In this course, students will develop deductive and inductive critical reasoning skills through the
analysis of pseudoscientific claims and theories. Topics such as constructing and analyzing
arguments and their parts, identifying fallacies, testing for validity, explaining and criticizing theories,
knowledge, meaning, evidence, and truth, will be covered throughout the semester. Students will be
expected to read assigned materials (about 40-50 pages per week) and will be evaluated and graded
on weekly in-class quizzes and a final take-home exam.

Required Texts


Grading and Assignments

Students will be given a total of 8 in-class quizzes, each worth 10% (80% total) of final grade. A
final take-home exam will be given the last week of classes, based on formal logic lectures and
materials given throughout the second half of the semester. The final exam is worth 20% of the
final grade.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation is a requirement for this course; please note that final grades will be
adjusted favorably for those students who regularly attend and actively participate in class
throughout the semester.
Assignments

Week 1 (Jan. 6, 8, 10): Chapter 1 (CP) Deciding What to Believe (pgs. 1-18)
Chapter 1 (SV) Close Encounters with the Strange (pgs. 1-12)

Chapter 4 (SV) Relativism, Truth, Reality (pgs. 70-93)
Jan. 17 quiz #1 (chapters 1, 2, and 4)

Week 3 (Jan. 22, 24): Jan. 20 no classes; Martin Luther King Jr. Observed Holiday
Chapter 3 (CP) Understanding Arguments through Reconstruction

Week 4 (Jan. 27, 29, 31): Chapter 3 (CP) continued.
Chapter 5 (SV) Knowledge, Belief, and Evidence (pgs. 94-130)
Jan. 31 quiz #2 (chapters 3 and 5)

Week 5 (Feb. 3, 5, 7): Chapter 6 (CP) Fallacies: Arguments That Tend to Persuade (pgs. 155-190)
Chapter 8 (SV) How to Assess a “Miracle Cure” (pgs. 211-246)
(Optional Reading) Appendix - Fallacies (SV) (pg. 298)

Week 6 (Feb. 10, 12, 14): Chapter 6 (CP) continued
Chapter 8 (SV) continued
Feb. 14 quiz #3 (chapters 6 and 8)

Week 7 (Feb. 17, 19, 21): Chapter 7 (CP) That Depends on What You Mean by… (pgs. 191-227)
Chapter 6 (SV) Evidence and Inference (pgs. 134-156)
Feb. 21 quiz #4 (chapter 7)

Week 8 (Feb. 24, 26, 28): Chapter 6 (SV) continued

March 3rd-7th Spring Break: No classes

Week 9 (Mar. 10, 12, 14): Chapter 8 (CP) Arguments That are Not Deductive (pgs. 228-285)
Mar 14 quiz #5 (chapters 6 and 8)

Week 10 (Mar. 17, 19, 21): Chapter 2 (SV) Possibility of the Impossible (pgs. 13-30)
Chapter 3 (SV) Looking for Truth in Personal Experience (pgs. 31-66)
Mar. 21 quiz #6 (chapters 2 and 3)

Week 11 (Mar. 24): Chapter 9 (CP) Explanation and the Criticism of Theories (pgs. 286-339)
No class March 26 and 28 (I will be at a Philosophy Conference in San Francisco)
Week 12 (Mar. 31, Apr. 2, 4): Chapter 4 (CP) Evaluating Arguments (pgs. 88-122)
   Apr. 4 quiz #7 (chapter 9)

Week 13 (Apr. 7, 9, 11):  Chapter 4 (CP) continued
                          Chapter 5 (CP) When Does the Conclusion Follow? (pgs. 123-153)
                          Apr. 11 quiz #8 (chapter 4)

Week 14 (Apr. 14, 16, 18): Chapter 5 (CP) continued
                           Review Chapters 4 and 5

Week 15 (Apr. 21, 23, 25): Take Home Exam given in class April 21 and due April 25th
                           Student Evaluations April 23