

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Reasoning and Critical Thinking

Course Number and Section

PHILOSOP

1230A 550

Instructor Name(s): Steve Bland

Instructor Email(s): sbland2@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

Through reasoning, and thinking more generally, we attempt to understand the past, anticipate the future, make rational decisions, and promote moral goods. But our thinking isn't flawless; it is subject to all kinds of systematic errors. Even worse, we don't often recognize when we're in error, or how we got there. Consequently, our errors often go uncorrected, and our views about such important topics as politics, ethics, economics, health, and happiness are distorted. The good news is that our views are predictably distorted, and therefore subject to correction. We can learn how to recognize and mitigate the sources of our mistakes. This is critical thinking. In this course, you will learn about some of the biases, illusions, and weaknesses that afflict human minds. These shortcomings affect how we evaluate arguments, reconstruct events, predict the future, make decisions, and moralize. Our principal aim will be to generate strategies for effectively minimizing the impact of these phenomena on our thinking, and the thinking of others, so that we are able to reach more accurate conclusions about the things that matter to us most.

Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry

1. Manifest an understanding of the concepts and techniques covered in this course, and an ability to apply them to evaluate and improve judgements and decisions.
2. Work cooperatively with your peers to reinforce the lessons in the course material and prepare to manifest your understanding in the context of the course's two exams.
3. Manage and satisfy your academic responsibilities by meeting deadlines, communicating effectively, attending lectures, and demonstrably engaging with course material.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

None

Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Participation questions	Each class	25
Study guide	October 5th	10

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Midterm exam	October 6th	20
Final exam study guide	December 11th	15
Final exam	December	30

Friday, August 14, 2026

Huron Brief Course Outline 2026/27

In-course Costs \$000.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
 - Or include the weblink of the textbook’s publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.