

ARTSSCI 1BB3/Argumentation  
McMaster University  
Term 2, 2018-2019

Class:

Time: Tuesday 3:30-5:20pm, Thursday 3:30-4:20pm  
Location: BSB 120

Professor: Dr. James L. Sikkema  
Office: UH 314A  
Office Hour: Friday: 10:00 - 11:00  
Email: sikkej@mcmaster.ca

Course Description & Objectives:

This course introduces students to the basic elements of critical thinking and argumentation. Critical thinking essentially distinguishes between the capacity and quality of human thought, and argumentation identifies the rules and principles of good thinking; i.e. claims supported by sound reasoning. The course will work through basic principles of argumentation, develop the ability to enlist and evaluate various forms of argument, identify fallacious forms of reasoning, and become conversant in some of the most significant and influential arguments that have been made in the history of Western philosophy.

Required Texts:

- Bruce, Michael and Steven Barbone, eds. *Just the Arguments: 100 of the Most Important Arguments in Western Philosophy*. Boston: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011 (*paperback*). ISBN: 978-1444336382
- Morrow, David R. and Anthony Weston. *A Workbook for Arguments: A Complete Course in Critical Thinking, 2nd Edition*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2015. ISBN: 978-1624664274

*Books are available in the Campus Bookstore.*

Evaluation:

Argument Assignments - 20% (Weekly in-class assignments)  
Test 1 - 15% (Thursday, February 14)  
Test 2 - 15% (Thursday, March 28)  
Argumentative Essay - 25% (Tuesday, April 9)  
Final Exam - 25% (TBD)

## Note on Argument Assignments

The primary course text, *A Workbook for Arguments*, contains a number of unit exercises. Each week you will be tasked with completing a specified number of these for submission. Submissions will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. A Pass will be awarded if and only if work is completed on time and according to the stipulated guidelines. There will be a zero tolerance policy for late submissions.

## Note on Tests

There will be two tests in this course. Each test will have a 50 minute duration and will consist of multiple choice, true/false and short-answer questions.

## Note on Argumentative Essay

You will be tasked with writing an argumentative essay on any topic of your choosing. In the weeks before the due date we will take some time during class to begin formulating a topic, a position and an argument. Essays must be between 1200 - 1500 words (standard format) and are due on Tuesday, April 9.

## Note on Final Exam

The final exam will be cumulative and will consist of the same format as the tests.

## Policy on Missed Work, Extensions and Late Penalties

All extension requests must be communicated with the instructor at least one day prior to the due date of the assignment. Should you fail to perform such communication your assignment may not be protected from late penalties.

The late penalty for any assignment not submitted on time will be 2% per day.

If you must use MSAF for any assignment please be sure to understand your responsibilities.

You must send the instructor an email after using MSAF to work out an alternate date for you to complete the missed coursework. Any late submissions after that time will be subject to the stated late penalties.

As far as this instructor is concerned, the use of MSAF does not absolve you from completing the missed coursework. You must still complete the missed coursework. Should you fail to fulfil your responsibilities after submitting MSAF, and consequently fail to work out an alternate deadline with your instructor, you may be liable to receive no credit for the missed coursework.

## Please Note:

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme

circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L, and/or McMaster email. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email and course websites regularly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

*McMaster Policy on Academic Integrity:*

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences—e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity), located at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: 1) Plagiarism—e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained. 2) Improper collaboration in group work. 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **MSAF Statement**

*McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):*

In the event of an absence, students should review and follow the Academic Regulations in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.” Please consult the MSAF statement on our website (<https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/forms-requests/>) and direct any questions or concerns to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program Office.

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities Statement**

*Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:*

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. SAS can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or email [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

## **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO) Statement**

*Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO):*  
Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous, or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office (i.e. to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program Office) normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## **Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection Statement**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student-submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## Course Schedule:

### **Week 1**

Tuesday 01/08: *Introduction*

Reading: *Workbook*, xvii - xx

Thursday 01/10: *God*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, I.1,3,4

### **Week 2**

Tuesday 01/15: *General Rules 1*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 1-3 (pp.3-22)

Thursday 01/17: *God*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, I.7,10,11

### **Week 3**

Tuesday 01/22: *General Rules 2*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 4-6 (pp.22-32)

Thursday 01/24: *Metaphysics*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, II.14, 15, 16

### **Week 4**

Tuesday 01/29: *Generalizations 1*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 7-8 (pp.38-49)

Thursday 01/31: *Metaphysics*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, II.20, 22, 23

### **Week 5**

Tuesday 02/05: *Generalizations 2*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 9-11 (pp.49-64)

Thursday 02/07: *Metaphysics*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, II.25, 30, 33

### **Week 6**

Tuesday 02/12: *Analogies*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rule 12 (pp.73-79)

Thursday 02/14: **Test 1**

### **Week 7**

Tuesday 02/19: No Class; Midterm Recess

Thursday 02/21: No Class; Midterm Recess

### **Week 8**

Tuesday 02/26: *Causality*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 18-21 (pp.108 - 118)

Thursday 02/28: *Epistemology*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, III.40, 41,42

### **Week 9**

Tuesday 03/05: *Deduction 1*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 22-25 (pp.126-130)

Thursday 03/07: *Epistemology*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, III.45, 46, 49

**\*Argumentative Essay Outlines Due 03/07 at 11:59 PM to Dropbox on Avenue**

### **Week 10**

Tuesday 03/12: *Deduction 2*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 26-28 (pp.130-158)

Thursday 03/14: *Ethics*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, IV.51, 52, 55

### **Week 11**

Tuesday 03/19: *Extended Arguments 1*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 29-30 (pp.159-167)

Thursday 03/21: *Ethics*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, IV.57, 58, 63

### **Week 12**

Tuesday 03/26: *Extended Arguments 2*

Reading: *Workbook*, Rules 31-33 (pp.168-185)

Thursday 03/28: **Test 2**

### **Week 13**

Tuesday 04/02: *Fallacies*

Reading: *Workbook*, Appendix I (pp.227-255)

Thursday 04/04: *Mind*

Reading: *Just the Arguments*, V.76, 85, 88

**Week 14**

Tuesday 04/09: *Argument Mapping*

Reading: *Workbook*, Appendix III (pp.268-286)

**\*Argumentative Essay Due 04/09 at 11:59 PM to Dropbox on Avenue**