

Syllabus
PHIL 10: REASONING SPRING 2009 W 6:30-9:00 pm
1455 EW6 Prof. Steinsvold

Course Description and Objectives

What are the best forms of reasoning? Which forms of reasoning should we avoid? What makes some forms of reasoning better than others, and why? These are the types of questions we will be exploring in this class. We will explore the relationship between philosophy and reasoning, discussing a variety of puzzles that have intrigued philosophers. Various forms of logic will be discussed, as well as basic probability, some statistics, psychology, social psychology, amongst other topics.

Required Text

Critical Reasoning, A Users Manual. By Chris Swoyer.

This text is available for free on the internet. Search for "Chris Swoyer" on google, or use:

Link to Swoyers homepage: <http://www.ou.edu/ouphil/chris.html>

Direct link to text: <http://www.ou.edu/ouphil/faculty/chris/crmscreen.pdf>

Other texts (also available from the internet) will be used as well.

Grading: Three Exams, Class Participation, and Attendance

There will be three major exams, each worth 33 % of your grade

Beyond this, healthy class participation (and to some extent, attendance) may be reflected in your final grade. Thus, if the student has an exam grade of a B- and also good class participation, the final grade may be a B or B+. Thus, participation may affect your grade by a range of ten points. These points are given at my discretion. Note that, there are homework questions in the text, and though I wont be collecting your homeworks, we will discuss answers to these questions in class. Do them. Overall, I hope you feel encouraged to participate. Class discussion makes everything more interesting. A lack of class participation will not negatively affect your grade (unfair to penalize the quiet). Class participation may involve presenting your answers to homework questions at the board. Being late, especially being continually late, will take away from your class participation points. Being late means arriving after attendance has been taken. If you arrive late, inform me after class to mark you as late. As I understand it, past a certain point I am allowed to fail the student for excessive absences. Hopefully it wont come to that. I do take doctors notes.

If you miss an exam there will be some penalty to your grade of this exam (once taken).