



PHL 137

Critical Thinking

S3 Day 2015

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor
Wilson Cooper
wilson.cooper@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email
By Appointment
Credit points
3
Prerequisites
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description
This unit aims to teach the fundamentals of critical thinking and reasoning. Students learn how to construct, analyse and critically evaluate arguments; how to detect common fallacies in reasoning; and how to think logically and creatively. We teach these skills by developing practical techniques for the evaluation of reasoning, and applying them to arguments from business, law, science, politics, philosophy and the media. Critical thinking skills are invaluable across all disciplines, and will benefit students in academic contexts and in life beyond university.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Online Quiz 1</u>	10%	Thursday 17th Dec 2015
<u>In-Class Test</u>	25%	Friday 18th Dec 2015
<u>Mid-Session Assignment</u>	25%	Mon 11th Jan 2016
<u>Online Quiz 2</u>	10%	Thur 14th Jan 2016
<u>Final Written Assignment</u>	30%	Fri 22nd Jan 2016

Online Quiz 1

Due: **Thursday 17th Dec 2015**

Weighting: **10%**

This is an online multiple choice quiz that will test the material covered in lectures 1 through to 4.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes.

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue

In-Class Test

Due: **Friday 18th Dec 2015**

Weighting: **25%**

A test that will be taken in-class during lecture 6 and covering materials from lectures 1 through to 5. For those enrolled as iLearn only the test will be available online from Friday the 18th of December until Sunday the 20th of December 2015.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised

form

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue

Mid-Session Assignment

Due: **Mon 11th Jan 2016**

Weighting: **25%**

Construct a short argument in response to a set question and provide a standardisation of your argument.

The assessment task relates to the following learning outcomes:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Online Quiz 2

Due: **Thur 14th Jan 2016**

Weighting: **10%**

This is an online multiple choice quiz that will test the material covered in lectures 7 through to 9.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language in within persuasive dialogue
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Final Written Assignment

Due: **Fri 22nd Jan 2016**

Weighting: **30%**

This written assignment includes a broad standardisation of a longer piece of reasoning along with a 1200 word evaluation. It will include the materials from lectures 1 through to 14 of the unit with a focus on lectures 11 to 14.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Delivery and Resources

The unit will be delivered via fourteen lectures, which will include a practical component to allow the application of skills under supervision.

The unit will be supported by an iLearn website that will contain resources including, the unit text, discussion forums, self-evaluation quizzes, helpful links, lecture recordings, practice tests, and much more.

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/> PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement.

Please consult teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements.

Unit Schedule

Lecture 1 7th Dec	Introduction: Why do we need critical thinking? What are arguments?
Lecture 2 9th Dec	Standardising arguments
Lecture 3 11th Dec	Counterarguments; What are necessary and sufficient conditions?
Lecture 4 14th Dec	Necessary and sufficient conditions continued; conditional arguments and their validity
Lecture 5 16th Dec	Deductive arguments and inductive arguments
Lecture 6 18th Dec	Revision; In-Class test
Lecture 7 4th Jan	Inductive and statistical generalisations
Lecture 8 6th Jan	How the structure of arguments relates to our behaviour
Lecture 9 8th Jan	Inference to the best explanation; causal arguments
Lecture 10 11th Jan	Analogical arguments

Lecture 11 13th Jan	Clarifying arguments; language
Lecture 12 15th Jan	Broad standardisation
Lecture 13 18th Jan	Fallacies
Lecture 14 20th Jan	Evaluating longer arguments; Using these skills in your own arguments

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment

- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning

- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning

- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Recognise the structure of arguments and represent that structure in a standardised form
- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should

have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and confidently evaluate different types of reasoning
- Understand the different functions of language within persuasive dialogue
- Detect formal and informal forms of fallacious reasoning
- Formulate forceful arguments of your own
- Generalise your critical thinking skills to a wide variety of contexts

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz 1
- In-Class Test
- Mid-Session Assignment
- Online Quiz 2
- Final Written Assignment