



Critical Reasoning

Phil 100; SPRING 2024

SYLLABUS

Class Meeting times: UTR: 4:00-4:50am; Room: B210

Instructor: Dr. Andrei G. Zavaliy, *Professor of Philosophy*

Office Hours: UTR, 12:00-13:00pm; MW, 10:00-11:00 or by request.

Office Phone and Location: Ext. 3604; G332

E-MAIL: azavaliy@auk.edu.kw

Email Communication Policy:

Please be sure to write **your full name and indicate which class and section** you are taking when you send me an email. **Email without this crucial identifying information will be ignored.** If you have a question, please check the syllabus first and if your question is not answered there, then please feel free to send an email and I will be happy to clarify. I respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them; if I do not respond within 24 hours, please re-send the email.

AUK Mission Statement:

The American University of Kuwait is a liberal arts institution dedicated to teaching, learning, and scholarship. The University offers programs that provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong learning and professional success. AUK enriches society by fostering an environment that encourages critical thinking, effective communication, personal growth, service, and leadership.

College of Arts and Sciences Mission Statement:

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is committed to cultivating lifelong learning that empowers students to pursue technical competency in professional fields, self-awareness, a sense of civic and moral responsibility, and a breadth of vision in the tradition of liberal arts education. The College offers quality undergraduate programs leading to a bachelor's degree.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes:

Critical Reasoning or Logic studies the methods and principles for distinguishing good arguments from bad. When are the reasons given to support some claim really good reasons for accepting that claim? When is the reasoning fallacious? Our goal in this course is to develop certain basic ways to answer these questions. We begin with basic concepts for discussing, recognizing, and evaluating arguments. We proceed to study problems and dimensions of

meaning and how we may give definitions to clarify the meaning of concepts. We then consider a number of patterns of arguments that may seem persuasive, but which fail to give us logically good reasons for the conclusion. We then turn to a central family of deductive arguments, categorical syllogisms, developing a technique for determining whether a syllogism is a valid argument or not. We shall then consider briefly hypothetical and disjunctive syllogisms and arguments from analogy. Our goals are to develop understanding of the logical concepts involved and skill in applying those concepts in specific situations, in particular, to determine whether given arguments are logically strong or fallacious.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

CLO1:	Acquire conceptual knowledge of the purposes and benefits of logic and critical thinking in general in the context of the liberal education.
CLO2:	Demonstrate understanding of the various logical concepts, such as induction, deduction, validity, soundness, cogency and inference.
CLO3:	Draw a justified distinction between the persuasive and logical forces of various arguments.
CLO4:	Show the proficiency in using the Venn Diagrams and Truth-tables for determining the validity of deductive arguments.
CLO5:	Identify the most common logical fallacies and construct cogent, non-fallacious arguments when developing a rational defense of one’s point of view.

REQUIRED TEXT:

- *Critical Thinking*, by Moore and Parker, 12th edition, McGraw Hill, 2020. PDF file will be posted on Moodle.
- *Assorted Handouts*. Occasionally handouts with additional assignments will be posted to the class. You can access all the handouts, assignments and all the relevant course documents (e.g., syllabus, power-point presentations, study guides, etc.) from *Moodle*.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Any student who misses MORE THAN 15% of class sessions of any course during a semester should expect to receive an (FN), unless s/he submits documented evidence to the course instructor of inpatient medical care, death of an immediate family member, academic instructional activities, or national athletic activities. If excused, students are required to satisfy all coursework due or assigned during their absence, as determined by the course instructor. If a student does not submit documented evidence for her/his absence exceeding the limit, it is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from the course by the specified deadline, as indicated on the Academic Calendar. Students who withdraw from a course receive a grade of “W.” Students who do not withdraw from a course nor submit supporting documents for excessive absences should expect to receive a grade of “FN” (failure for non-attendance).”

THE 8-MINUTE RULE: You will not be able to sign the attendance sheet if you are more than 8 minutes late, and you'll have to take the absence. Leaving the class early will amount to an absence from the class as well even if you sign the attendance sheet.

**YOU NEED NOT EMAIL ME EXPLAINING OR ANNOUNCING YOUR ABSENCE.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT EXCEED THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF
ABSENCES ALLOWED**

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The American University of Kuwait regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values and standards of intellectual honesty. The guiding principle of academic integrity shall be that a student's submitted work, examinations, and projects must be that of the student's own work. The University is committed to enforcing its Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the University's Academic Integrity Procedures. It is strongly suggested that you educate yourself about what constitutes plagiarism by visiting www.plagiarism.org.

Academic Support:

Learning Support Services focuses on empowering students to become independent and successful learners by developing their literacy skills, enhancing their understanding, and helping them improve their academic and study skills. Learning Support Services is comprised of two centers: the Tutoring Center and the Writing Center. The Tutoring Center provides free academic support in various subjects to AUK student. Email: tutoringcenter@auk.edu.kw.

The Writing Center provides multilingual support (English, Arabic, French, and Spanish) through individual or small-group consultations. Email: writingcenter@auk.edu.kw

Disability Accommodations:

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, kindly arrange for an appointment with Ms. Sophia Pais, a Senior Counselor at the Counseling Center (spais@auk.edu.kw) located in front of Gate 2 at the earliest with the understanding that all disability-related accommodations require registration with the Counseling Center and are not applied retroactively.

Evaluation and Grading:

- 4 Quizzes - 33%
- Midterm Exam – 33 %
- Final Exam – 34 %

(NO extra credit work is available)

QUIZZES

There will be 4 quizzes during the semester. All quizzes will be announced in advance. The quizzes will cover the reading assignments as well as the class discussions. If you miss a quiz – IT CANNOT BE MADE UP. However, at the end of the semester I will only average the 3 best quizzes. The lowest 4th grade for the quiz will be dropped. Thus, if you miss one quiz you lose the privilege of having the lowest grade dropped.

The official AUK numerical grading system:

A	=	94 - 100%	(GPA: 4)	C-	=	70-73%	(GPA: 1.7)
A-	=	90 - 93%	(GPA: 3.7)	D+	=	67-69%	(GPA: 1.3)
B+	=	87 - 89%	(GPA: 3.3)	D	=	64 - 66%	(GPA: 1.0)
B	=	84 - 86%	(GPA: 3.0)	D-	=	60-63%	(GPA: 0.7)
B-	=	80 - 83%	(GPA: 2.7)	F	=	<60%	(GPA: 0.0)
C+	=	77 - 79%	(GPA: 2.3)	I	=	Incomplete	
C	=	74 - 76%	(GPA: 2.0)	WF	=	Withdrawal with Failure	

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The AUK Library provides you with the necessary support to conduct research and find additional readings for your class work. Need to research but don't know where to start? Not sure how to find and use online resources (books, data, articles...etc.)? Not sure how to cite a source or develop a reference list? **Ask a librarian!**

Research help is available through email, MS Teams, Zoom. Contact the library at: library@auk.edu.kw or go to <https://www.auk.edu.kw/academics/Library> to begin your search!

COURSE SCHEDULE:

We will try to cover the following topics in this order:

WEEKS 1-3 – What is Critical Thinking? (Chapters 1-2)

- The Basics: Claims, Issues and Arguments
- Two Kinds of Good Arguments: Deductive and Inductive
- Recognizing Arguments
- Arguments vs. Causal Explanations [*Chapter 11*]
- Persuasive and Logical force of Passages
- Language and Critical Thinking (Chapter 3)
 - Defects in Cognitive meaning: Vagueness and Ambiguity
 - Semantic vs. Syntactic Ambiguity
 - Function of Definitions

WEEKS 4-6 – Common Types of Inductive Arguments (Chapters 4, 10, 11)

- The Credibility of Sources and Argument from Authority
- Inductive Generalization
- Argument from Analogy
- Causal Inference

Midterm Exam

WEEKS 7-9– Persuasion through Rhetoric: Devices and Fallacies (Chapters 5, 6, 7)

- Euphemisms, Stereotypes and Innuendos
- ‘Psychological’ Fallacies of Reasoning
 - Fallacies of Relevance, Ambiguity and Weak Induction

WEEKS 10-12 - Deductive Arguments: Categorical Logic (Chapter 8)

- Categorical Propositions
- Square of Opposition

- Standard Form Categorical Syllogism
- Venn Diagrams
- Translation Challenges

WEEKS 13-15 - Deductive Arguments: Truth-Functional (Propositional) Logic (Chapter 9)

- Symbolic Language and Translation
- Truth-Tables
 - Consistency
 - Equivalence
 - Contradiction
- Common Valid and Invalid Deductive Argument forms

Final Exam

THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES.