

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong**  
**2018/19 2nd semester**  
**UGED1810A Critical Thinking 批判思考**  
**Course Outline**

**Instructor: Dr. Kwok Pak Nin, Samson**  
**Time: Thursday 16:30-18:15**  
**Venue: NAH 11**

**Course overview:**

The course aims to provide a basic training in critical reasoning as a methodological foundation of independent thinking. Students will learn how to extract, construct, and evaluate arguments; how to identify common fallacies, Cognitive Bias and to reflect on the use of language and its bearing on clear thinking; and how to think critically about issues in both real life situation and theoretical arguments which they commonly encounter in the course of their studies.

**Learning outcomes:**

1. Acquire analytic skills and a critical disposition.
3. Translate arguments in ordinary language into symbolic argument forms.
4. Recognize common valid argument forms.
5. Identify, classify, and assess arguments in various contexts.
6. Understand Scientific and Moral Reasoning
7. Identify and analyze informal fallacies.
8. Identify and analyze cognitive bias.

**Assessment:**

<b>Task nature</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Class participation	Class discussion	5%
Mid-term quiz	In class quiz	30%
Final exam	Centralized exam	50%
Take home assignment	Group assignment on Informal Fallacies and Moral Reasoning	15%

**Learning activities and workload:**

- 1. Lecture:** 2 hours per week.
- 2. Reading and Exercise:** 2 to 3 hours per week.

**Details of course website:**

We use Blackboard Learn for this course. Lecture notes and information on assignments will be posted on the website.

**Topics & schedule:**

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	Jan 10	Introduction: The thinking model	<i>An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity</i> , Ch.1; <i>How We Reason</i> , Ch.1
2	Jan 17	Cognitive Bias	<i>Thinking, Fast and Slow</i> , Part 2.
3	Jan 24	Linguistic-Conceptual Analysis	《思方導航》，第一篇 <i>Informal Logic</i> , Ch.1&9
4	Jan 31	Basic Concepts of Logic	<i>A Concise Introduction to Logic</i> , Ch. 1
5	Feb 7	<b><i>Lunar New Year Holiday</i></b>	
6	Feb 14	Symbolic Language and Truth Table	<i>A Concise Introduction to Logic</i> , Ch.6
7	Feb 21	Conditional Reasoning	<i>A Concise Introduction to Logic</i> , Ch.6-7; <i>A rule book for arguments</i> , Ch.6
8	Feb 28	Inductive Reasoning	<i>A Concise Introduction to Logic</i> , Ch.1&9
9	Mar 7	<b><u>Mid-term quiz</u></b>	
10	Mar 14	Scientific Reasoning	<i>A Concise Introduction to Logic</i> , Ch.10; <i>How to Think About Weird Things</i> , Ch.6
11	Mar 21	Moral Reasoning	<i>An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity</i> , Ch.18
12	Mar 28	Informal Fallacies	《思方導航》，第五篇
13	Apr 4	<b><i>Reading Week</i></b>	
14	Apr 11	Informal Fallacies	《思方導航》，第五篇
15	Apr 18	Making rational decisions	<i>An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity</i> , Ch.22

**Recommended learning resources: (# main reference)****Critical Thinking in general:**

Joe Y. F. Lau, *An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity: Think More, Think Better*, Wiley publication, 2011.#

Brooke Noel Moore and Richard Parker, *Critical Thinking*, 10th ed., McGraw Hill, 2012

Theodore Schick and Lewis Vaughn, *How to Think About Weird Things: Critical Thinking for a New Age*, 7th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2014.

Jordan Ellenberg, *How Not to Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking*, Penguin Books, 2015.

Philip Johnson-Laird, *How We Reason*, Oxford University Press, USA, 2009

**Linguistic-Conceptual Analysis:**

貝剛毅,《思方導航》(第四版), 匯智出版有限公司, 2014.#

李天命,《語理分析的思考方法》, 青年書屋, 1999

李天命,《李天命的思考藝術》(最終定本), 明報出版社, 2009

**Formal Logic:**

Patrick Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic*, 12<sup>th</sup> ed., Cengage Learning, 2015.#

Anthony Weston, *A Rulebook for Arguments*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Hackett Publishing Company, 2009.  
 Irving Copi, Carl Cohen and Kenneth McMahon, *Introduction to Logic*, 14th ed., Pearson Education Limited, 2014.  
 Merrie Bergmann and James Moore, *The Logic Book*, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill, 1998.  
 林正弘,《邏輯》, 三民書局, 1994。

### **Informal Logic:**

Douglas Walton, *Informal Logic 2nd edition*, Cambridge University Press, 2008#  
 Alec Fisher, *The Logic of Real Arguments*, Cambridge University Press, 1988.  
 Trudy Govier, *A Practical Study of Argument*, 7th ed., Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, 2010.  
 Trudy Govier, *Problems in Argument Analysis and Evaluation*, Foris Publications, 1987.  
 貝剛毅,《思方導航》(第四版), 匯智出版有限公司, 2014.#

### **Moral Reasoning:**

James Rachels, *The elements of moral philosophy 6<sup>th</sup> edition*, Boston: McGraw Hill, 2010.#  
 L. P. Pojman, *Ethics: Discovering right and wrong*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. 2006.

### **Cognitive Bias:**

Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Penguin Books, 2012 #  
 David Hand, *The Improbability Principle*, Bantam Press, 2014  
 魯爾夫.杜伯里著,王榮輝譯,《思考的藝術》,商周出版, 2012  
 魯爾夫.杜伯里著,王榮輝譯,《行為的藝術》,商周出版, 2012

### **Contact:**

<b>Lecturer</b>	
Name:	Dr. Kwok Pak Nin, Samson
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Consultation Hour:	Thur 10:30-12:00
Telephone:	3943-1519
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### **Feedback for evaluation:**

1. Students are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the course via email or meetings with lecturer.
2. Students evaluate the course through a survey and written comments at the end of the term as well as via regular feedback between teacher and students. This information is highly valued and is used to revise teaching methods, tasks, and content.

### **Academic honesty and plagiarism:**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](#) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

## Grade Description for Assignment

	Argument	Theory Analysis	Writing Style
[Excellent] A (85-92) Or [Very Good] A- (80-84)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You provide a detailed and specific thesis statement that clearly describes the main claim(s) you will be arguing for and indicates how and what you plan to say adds something to the discussion, rather than mostly repeating the material we have read.</li> <li>- You defend your claims in a well-developed way by giving and explaining your reasons for your position.</li> <li>- You identify likely objections, present them charitably and respond to them effectively.</li> <li>- You carefully explain the theoretical and/or practical implications of your argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You provide an accurate account of the relevant parts of the theory.</li> <li>- You illuminate the relationship between the theory's conclusion(s) and its arguments.</li> <li>- You quote relevant key passages with proper citations.</li> <li>- You define key terms, and explain their role and how they relate to each other.</li> <li>- You discuss what the thinker would probably have said about an issue by drawing on what he/she did say about other related matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You choose your words carefully. The language is precise rather than vague, natural rather than awkward, straightforward rather than ostentations.</li> <li>- Each piece of the essay is presented in a way that makes it clear to the reader how it is relevant to your thesis</li> <li>- Where appropriate, you use real or hypothetical examples to help illustrate abstract points.</li> </ul>
[Good] B+ (76-79), B (72-75) or B-(68-71)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thesis statement is clear, but general and unambitious.</li> <li>- The reasons given to support claims are occasionally weak or too brief. Some claims in need of defense are merely asserted.</li> <li>- Some key objections are not considered, or the response is weak or too brief.</li> <li>- Theoretical and/or practical implications are not explained, or the explanation is vague and imprecise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are minor inaccuracies in the account of the theory. Some small points are overlooked.</li> <li>- The theory's arguments for its conclusion(s) are described, but the relationship between them is not explained, or the explanation is vague and imprecise.</li> <li>- Use of quotations is sometimes missing or erratic or without proper citations.</li> <li>- Some key concepts are not defined, or are defined carelessly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The language is generally clear, but occasionally lacks precision or naturalness or desirable simplicity.</li> <li>- The relevance of small parts of the essay is not made clear.</li> <li>- Illustrative examples are used rarely or not at all.</li> </ul>
[Fair] C+ (64-67) C (60-63) or C-(56-59)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thesis statement is absent or insignificant or confused.</li> <li>- The reasons given to support claims are usually weak or too brief. Many claims in need of defense are merely asserted.</li> <li>- Objections are not considered, or they are only a straw-man version, or the response is ineffective.</li> <li>- Implications are not identified, or they are asserted without explanation.</li> <li>- The argument is likely to contain contradictions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are significant inaccuracies in the account of the theory. Some major points are overlooked.</li> <li>- The theory's conclusion(s) are described without reference to its argument.</li> <li>- Use of quotations is missing or erratic or without proper citations.</li> <li>- Key concepts are not defined, or are defined incorrectly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The language is often unclear, due to being vague or awkward or ostentatious.</li> <li>- The relevance of significant parts of the essay is not made clear.</li> <li>- Illustrative examples are used incorrectly or not at all.</li> </ul>
[Pass] D+ (53-55) D (50-52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student demonstrates an awareness of what an argument is, and tries to make one.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student grasps at least the main features of some of the theory's most important points.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The language is intelligible more often than not.</li> </ul>