Philosophy 9: Principles of Critical Reasoning
Summer 2023

Instructors:
John Kardosh
Email: jkardosh@humnet.ucla.edu

Aaron West
Email: awest@humnet.ucla.edu

Calvin Normore
Email: normore@humnet.ucla.edu

Course Description:
This course will introduce both the theory and practice of critical reasoning. Reasoning is both something we do in every area of life and something for which we think there are standards that must be met if it is to be done well. Our course examines the ways we reason, the ways we ought to reason, and seeks to harmonize these perspectives.

The curriculum is divided into two modules. Module One focuses on logical methods for identifying and evaluating deductive arguments. Meanwhile, Module Two delves into the mathematical frameworks underpinning inductive arguments and decision-making. This module also underscores the limitations inherent in these theories, highlighting common errors humans tend to commit when making decisions or reasoning inductively.

Required Texts and Supplies:
All required readings will be freely available on our BruinLearn/Canvas site: https://bruinlearn.ucla.edu/courses/165995

We will also use a few web applications for diagramming and evaluating arguments. Students are encouraged to bring their personal devices (Mac, PC, or Chromebook) to practice these applications. Students unable to bring a personal device can borrow one from CLICC Laptop Lending in Powell Library.

Course Requirements/Grading:
- Problem Sets:
  - Week 1: 15%
  - Week 2: 25%
  - Week 3: 25%
- Final Exam – 35%

Learning Objectives
- Become familiar with current research on how we reason
- Acquire skills and tools for avoiding reasoning traps
- Acquire tools for evaluating arguments in academic and non-academic articles
- Learn to thoughtfully review peer work
Learn to evaluate statistical and probabilistic claims and arguments
- Learn the capabilities and limitations of AI tools in evaluating arguments
- Learn to frame a research question
- Learn to prepare an article for publication

**Schedule of Topics and Readings:**
A schedule of readings and topics for each week will be posted to BruinLearn/Canvas: https://bruinlearn.ucla.edu/courses/165995. Please consult the schedule for required, recommended, and optional readings.

**Accommodations:**
Students with learning needs that require special accommodations are encouraged to consult with UCLA’s Center for Accessible Education (CAE). Details of the services CAE provides, including the protocol for letters of accommodation, can be found on their website: https://www.cae.ucla.edu. Your instructor or teaching assistant also remain readily available for any assistance required to enhance the accessibility of the class; so, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

**Academic Integrity:**
Students are expected to know and to follow the university’s guidelines for academic honesty. Academic misconduct can occur in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. When in doubt about whether some academic practice is acceptable, ask your instructor for assistance. Always err on the side of caution. Any suspected violation of university policy regarding academic conduct will be reported directly to the Office of the Dean of Students, without exception. UCLA’s policies on academic and intellectual integrity can be found at:
- https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode
- https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity