

## PHIL 1500: Logic and Critical Thinking

Spring 2009

**Instructor: Brian Howell**

**Office: Peabody 24**

**Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00- 3:00 pm (and by appointment)**

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### Course Description:

This course will be an examination of examining. Each of us, as humans, makes choices constantly while engaged in daily life. After all, you did choose to come here today. Was this the right choice? Maybe, maybe not. What would it mean to think “critically” about such a question? As part of a course on “critical thinking” it will necessary for us to ask such questions and attempt to answer them. The aim simply will be to become a better thinker. Maybe you'll become a better person as a result. Something to think about anyway.

I have chosen to divide this course into two parts. During the first few weeks we will be focused logic and arguments in general. We will look at some ideas about what makes an argument good or bad, how to construct good arguments of your own, and how to find and analyze arguments given by others (even when they are not apparent). The second part of this course will made up of a selection of related philosophical texts, all of which are focused on the philosopher Socrates. We will see what the authors of these texts have to say about thinking and what Socrates as a character in them has to say about thinking. We will also think about the texts themselves. The ideas contained in each will overlap in some ways but will also diverge in some important ways. Hopefully by looking at them together and comparing them with our own ideas we will be able to gain some insight.

This course is designed to provide an introduction to philosophical thinking through argument practice and a careful reading of some philosophical classics. As an introductory philosophy course, there is no expectation that you have any previous acquaintance with philosophy. However, you will be expected to do quite a bit of work, both in and out of class. You should come to class prepared, having done all of the assigned reading and given the material some considerable thought. A large part of our classes will be discussion and you will be expected to participate. Though short, these readings will be difficult and will require slow and often multiple readings.

### Required Texts:

- Argument Handout (available on WebCT – please print and bring to class)
- *The Trials of Socrates*, ed. By C.D.C. Reeve (Hackett)
  - contains: - Plato, *Euthyphro*; *Apology*; *Crito*
  - Xenophon, *Socrates' Defense to the Jury*
  - Aristophanes, *Clouds*
- Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony* (available on WebCT – please print and bring to class)

### Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. This means that you must come to every class. If you cannot come for some reason please take note. I will allow three unexcused absences, no questions asked. I intend these primarily for undocumented illness and other such unforeseen circumstances. So please do not use these absences unless absolutely necessary. Beginning with the fourth unexcused absence points will be deducted from your participation grade. (Two percentage points for each absence) You will only be permitted to make-up missed work, including pop-quizzes, if you have a written excuse from the Health Center or Dean's Office.

**Grading:** Your final grade will be composed in the following way.

Participation and Attendance	10%
Assignments and Quizzes	20%
Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Final	20%

\* The honor code is in effect in this class and will be enforced.  
(<http://www.uga.edu/honesty/index.html>)

\*\*This syllabus is a plan for the course and is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
<b>Schedule of Readings</b> * You should read the work assigned for the given class prior to attending that class.	<b>8 January</b> Course Introduction
<u>13</u> Arguments - read sections A-D of “Argument Basics” handout	<u>15</u> Arguments - read section E of “Arg Basics” handout
<u>20</u> Arguments - do practice arguments and bring to class	<u>22</u> Arguments - read section F of “Arg Basics” handout
<u>27</u> Arguments - activity, TBA	<u>29</u> Arguments - activity, TBA
<b>3 February</b> Arguments - activity, TBA	<u>5</u> Arguments - activity, TBA
<u>10</u> Plato - “Euthyphro” - p. 3-15 (2a-10a)	<u>12</u> Plato - “Euthyphro” - p. 15-25 (10a-end)
<u>17</u> <b>Exam 1</b>	<u>19</u> Film Discussion TBA
<u>24</u> Plato - “Apology” - p. 26-36 (17a-24b)	<u>26</u> Plato - “Apology” - p. 36-45 (24b-30b)
<b>3 March</b> Plato - “Apology” - p. 45-61 (30c-end)	<u>5</u> Plato - “Apology” - re-read entire dialogue
<u>10</u> Spring Break – No Class	<u>12</u> Spring Break – No Class
<u>17</u> Plato - “Crito” - p. 62-67 (43a-46e)	<u>19</u> Plato - “Crito” - p. 67-71 (47a-49e)
<u>24</u> Plato - “Crito” - p. 71-78 (49e-end)	<u>26</u> <b>Exam 2</b>
<u>31</u> Xenophon “Socrates' Defense” - p. 178-184 (all)	<b>2 April</b> Aristophanes “Clouds” - p. 89-118 ( <i>line</i> 1-515)
<u>7</u> Aristophanes “Clouds” - p. 118-154 ( <i>line</i> 515-1130)	<u>9</u> Aristophanes “Clouds” - p. 154-176 ( <i>line</i> 1130-end)
<u>14</u> Kierkegaard, <i>Concept of Irony</i>	<u>16</u> Kierkegaard, <i>Concept of Irony</i>
<u>21</u> Kierkegaard, <i>Concept of Irony</i>	<u>23</u> Kierkegaard, <i>Concept of Irony</i>
<u>28</u> Film Discussion Kurosawa - “Rashomon”	<u>30</u> Final Discussion/Review

**\*Date of Final TBA**