

PHIL-105 How to Reason and Argue:
An Introduction to Critical Thinking
Spring 2024

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Course Description:

We often wonder *what* to think. We ask questions like: What is the square root of 201,601? What is the most fundamental particle of our universe? What is justice? What led to the collapse of the Roman Empire? What is the fastest route to that coffee shop off Franklin Street? And so on. But rarely do we consider *how* to think.

This course is an introduction into how to think. It covers the basics of argument identification, argument evaluation, argument construction, errors in reasoning, and critical thinking.

But don't be fooled: this course is *not* a course in rhetoric, the art of persuasion. Learning how to think critically is not about winning arguments. Thinking critically is about subjecting one's own beliefs and values, as well as those of others, to intense scrutiny. The reward of thinking critically is not a knockdown of one's intellectual opponents, but a deeper understanding of the matters we care about most.