

# PHIL 2050.001/101: Logic and Critical Thinking

**Fall 2026**

10:10 – 11:00 AM

All sessions meet in EESAT 115

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Office: EESAT 225D

**Office Hours:** Monday/Wednesday 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM or by appointment

## Course Description and Objectives

*A focus on critical thinking to develop the skills for making sound arguments and for evaluating the arguments of others in order to recognize the difference between arbitrary and well-reasoned judgments. Topics include deductive and inductive modes of practical reasoning, common fallacies, rules of inference, and the formal rules of logic.*

By what criteria do we distinguish good arguments from bad ones? What does it mean to say that one statement follows from another? Logic, as the science of argumentation, attempts to give students a means for answering these questions. As we will see, understanding how to answer these questions is important for proficiency in reasoning. Heightened ability to express ideas clearly and concisely, and enlarged capacity to formulate arguments rigorously and to analyze them critically, are crucial skills for us as thinking beings.

This course aims to increase your skills as a rigorous critical thinker. To that end, you will learn how to assess the strength of an argument, including a critical evaluation of your own writing. You will learn to pay attention to the way every position entails further logical commitments. And you will learn to examine both the structure and content of an argument in order to better understand the way each contributes to the rigor of an argument.

## Course Structure and Attendance

**Mondays** and **Wednesdays** are lecture sessions: The reading in this course is all optional and supplementary; all of the content you will be assessed on will come from in-class lectures. I will take attendance on Mondays and Wednesdays, but you will not be graded on your attendance. **Fridays** are “recitation” sessions: I will not lecture on new material on Fridays. The sessions will be for answering your questions, submitting homework, and/or taking quizzes or exams. I will not take attendance on Fridays, but you must be present in order to take a quiz or exam.

Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class that you are able. I have great respect for students who are balancing the demands of their coursework with the responsibilities of caring for family members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss a class, please contact me and we will try to find ways to bring you up to speed on material you miss.

## ADA Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it's important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>).

## Communication

Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

## Required Materials

There is no textbook for this course. This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere](https://online.unt.edu/learn) (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

## Recommended Materials

8.5"x11" pad of graph paper for formal logic assignments

## Course Requirements

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|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| • <b>Midterm Exam</b>              | 25%             |
| • <b>Quizzes</b>                   | 5%              |
| • <b>Argument Diagramming Exam</b> | 15%             |
| • <b>Fallacies Exam</b>            | 15%             |
| • <b>Homework Assignments</b>      | --- (see below) |
| • <b>3-Essay Sequence</b>          | 40%             |
- (see assignment descriptions for relative weight)

## Grading Policies

A: 90-100%; B: 80-89.9%; C: 70-79.9%; D: 60-69.9%; F: below 60.0%

- **Homework is not graded.** It is optional and will be awarded points on the basis of completeness rather than correctness. For every assignment you choose to hand in, you will receive **one bonus point**. These points will be added to your **midterm exam total**.

- **Logic Puzzles** can also be completed for bonus points (added to your **essay sequence total**), but **points are awarded for correct solutions only**.
- **Late homework and logic puzzles will receive no credit.** You should submit assignments in class on the listed due dates (see below), but you may submit homework and/or logic puzzles early (either in class or during office hours) if you need to make advance arrangements for days when you'll be absent.
- **You must be present in class to take the scheduled quizzes and exams.** If you cannot be present during the exam date, you should make advance arrangements with me to take the exam in question early. **No late exams will be given.**

## Policy on Generative AI

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [insert tool(s) here, e.g., Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the [Student Academic Integrity policy \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003).

## Course Schedule

| Week     | Date      | Content                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | August 17 | <b>First Day:</b><br>Syllabus; Introductions; Outline of the course<br><br><b>Lecture/Discussion:</b> Logic, Arguments, Persuasion, and Intelligence<br><br><b>Reading:</b> Why Logic? |
|          | August 19 | <b>Lecture:</b> Symbols and Formulas<br><br><b>Reading:</b> Connectives<br>Syntax and Symbolization                                                                                    |
|          | August 21 | <b>Homework 1 Due</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>2</b> | August 24 | <b>Lecture:</b> Using Truth Tables<br><br><b>Reading:</b> Semantics §3.1-3.2                                                                                                           |
|          | August 26 | <b>Lecture:</b> Using Truth Tables<br><br><b>Reading:</b> Semantics §3.1-3.2                                                                                                           |
|          | August 28 | <b>Homework 2 Due</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>3</b> | August 31 | <b>Lecture:</b> Properties of Propositions and Sets<br><br><b>Reading:</b> Semantics §3.3-3.4<br>Properties of Propositions, Sets, and Arguments<br>Short Form Tables                  |

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|----------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          | September 2  | <b>Lecture:</b> Argument Validity<br><b>Reading:</b> Semantics §3.5-3.6<br>Properties of Propositions, Sets, and Arguments<br>Short Form Tables<br>Testing For Validity |
|          | September 4  | <b>Homework 3 Due</b>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>4</b> | September 7  | <b>Labor Day</b><br>No Class                                                                                                                                            |
|          | September 9  | <b>Lecture:</b> Argument Validity<br><b>Reading:</b> Semantics §3.5-3.6<br>Properties of Propositions, Sets, and Arguments<br>Short Form Tables<br>Testing For Validity |
|          | September 11 | <b>Truth Tables Quiz</b>                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>5</b> | September 14 | <b>Lecture:</b> Derivations: The Nine Basic Rules<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.1                                                                                   |
|          | September 16 | <b>Lecture:</b> Practicing Derivations<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.1                                                                                              |
|          | September 18 | <b>Homework 4 Due</b>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>6</b> | September 21 | <b>Lecture:</b> Constructing Derivations<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.2<br>Derivations: Rule Citation Guide                                                        |
|          | September 23 | <b>Lecture:</b> Constructing Derivations<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.2<br>Derivations: Rule Citation Guide                                                        |
|          | September 25 | <b>Homework 5 Due</b>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>7</b> | September 28 | <b>Lecture:</b> Derivation Strategies<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.3<br>Derivations: Rule Citation Guide<br>Dr. Lampert's Derivation Strategies                    |
|          | September 30 | <b>Lecture:</b> Derivation Strategies<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations §5.3<br>Derivations: Rule Citation Guide<br>Dr. Lampert's Derivation Strategies                    |
|          | October 2    | <b>Derivations Quiz</b><br><b>Homework 6 Due</b>                                                                                                                        |

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| <b>8</b>  | October 5   | <b>Lecture:</b> Advanced Derivations<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations<br>Dr. Lampert's Derivation Strategies                                 |
|           | October 7   | <b>Lecture:</b> Advanced Derivations<br><b>Reading:</b> Derivations<br>Dr. Lampert's Derivation Strategies                                 |
|           | October 9   | <b>Homework 7 Due</b>                                                                                                                      |
| <b>9</b>  | October 12  | Exam Review                                                                                                                                |
|           | October 14  | Exam Review                                                                                                                                |
|           | October 16  | <b>Midterm Exam</b>                                                                                                                        |
| <b>10</b> | October 19  | <b>Lecture:</b> Informal Logic – Structure and Content<br><b>Reading:</b> The Basic Tools of Reasoning<br>Basic Argument Analysis, pp. 1-7 |
|           | October 21  | <b>Lecture:</b> Informal Logic – Structure and Content<br><b>Reading:</b> The Basic Tools of Reasoning<br>Basic Argument Analysis, pp. 1-7 |
|           | October 23  | <b>Homework 8 Due</b><br><b>Essay #1 Due (11:59 PM)</b>                                                                                    |
| <b>11</b> | October 26  | <b>Lecture:</b> Diagramming Arguments<br><b>Reading:</b> Basic Argument Analysis, pp. 7-30<br>Diagramming Arguments                        |
|           | October 28  | <b>Lecture:</b> Diagramming Arguments<br><b>Reading:</b> Basic Argument Analysis, pp. 7-30<br>Diagramming Arguments                        |
|           | October 30  | <b>Homework 9 Due</b><br><b>Peer-Editing Assignment Due (11:59 PM)</b>                                                                     |
| <b>12</b> | November 2  | <b>Lecture:</b> Identifying and Diagramming Implicit Premises<br><b>Reading:</b> Advanced Argument Analysis                                |
|           | November 4  | <b>Lecture:</b> Diagramming Debates<br><b>Reading:</b> Advanced Argument Analysis                                                          |
|           | November 6  | <b>Argument Diagramming Exam</b>                                                                                                           |
| <b>13</b> | November 9  | <b>Lecture:</b> Fallacies<br><b>Reading:</b> Spot Fallacies                                                                                |
|           | November 11 | <b>Lecture:</b> Fallacies<br><b>Reading:</b> Spot Fallacies                                                                                |

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|           | November 13    | <b>Homework 10 Due</b><br><b>Essay #2 Due (11:59 PM)</b>                                                                |
| <b>14</b> | November 16    | <b>Lecture:</b> Catching Fallacies in the Wild                                                                          |
|           | November 18    | <b>Lecture:</b> Catching Fallacies in the Wild                                                                          |
|           | November 20    | <b>Fallacies Exam</b>                                                                                                   |
|           | November 23-27 | <b>Thanksgiving Break</b><br>No Class                                                                                   |
| <b>15</b> | November 30    | <b>Lecture:</b> LSAT and other Graduate Admissions Exams<br><b>Reading:</b> Reasoning on Graduate School Entrance Exams |
|           | December 2     | <b>Lecture:</b> LSAT and other Graduate Admissions Exams<br><b>Reading:</b> Reasoning on Graduate School Entrance Exams |
|           | December 4     | <b>Reading Day</b><br>No Class                                                                                          |
|           | December 7     | <b>Final Exams Week</b> (No Class)<br><b>Essay #3 Due (11:59 PM)</b>                                                    |