

IBH 2AE3 Critical Thinking Fall 2020

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course aims to develop students' ability to identify and evaluate various kinds of reasoning that are frequently encountered in everyday life, as well as their ability to articulate their evaluations of that reasoning. Although our primary focus will be to gain an understanding of how good reasoning works, we will also work on identifying some common pitfalls that can lead to bad reasoning and other errors of thought: informal fallacies and cognitive biases.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. When given a passage of writing, identify its structure and which parts of the passage include reasoning and which do not
2. Correctly schematize reasoning found in passages of writing to reveal its structure
3. Evaluate the quality of reasoning in a variety of kinds of arguments
4. Identify errors in reasoning and thinking due to a variety of informal fallacies and cognitive biases

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Megan Stotts	E-Mail: stottsm@mcmaster.ca
Class Times: Thursdays 10:30–11:20am (with two exceptions: on Oct. 1 and Nov. 19, we will meet 4:30–5:20pm instead)	
Virtual Office Hours: TBD	

COURSE DELIVERY

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	DELIVERY	DESCRIPTION	TOOL(s)
Self-study	Asynchronous	Students read chapters from the textbook, watch pre-recorded lectures, and complete exercises at specified points before and during the lectures.	Textbook (hard copy); Avenue to Learn with links to videos; Teams, Zoom, or perhaps an online whiteboard for working with other students
Virtual Q&A	Synchronous	Instructor answers students' questions about course material live for 50 minutes each week. Attendance is highly recommended, but there is no penalty for missing a session.	Zoom, during scheduled class time.

EVALUATIONS	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
Exercises	10%	Several exercises will be due via Avenue during self-study each week, and a random selection of those exercises will be marked for completion. All marked exercises will be weighted equally.
Tests	65%	Five tests, all on Avenue to Learn, weighted equally. Each will be available for 48 hours, but students will have a time limit once they begin.
Reflection	10%	Near the end of the term, students will submit a reflection about the ways in which the skills from this class apply to business contexts. Students may choose between a written essay or an oral presentation submitted as a video upload.
Final exam	15%	This is essentially a sixth test. It will have the same length and format as the other tests.