Hello, students! My name is Dr. Pawar (rhymes with “guitar”) and I am your instructor for course. I enjoy teaching PHI 120 even though it is a tough course to teach. There are a lot of reasons why it's tough to teach this course, but the mains ones are: (1) it’s more work than the usual Philosophy courses because there are a lot of students and student work to keep track of; and (2) most of you probably don’t want to be here. You’re taking this class because it’s a general education requirement, am I right? So why do I like teaching it? Because when you apply yourself and learn the material, it will improve your life. Period. And that is a beautiful thing. After all, living without knowing how to think critically is like flying a plane without knowing what makes a plane fly.

A word of warning: This class is tough. Each of us thinks all the time, everyday. But critical thinking, or reasoning, is not the way we usually think. It means that you will have to pay very close attention to what you say, write, read, and hear. You will need to examine and be ready to revise your assumptions and presuppositions. Sometimes it might make your head hurt, but I’m here to help. If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to ask. Here’s how you can contact me:

Office Hours: My office is in LCH A-337 and I am there Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:15am -11:15am &1:15pm – 2:15pm, and by appointment.
Phone: 310.243.1067
Email: spawar@csudh.edu

Course Description and Learning Objectives
In this course you will learn to apply tools to question/examine both your own thinking and the thinking of others. You will be introduced to methods of critical thinking including the nature of arguments, formal and informal fallacies, and deductive and inductive arguments. You will learn critical skills that will help you to make better decisions, spot fake news, see through bullsh*t, and become better informed. The goal of this course is to improve your thinking. You will learn to make strong, well-reasoned arguments so that you will be successful not only in your academic career, but in the rest of your life as well. By the end of this course, you will:
• Recognize and employ some of the basic rules of the logic of the English language.
• Recognize and employ elementary inductive and deductive processes.
• Define and recognize the formal and informal fallacies of thought and language.
• Distinguish matters of fact from issues of judgment or opinion.
• Analyze, criticize and advocate ideas by reasoning inductively and deductively and reaching well-supported factual or judgmental conclusions.
Required text: Moore and Parker, *Critical Thinking (Connect Plus Access Card)*, 12th edition (McGraw Hill). Connect Plus allows you access to the online textbook, *Critical Thinking* by Moore and Parker. As you read it will guide you through the material and help you to master important course concepts by prompting you with questions to see how much you’ve learned. It will send you to relevant parts of the text to work on material that you haven’t yet mastered and offer additional exercises to help you learn it. You do not need to purchase a physical copy of the book. If you want a hardcopy, you can purchase the Connect Plus Access Card with a loose-leaf edition of the book, but you only receive credit for reading the book by doing it online. This is cheaper than buying the textbook outright. The access code is available at the campus bookstore for $79. The computer/technical requirements for accessing this material are the same as for accessing Blackboard. You can find these requirements at [https://www.csudh.edu/academic-technology/instructional-technology-resources/online-courses-tech/](https://www.csudh.edu/academic-technology/instructional-technology-resources/online-courses-tech/). You can find Blackboard tutorials at [http://www.csudh.edu/it/services/blackboard/bulletin/](http://www.csudh.edu/it/services/blackboard/bulletin/). Campus support is available from the Helpdesk at 310-243-2500.

Expectations: We have a lot to cover so our time is valuable. I look forward to and expect to see you each class. If you need to miss class for some reason, let me know as soon as possible so that I can arrange for you to make up any work that we did in class that day. You will learn more deeply if you give the material your full attention, so I expect you to have your cell phone put away during class. If you need to use your phone, please step out of the classroom to do so otherwise you may distract your fellow students. If you have some reason that you need your cell phone on 24/7 (your wife is in labor, you’re expecting a donor kidney, etc.), let me know. It’s especially important not to distract your fellow students during exams and quizzes so if your phone is on at these times, you will receive a zero grade for that quiz or exam.

We need your voice and input expressed so that learning can be maximized. Deeper learning occurs when multiple perspectives about the material is shared. Thinking critically requires that you consider multiple perspectives.

![Figure 2 People attempt to return a beached whale to the ocean](image1)

Come to class prepared to discuss your perspective by completing the Learnsmart (reading) assignments before class.

Most class periods will include a short lecture. You will have a number of opportunities to express yourself in class, including responding to the lecture and answering questions posed to the class. Beginning in week 3, you will be issued a clicker device that you can use to answer these lecture questions. You will be able to use the clicker for the duration of the course and must bring it to class everyday (you’ll need to return it at the end of the semester). Another opportunity to express yourself is in small groups. In these groups you will complete daily in-class exercises, during which you will have the opportunity to learn how your fellow students think through the problems. This is an invaluable learning opportunity. To maximize learning, each group member should participate in discussion about each exercise. (Don’t assign questions to various group members!)

We will start most classes with short iClicker quizzes that will allow me to assess how well you have learned the material from the previous class. You need to be on time in order to complete the
quizzes. We’ll have weekly **homework assignments** that are throughout the course. Due dates are TBA. You will receive credit for the homework if it is complete and on time, but you’ll need to check the answers yourself. We will also have three **exams**. Because each chapter builds upon the rest, each exam will be cumulative in nature, but will focus on the most recent material learned. Bring a scantron form to your exams!

You will be analyzing and evaluating arguments, claims and opinions – both yours and those of fellow students. Remember that we are all just learning, so please treat one another with kindness and respect, and **make your criticisms constructive**. Be forgiving.

In order for me to accurately assess your critical reasoning skills, you need to comply with the University’s policies on academic integrity, which you can find here: [http://csudh.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2018/Catalog/General-Information/Academic-Integrity](http://csudh.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2018/Catalog/General-Information/Academic-Integrity). You may be dismissed from the course if you fail to comply with these policies.

If you have a learning disability, please contact the Student **disAbility Resource Center** in Welch Hall B180 (310-243-3660; TDD: 310-243-2028) and let me know any special accommodations they require.

**Good news for section 7!** You have the benefit of a Supplemental Instructor! Pablo Lopez is a fellow student who works for the Toro Learning and Testing Center to provide study session for students in PHI 120-07. Beginning in Week 3, he will hold 2 study sessions per week to review the class material. Attending supplemental instruction sessions is voluntary and confidential. You don’t have to attend – but it’s a great opportunity, so take advantage of it if you can.

**The Chancellor’s Office wants your opinions!** I was graciously offered a grant from the CSU Chancellor’s Office to help me redesign this course to incorporate recent technology – primarily the use of iClickers in the classroom. Because of this grant, I was able to purchase clickers for your use during the semester. In return, they want your opinion on all sorts of things related to this course. They will ask you to fill out surveys several times during the semester. Please complete these surveys. It will help me to continue to improve the course for future students and it will help the Chancellor’s Office to justify giving grant money to professors to redesign their courses.

Opportunities for **extra credit** are available. You can earn up to 2% extra credit in this course. **Ask me how.**
Here's how your final grade will be determined:
Attendance and participation (lecture questions, in-class exercises) 5%
iClicker Quizzes 5%
LearnSmart reading Assignments 15%
Homework Assignments 15%
Exams 60%

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Dates  Read  Topic
1/23 – 1/25 1  Why do I need to take a class in Critical Thinking? Don’t I do that already? Why shouldn’t I believe everything I think? If I always think critically, then I’m always right ... right?
1/30 – 2/1 3  What are you talking about?
How do I learn to communicate clearly, precisely, and unambiguously?
2/6 – 2/8 4  Should I believe what I’m hearing/reading?
2/13 – 2/15 2/13: Meet in LIB S 2021 A for Library Assignment 2/15: Exam 1 (chapters 1, 3, 4)
2/20 – 2/22 2  How do I know if reasons are good reasons? How do I evaluate an argument?
2/27 – 3/1 9  Was that a brilliant deduction or what?
3/6 – 3/8 8  What fallacies arise when deduction goes wrong?
3/13 – 3/15 8  What fallacies arise from ambiguity, vagueness or other lack of clarity?

Spring Recess (week of March 27)
4/3 – 4/5 11  How can I make a strong argument based on evidence? –or- Why did I take statistics?
4/10 – 4/12 7  What happens when induction goes wrong?
4/17 – 4/19 5  How do I avoid being misled by the spin-doctors?
4/24 – 4/26 5  How do I avoid being misled by irrelevant factors? (Red herrings)
5/1 – 5/3 6  Stop changing the subject! How can I avoid being misled by irrelevant factors? (Red herrings)
5/8 – 5/10 More fallacies of irrelevance (Red herrings, continued)
Finals Thursday, May 17 @ 11:30 am – 1:30 pm: Exam 3