

# CRITICAL THINKING (PHIL 102)

## Summer 2008

“The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically...The complete education gives one not only power of concentration but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate.” (Martin Luther King)

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Instructor: John Anders  
Email: john.anders@unlv.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Throughout our daily lives we are presented with many arguments of various kinds. This class will help you to understand the structure of those arguments, giving you the ability to distinguish good arguments from bad arguments. In this class you will learn to:

1. Distinguish arguments from non-arguments within ordinary-language.
2. Identify the parts of an argument.
3. Identify the structure of different kinds of arguments: inductive, causal, analogical, deductive.
4. Distinguish between the concepts of validity and soundness.
5. Recognize valid syllogisms.
6. Recognize common logical fallacies.

**TEXTS:** (1) Instructor Notes to be posted online  
(2) Supplemental texts supplied online

**GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS:** Your final grade comes from several components.

Big Homework assignments – 30%  
Weekly homework assignments\* – 30%  
Mid Term – 20%  
Final Exam – 20%

\* I drop your 2 lowest homework scores.

I assign letter grades in the usual way: 90% is the lower bound for an A-, 87% the lower bound for a B+, 83% the lower bound for a B, etc. Scores on the cusp are rounded up. There are no extra credit assignments.

**CLASS POLICIES:** You are allowed two unexcused absences. After that, your final grade will suffer (-3 points per absence deducted from overall final grade). If you must miss class you should inform me by email in advance for the absence to count as excused. (I am flexible about this if you are faced with legitimate sorts of concerns.)

Late homework will not be accepted. No Exceptions!

Cheating or plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated. The usual penalty is for cheating is to fail the course.

If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the appropriate department at CSN