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**PHILOSOPHY 1250 COURSE OUTLINE**  
D. Whitling



I. Text: Bierman & Assali, *The Critical Thinking Handbook*, chs.1-8.

**II. Course Content & Tentative Schedule:**

**Sep. 8, 13, 15, 20: 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.

**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.

**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.

**Sep.22, 27, 29, Oct.4, 6: 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 Oct. 6. Again, the exercises! A quiz is more than eminent.

**Oct.13, 18, 20, 25: 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 Oct. 25. **Study for mid-term.**

**Nov.1: Mid-Term**

**Nov.3, 8, 10, 15, 17: 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.

**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.

**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.

**Nov.22, 24, 29, Dec. 1, 6.: 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.

**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?

**Dec. 8: Review for Final Exam.**

### **III. EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be based on a variety of short assignments and quizzes, a mid-term and a final exam.

**IV. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:** The instructor may be reached at Grande Prairie Composite High School during the day at **532-7721**.<sup>\*</sup> The home phone number is **532-0293**.

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<sup>\*</sup>I prefer that you don't leave voice mail for me.