

**DOCUMENT N: COURSE AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COVER SHEET**

See Course and Program Development Policy and Procedures for Instructions

<b>SCHOOL:</b> LAW <input type="checkbox"/> MSB <input type="checkbox"/> YGCLA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Contact Name:</b> Joshua Kassner	<b>Phone:</b> X:5316
<b>DEPARTMENT / DIVISION:</b> LEHS		
<b>SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL (state name of action item 1-20 and course name, code &amp; number / program affected):</b> New Course: Critical Thinking and Arguments, PHIL 150 / Jurisprudence and General Education RESUBMIT		
<b>PROPOSED SEMESTER OF IMPLEMENTATION:</b> Fall <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Year: 2009		

<b>Box 1: TYPE OF ACTION</b>	ADD(NEW) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DEACTIVATE <input type="checkbox"/>	MODIFY <input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Box 2: LEVEL OF ACTION</b>	Non-Credit <input type="checkbox"/>	Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>

Box 3: ACTION ITEM (check appropriate boxes)		DOCUMENTS REQUIRED (see box 4 below)	IMPACT REVIEWS (see box 5 on back)	APPROVAL SEQUENCE (see box 6 on back)
	1. Experimental Course <sup>1</sup>	NOP	a, c, e	AC
	2. Course Title	NO		ABCD
	3. Course Credits	NO		ABCD
	4. Course Number	NO		ABCD
	5. Course Level	NO		ABCD
	6. Pre & Co-Requisite	NO		ABCD
	7. Course Description	NOP		ABCDEF
X	8. New Course	NOP		ABCDEF
	9. Deactivate a Course	NO		ABCDEF
	10. Program Requirements	NO	b, c, d, e	ABCDEF
	11a. UG Specialization (24 credits or less)	NO	a, b, c, d, e	ABCDEF
	11b. Masters Specialization (12 credits or less)	NO	a, b, c, d, e	ABCDEF
	11c. Doctoral Specialization (18 credits or less)	NO	a, b, e	ABCDEF
	12. Closed Site Program	NOT	e	ABCDHIK
	13. Program Suspension <sup>9</sup>	NO,5	a, e	ABCDEGIK
	14a. Certificate Program (ug/g) exclusively within existing degree program	NO	a, c, e	ABCDEFHIK
	14b. Certificate Program (ug/g) where degree programs do not exist or where courses are selected across degree programs (12 or more credits)	NOQR, 6	a, c, e	ABCDEFHJL
	15. Off-Campus Delivery of Existing Program	NO, 4	a, b, c, e	ABCDHIL
	16a. UG Concentration (exceeds 24 credit hours)	NO, 5	a, c, d, e	ABCDEFHJL
	16b. Masters Concentration (exceeds 12 credit hours)	NO, 5	a, c, d, e	ABCDEFHJL
	16c. Doctoral Concentration (exceeds 18 credit hours)	NO, 5	a, c, d, e	ABCDEFHJL
	17. Program Title Change	NO, 5	a, c, d, e	ABCDEFHJL
	18. Program Termination	NO, 10	d, e	ABCDEFHIK
	19. New Degree Program	NOQR, 3,8	a, c, d, e	ABCDEFHJL
	20. Other	Varies	Varies	Varies

Box 4: DOCUMENTATION (check boxes of documents included)			
X	N. This Cover Sheet	Q. Full 5-page MHEC Proposal	T. Other
X	O. Summary Proposal	R. Financial Tables (MHEC)	
X	P. Course Definition Document	S. Contract	

- Approval of experimental course automatically lapses after two offerings unless permanently approved as a new course.
- Codes: a) Library Services (Langsdale or Law) b) Office of Technology Services c) University Relations d) Admissions
- Letter of Intent is required by USM at least 30 days before a full proposal can be submitted. Letter of Intent requires only the approval of the dean and the provost and is forwarded to USM by the Office of the Provost.
- One-page letter to include: Program title & degree/certificate to be awarded; resources requirements; need and demand; similar programs; method of instruction; and oversight and student services (MHEC requirement)
- One-page letter with description and rationale (MHEC requirement)
- One or two-page document that describes: centrality to mission; market demand; curriculum design; adequacy of faculty resources; and assurance program will be supported with existing resources. (MHEC requirement)
- Learning objectives, assessment strategies; fit with UB strategic plan
- Joint Degree Program or Primary Degree Programs require submission of MOU w/ program proposal. (MHEC requirement)
- Temporary suspension of program to examine future direction; time not to exceed two years. No new students admitted during suspension, but currently enrolled students must be given opportunity to satisfy degree requirements.

**DOCUMENT N: COURSE AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COVER SHEET (Page 2 of 2)**

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<b>SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL</b> (state name of action item 1-20 and course name, code & number / program affected):
New Course: Critical Thinking and Arguments, PHIL 150 / Jurisprudence and General Education

10. Provide:
- evidence that the action is consistent with UB mission and can be implemented within the existing program resources of the institution.
  - proposed date after which no new students will be admitted into the program;
  - accommodation of currently enrolled students in the realization of their degree objectives;
  - treatment of all tenured and non-tenured faculty and other staff in the affected program;
  - reallocation of funds from the budget of the affected program; and
  - existence at other state public institutions of programs to which to redirect students who might have enrolled in the program proposed for abolition.
11. University Council *review* (for a recommendation to the President or back to the Provost) shall be limited to curricular or academic policy issues that may potentially affect the University's mission and strategic planning, or have a significant impact on the generation or allocation of its financial resources.

Box 5: IMPACT REVIEW	SIGNATURES (see procedures for authorized signers)	DATE
a. Library <input type="checkbox"/> No impact <input type="checkbox"/> Impact statement attached	Director or designee:	
b. OTS <input type="checkbox"/> No impact <input type="checkbox"/> Impact statement attached	CIO or designee:	
c. University Relations <input type="checkbox"/> No impact <input type="checkbox"/> Impact statement attached	Director or designee:	
d. Admissions <input type="checkbox"/> No impact <input type="checkbox"/> Impact statement attached	Director or designee:	
e. Records <input type="checkbox"/> No impact <input type="checkbox"/> Impact statement attached	Registrar or designee:	

Box 6: APPROVAL SEQUENCE	APPROVAL SIGNATURES	DATE
A. Department / Division	Chair: <i>Thomas E. Carney</i>	15 May 09
B. Final faculty review body within each School	Chair: <i>Margaret J. Potthast</i>	5/21/2009
C. College Dean	Dean: <i>Ray W. Turner</i>	5/21/09
D. Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	Provost: <i>Mary C. Noh for Susan Jo Carr</i>	6-1-09
E. Curriculum Review Committee (UFS subcommittee)	Chair: <i>Debra J. Gaur</i>	6/3/09
F. University Faculty Senate (UFS option)	Chair:	
G. University Council (see # 11 above)	Chair:	
H. President	President:	
I. Board of Regents – notification only		
J. Board of Regents – approval		
K. MHEC – notification only		
L. MHEC – approval		
M. Middle States Association notification	Required only if the mission of the University is changed by the action	

Josh Kassner's statement regarding proposed revisions to the PHIL 150 proposal:

“During [the Curriculum Review Committee's] last meeting there were concerns raised regarding the proposal for PHIL 150. Specifically, the course description in Document P failed to adequately distinguish PHIL 150 (Critical Thinking and Arguments) from WRIT 314 (Arguments and Persuasion). It was suggested to me that the proposal would be acceptable if the course description was revised so that the philosophic nature of PHIL 150 was clear; thus clearly distinguishing PHIL 150 from WRIT 314. In addition, another individual suggested that a similar amendment to the learning goals might be in order. In an effort to meet these concerns I have revised the Document P for PHIL 150 to distinguish PHIL 150 from WRIT 314.”

**DOCUMENT O: SUMMARY PROPOSAL**

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<b>DEPARTMENT / DIVISION:</b> LEHS		
<b>SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL</b> (state action item 1-23 and course name & number or program affected):		
New Course: Critical Thinking and Arguments, PHIL 150 / Jurisprudence and General Education		
<b>PROPOSED SEMESTER OF IMPLEMENTATION:</b> Fall <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Year: 2009		

**O-1: Briefly describe what is being requested:**

The addition of a new philosophy course that is focused on helping students develop their critical thinking and analytic skills.

For new courses or changes in existing courses (needed by Registrar)

<b>OLD Title:</b>	<b>Course # / HEGIS Code:</b>	<b>Credits:</b>
<b>NEW Title:</b> Critical Thinking and Arguments	<b>Course # / HEGIS Code:</b> PHIL 150	<b>Credits:</b> 3

**O-2: Set forth the rationale for the proposal:**

There are three reasons upon which this request is based. First, as a general matter, with the addition of first and second year students there is a pressing need for 100 level philosophy courses. Second, a course in critical thinking an arguments would benefit existing programs; the Jurisprudence program in particular. Third, a critical thinking and arguments course would benefit many of our students both within LEHS and across the CLA.

## **Document P**

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Date Prepared: 02/19/09

Prepared by: Joshua Kassner

Department: LEHS

Course Numbers: PHIL 150

Course Title: Critical Thinking and Arguments

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: None

Course Purpose: General Education; Elective; Prerequisite for Jurisprudence Program

Rationale:

There are three reasons upon which this request is based. First, as a general matter, with the addition of first and second year students there is a pressing need for 100 level philosophy courses. Second, a course in critical thinking and arguments would benefit existing programs; the Jurisprudence program in particular. Third, a critical thinking and arguments course would benefit many of our students both within LEHS and across the CLA.

Catalog Description:

This course satisfies 3 credits of the humanities (History/Philosophy) general education requirements. This course explores the process of thinking critically and philosophically; and guides students in thinking more clearly, insightfully and effectively. In addition this course will focus on helping students identify, understand, and critically assess philosophical arguments. The students will use both classic philosophic texts and real world examples to develop both their critical thinking skills and their ability (in both written and oral forms) to formulate, express, and critique arguments.

Suggested approximate class size: 30

## Content Outline:

The ability to think critically and argue rigorously has been at the foundation of Western philosophical thought since the pre-Socratics. In this course, though substantive philosophical arguments and texts will be explored, the focus is on what it means to take a philosophic perspective on the world. The substantive content of the course can be broken into three categories: the fundamental concepts that are employed in critical thinking and arguments; the identification and differentiation of argument forms; and the characteristics that distinguish strong from weak arguments. In addition, throughout the course there will be an emphasis placed on the application of such theoretical constructs to the real world; and an exploration and discussion of arguments found in major philosophic works (e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hobbes, Kant, Frege, and Wittgenstein).

The presentation of the material will be broken down into a number of subsections. The first will be an introduction to basic concepts and the students will be asked to identify and map out arguments that they find in the editorial pages of a newspaper. Second, the focus will shift to the use of language with an emphasis on the importance of understanding the relevance of the meaning of terms and phrases. Students will be asked to discuss and assess the use of language in the media and in political discourse. Third, the identification of informal fallacies will be discussed. Arguments that are circular, include ad hominem attacks, are based on equivocations, or suffer from the genetic fallacy are readily identifiable and are clear indications of a weak argument. Fourth, we will discuss the logic and pitfalls of categorical propositions. Fifth, as it is one of the most common forms of argument, we will spend a significant amount of time on inductive reasoning. The last section will be oriented towards practical application. Specifically, the students will discuss and offer their own arguments in response to a series of ethical dilemmas.

## Learning Goals:

Students will be able to identify arguments in both written and oral form;

Students will analyze the structure of an argument and construct coherent arguments;

Students will be able to think critically about real world problems and philosophic propositions; and

Students will be able to take a critical philosophic perspective on their own beliefs and values.

## Assessment Strategies:

- Use of pre and post tests.
  - Pre-Test: In week one the student will be asked to write a short analysis of an editorial.

- Post-Test: Towards the end of the semester, the student will be asked to write another analysis of the same editorial.
- Students will present an oral argument to the class and then the class will be asked to comment upon the argument. This will provide evidence of the student's oral capabilities and will also provide peer-review.
- Students will be required to turn in a number of short essays (600-800 words) in which they identify, and then critically assess or defend arguments found in the popular press and/or philosophic texts.

Text(s) and Materials: Patrick Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic* (BPR Publishers, 2008).

Lab Fees: None