

Course Expectation Resource Sheet - PHI 105

Course: PHI 105 - Critical Thinking

Department: Political Science & Philosophy

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: 12 credit hours

Catalog Description: This course develops intellectual self-awareness by teaching the canons and skills of critical reasoning. Deductive and inductive reasoning, the application of logic to a variety of significant issues, and the relation between language and argumentation will be studied.

Catalog: 2025-2026 **Last Updated:** 9/19/2025

Gen Ed Course: Yes

Gen Ed Area: PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gen Ed Requirement: Public Issues (GEC 116)

CORE-42 Course: Yes

CORE-42 Area: Humanities & Fine Arts

MOTR Code - MOTR Title: PHIL 101 - Introduction to Logic

Credit available through:

(click link for more information and required scores)

[Advanced Placement \(AP\)?](#): No

[College Level Exam Program \(CLEP\)?](#): No

[International Baccalaureate \(IB\)?](#): No

Responses and Advice from Department Representatives

Last Updated: 9/19/2025 8:38:37 AM

Responses apply to: Both seated and online courses

What expectations do you have for students in this course?

Expectations are minimal and are 1) cognitive and 2) dispositional.

Cognitive: Basic expectations here consist of the assumption that students have a reading and writing ability commensurate with the completion of a secondary education certification (e.g., a high school diploma).

Dispositional: Dispositional expectations concern both behavior and engagement with the material. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to read and study the materials covered in the course.

What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?

Study skills crucial to success in this course are listening, note-taking, and reading comprehension. All of these skills will be honed and refined in the course of the class and will contribute to the overall acquisition of critical thinking abilities.

What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?

The most consistently successful techniques are centered on active engagement with the material, via consistent review of material, practice, group study, etc. Cramming is not recommended and will often result in suboptimal performance.

What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course?

Two behaviors in particular cause students to struggle. Lack of attendance and absence of executive functioning behavior like note-taking. Both of these directly impede comprehension, recall, and mastery of information and cognitive skills imparted via the course. In terms of online sections, students should have the same expectations as seated sections, as the online classes require the same basic sort of attentiveness.

What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?

The struggles most often seen relate to the suboptimal behavior outlined in the previous question. The remedy for these situations is often as basic as class attendance and engagement with the material covered in the course. Another underutilized resource is communication with the instructor. Never hesitate to communicate with faculty. We are here to help you succeed. If unforeseen circumstances arise, please be prompt about letting the instructor know. Students often either do not communicate with the instructor or communicate too late in the semester. Keep your instructor in the loop. In addition, take advantage of office hours to ask questions about aspects of the material that are unclear to you. Students do not fully utilize these resources, even in online sections with Zoom office hours.

How do you describe the course to students when they ask “What is this class about?” (without using the catalog description)?

The course is about increasing students’ awareness of logic, argumentation, and a thoughtful engagement with the world. PHI 105 strives to increase students’ agency by putting them in possession of a adaptively advantageous and portable critical thinking ability which will serve them well throughout their college journey and beyond.

Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?

One of the benefits is a keener awareness of and ability to analyze language and argumentation, including this question itself. The question presupposes that General Education requirements and larger benefits to students are segregated categories. This is incorrect. Recent research clearly demonstrates that breadth of knowledge contributes to acuity in specialization, both in terms of identifying problems and formulating constructive solutions.

Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?

PHI 105 has a universal relevance that is reflected not only in the benefits discussed in previous questions, but also in the consistent remark made by many students that they feel PHI 105 should be a required course for all their peers given the comprehensive benefits they have received and the skills that they have acquired.