

University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
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General Syllabus

PHIL 31083 Reasoning Across the Disciplines

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Students explore reasoning and critical thinking, developing analytic tools based on the standards of logic and reasoning. They then investigate argument analysis and formulation in various disciplines, applying their recently developed reasoning skills.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

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

1. Identify and analyze arguments in specific disciplinary contexts;
2. Identify and present the content of a text;
3. Analyze and critique definitions presented in the disciplinary contexts, and avoid common errors when generating definitions;
4. Analyze arguments/text in specific disciplinary contexts on the basis of relations of classes and categories used by an author, and avoid common errors when generating such arguments/texts;
5. Analyze arguments/texts in specific disciplinary contexts on the basis of propositional relations presented by an author and avoid common errors when generating such arguments/texts;
6. Analyze and critique various forms of scientific reasoning in specific disciplinary contexts, and avoid common errors when generating a scientific argument/text;
7. Synthesize and integrate the skills listed in 1-6 in a final project based in the student's project.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills**Critical Thinking Skills**

Students will develop skills for analysis of formal and informal argument, deductive and inductive reasoning, and scientific reasoning.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will write papers, lead class discussion, and present debates on a range of reasoning topics. Class presentation will be an important part of the discipline.

III. Major Course Topics

- A. Introduction to the Study of Reason and Analysis
- B. Arguments and Deduction
- C. Context and Induction
- D. Faulty Reasoning
- E. Explanations and Analogy
- F. Evaluating Explanations
- G. Understanding Cause
- H. Causal Explanations
- I. Analysis of arguments from various disciplines including law, social science, the arts, psychology, medicine, political science, history, business, health sciences, and education.