



## PHILOSOPHY 1250 COURSE OUTLINE



FEB. 07 2001

**I. Text:** Bierman & Assali, *The Critical Thinking Handbook*, chs.1-8.

### **II. Course Content & Tentative Schedule:**

**Jan.9,11,16,18,23,30:** Ch.1: "Linguistic Components of Arguments". Basic terminology which will be employed during the course. **Assignment:** Be sure to carefully read all the exercises and be prepared to answer them during the next class. A quiz is not beyond the realm of possibility.

**Ch.2, Part I:** "Elements of Arguments (pp.33-56)". What makes an argument work? Why are some good and others not so good? The first part of the chapter summarizes the basic ingredients of Aristotelian logic. **Assignment:** Pay close attention to the exercises 2.1-2.6. A quiz now enters the realm of probability.

**Ch.2, Part II:** "Elements of Arguments (pp.56-80)". This is a brief introduction to formal sentential logic which is the logic of computers. As usual, diligently peruse the remaining exercises. Quizzes will become common by this time.

**Feb.1,6:** Ch.3: "Reconstructing Arguments". How can written and spoken arguments be analyzed? How are an argument's assumptions identified? **Assignment:** Find a printed argument somewhere and analyze it in the manner suggested in the chapter. Again, the exercises! A quiz is more than eminent.

**Feb.8,13,15:** Ch. 4: "Evaluation of Arguments": After reconstructing an argument, how may it be criticized or supported? **Assignment:** Write a brief critical essay (500-800 words) on a topic of your choice, following the guidelines in the chapter. **Study for mid-term.**

**Feb.20:** Mid-Term

**Feb.22,Mar.6,8:** Ch.5: "Common Errors". Here the common "tricks of the trade" are identified and evaluated.

**Ch.6, Part I:** "Inductive Arguments (pp. 183-200)". Introduction to the most common form of argumentation.

**Ch.6, Part II:** "Inductive Arguments (pp.200-233)". Statistical reasoning is the focus of this part of the chapter.

**Mar.13,15,20,22:** Ch.7: "Reconstructing & Evaluating Inductive Arguments". Analyzing inductive arguments for clarity and strength. **Assignment:** Pay close attention to the exercises and there will likely be an in-class assignment.

**Mar27,29, Apr.3,5:** Ch.8: "Common Errors in Inductive Reasoning". Considers statistical and other fallacies. **Assignment:** Exercises. What would you conclude about the probability of a quiz on the basis of previous classes?

**Apr.10,12:** Review for Final Exam.

### **III. EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be based on a variety of short assignments and quizzes, a mid-term and a final exam.

**IV. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:** The instructor may be reached at Grande Prairie Composite High School during the day at 532-7721.\* The home phone number is 532-0293.

You may e-mail me at:

dwhitling@gppsd.ab.ca OR dwhit@telusplanet.net

\*I prefer that you don't leave voice mail for me;

D.Whitling