Argument Standards Worksheet

NAME ____________________ KEY ____________________

Philosophy 130
O’Rourke & Sertler

Argument Standards

A. Mark the following as True or False:

1. Every argument with a false conclusion is invalid. T / F
2. Every argument with a false premise is invalid. T / F
3. Every argument with a false premise and a false conclusion is invalid. T / F
4. Every argument with a false premise and a true conclusion is invalid. T / F
5. Every argument with true premises and a false conclusion is invalid. T / F
6. Every argument with a true conclusion is sound. T / F
7. Every argument with a false conclusion is unsound. T / F

B. Represent these arguments in standard form and then determine whether they are valid and (relative to a context of your choosing) sound.

1. David Letterman is over four feet tall, so he is over two feet tall.

   P1. David Letterman is over four feet tall.
   ..............................
   C. David Letterman is over two feet tall.

   **Valid and sound**

2. Since Jimmy Carter was president, he must have won an election.

   P1. Jimmy Carter was president.
   ..............................
   C. Jimmy Carter must have won an election.

   **Invalid and unsound**
3. If all of Illinois were in Canada, then Chicago would be in Canada. But Chicago is not in Canada. Therefore, not all of Illinois is in Canada.

P1. If all of Illinois were in Canada, then Chicago would be in Canada.
P2. Chicago is not in Canada.
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C. Not all of Illinois is in Canada.

Valid and sound

4. There can’t be a largest six-digit number, because six-digit numbers are numbers, and there is no largest number.

P1. Six-digit numbers are numbers.
P2. There is no largest number.
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C. There can’t be a largest six-digit number.

Invalid and unsound

5. Either you are going to Horrock’s or you’re going to Meijer. You’re going to Horrock’s, so you must not be going to Meijer.

P1. Either you are going to Horrock’s or you’re going to Meijer.
P2. You’re going to Horrock’s.
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C. You must not be going to Meijer.

Invalid and unsound – We interpret the ‘or’ inclusively; see the handout on the ‘or’ here.