What makes an argument work? Why are some good and others not so good? The first part of the chapter summarizes the basic ingredients of Aristotelian logic. Assignment: Pay close attention to the exercises 2.1-2.6. A quiz now enters the realm of probability.
- C. Sep.10: Ch.2, Part II: "Elements of Arguments (pp.56-80)". This is a brief introduction to formal sentential logic which is the logic of computers. As usual, diligently peruse the remaining exercises. Quizzes will become common by this time.
- D. Sep.15: Ch.3: "Reconstructing Arguments". How can written and spoken arguments be analyzed? How are an argument's assumptions identified? Assignment: Find a printed argument somewhere and analyze it in the manner suggested in the chapter. Due Sep.17. Again, the exercises! A quiz is more than eminent.
- E. Sep.17: Ch. 4: "Evaluation of Arguments": After reconstructing an argument, how may it be criticized or supported? Assignment: Write a brief critical essay (500-800 words) on a topic of your choice, following the guidelines in the chapter. Due Sep.24.
- F. Sep.22: Ch.5: "Common Errors". Here the common "tricks of the trade" are identified and evaluated. Assignment: Take one question from each exercise and write it up to hand in next class.
- G. Sep.24: Ch.6, Part I: "Inductive Arguments (pp. 183-200)". Introduction to the most common form of argumentation. Assignment: Study the first four exercises for a looming quiz.
- H. Sep.29: Ch.6, Part II: "Inductive Arguments (pp.200-233)". Statistical reasoning is the focus of this part of the chapter. Assignment: Complete Exercise 6.8A (pp.232-33) to hand in next class.
- I. Oct.1: Ch.7: "Reconstructing & Evaluating Inductive Arguments". Analyzing inductive arguments for clarity and strength. Assignment: Pay close attention to the exercises; you may be asked to complete some of them in class to hand in.
- J. Oct.6: Ch.8: "Common Errors in Inductive Reasoning". Considers statistical and other fallacies. Assignment: Exercises. What would you conclude about the probability of a quiz on the basis of previous classes?

### TO BE CONTINUED AT A LATER DATE.

### III. EVALUATION

The mid-term and final exam will count 25% each. There will be a major paper or project that will count 25%. Everything else (Quizzes, brief essays, etc.) will make up 25% of the mark.

Miscellaneous Information: The instructor may be reached at Grande Prairie Composite High School during the day at 532-7721. The home phone number is 532-0293.

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