PHIL5563 Methodology and Argumentation

Course Outline

Mode of Teaching: Face-to-face Teaching

Term: 2026-27 Term 1

Time：Thursday 18:30-21:30 **Location：ARC G03**

Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)

This course is an exploration, from both a practical and a theoretical perspective, of various aspects of argumentation theory and informal logic, with emphasis on the pragmatic and communicative dimensions of critical thinking and methodology as they inform good reasoning in various contexts. Among the topics covered are: basic principles of formal logic, categorization and application of informal fallacies, presumption, scientific method, pedagogical issues in teaching informal logic, etc.

Topics/Schedule (Tentative)

Week 1 (10 Sep) Overview and introduction to Arguments

Week 2 (17 Sep) Argument analysis

Week 3 (24 Sep) Pitfalls of language and definitions

Week 4 (8 Oct) Basic concepts of logic

Week 5 (15 Oct) Deductive validity

Week 6 (22 Oct) Methods of formal logic

Week 7 (29 Oct) Non-deductive arguments

Week 8 (5 Nov) Statistical and causal reasoning

Week 9 (12 Nov) Empirical and computational methods for philosophy

Week 10 (19 Nov) **In-class exam**

Week 11 (26 Nov) Survey of common fallacies

Week 12 (3 Dec) Presentation/debate 1

Week 13 (10 Dec) Presentation/debate 2

Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)

1. Acquire analytic skills and a critical disposition.
2. Grasp the central concepts in classical logic.
3. Demonstrate familiarity with major proof-theoretic methods in propositional and predicate logic.
4. Translate arguments in ordinary language into symbolic argument forms.
5. Recognize common valid argument forms.
6. Identify, classify and assess arguments in various contexts.
7. Identify and analyze informal fallacies.

Learning activities

1. Interactive lectures
2. In-class exercises
3. Group presentations
4. Debates

Assessment scheme

Task nature	**Description**	**Weight**
Class participation	Contribution to in-class discussions	10%
In-class exercises/quizzes	Short-answer questions	30%
In-class exam	Multiple-choice, short-answer and essay questions	40%
Presentation/debate	Group work on selected issues	20%

Grade Descriptor

Please refer to: http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf

Details of course website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

Recommended learning resources (Tentative)

Main textbook

M. H. Salmon. (2013). *Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking*, 6th edition. Cengage Learning.

Recommended readings

H. Cappelen, T. S. Gendler, and J. Hawthorne (Eds.). (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Methodology*. Oxford University Press.
A. Fisher. (2001). *Critical Thinking: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
I. Hacking. (2001). *An Introduction to Probability and Inductive Logic*. Cambridge University Press.
J. Y. F. Lau. (2011). *An Introduction to Critical Thinking and Creativity*. Wiley.
D. N. Walton. (2008). *Informal Logic: A Pragmatic Approach*, 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press.

何秀煌《思想方法導論》（臺北：三民書局，1990）
李天命《語理分析的思考方法》（香港：青年書屋，1981）

All required readings will be made available electronically via Blackboard.

AI tools usage guide

The use of AI tools is permitted; however, they must be explicitly acknowledged if they contribute significantly to any work submitted for assessment.

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Teacher	
Name:	Prof. ZHANG Jiji
Office location:	
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TA	
Name:	
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