

# PHILOSOPHY 121 - CRITICAL THINKING

Second Semester, 2021 - 2022

## Introduction

I'm Dōna Warren, a professor of philosophy and head of the Critical Thinking Center. You are welcome to call me "Dr. Warren," "Professor Warren," "Ms. Warren," or "Dōna."

## COVID Policy

We will be following the University's COVID protocols. You can find up-to-date information about those protocols here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>

## How You can Contact Me

Office: Room 122 Collins Classroom Center  
<https://uwsp.zoom.us/j/7153464115>

Office Hours: 1:00 - 1:50 on Mondays and Wednesdays.  
You should feel free to stop by my office during that time or hop into my Zoom room. No appointment is necessary, but you are welcome to make an appointment with me for another time that is more convenient for you.

Email / Message: You may email me at [dwarren@uwsp.edu](mailto:dwarren@uwsp.edu) or message me through the Canvas inbox.  
I will do my best to respond to your emails and messages within 24 hours, excluding weekends.

## How I will Contact You

I will contact you via

1. Your UWSP email.
2. Your Canvas inbox.
3. Announcements in Canvas: I realize that email can get overwhelming, so I will post every email that I send to the entire class as an announcement on Canvas as well.

It's a good idea to check your UWSP email and our Canvas site at least every other day.

## What You will be Doing

You will work through this course by doing two things: 1) Completing modules on Canvas and 2) Earning participation points. Here's how each of those things will work:

## 1) Completing the Modules on Canvas

Due Dates: The Canvas portion of the course is largely self-paced, but each module has a due date.

- ✓ Module 0 is due by the end of Wk. 1: 11:59 p.m. Sun., Jan 30.
- ✓ Module 1 is due by the end of Wk. 3: 11:59 p.m. Sun., Feb. 13.
- ✓ Module 2 is due by the end of Wk. 6: 11:59 p.m. Sun., Mar. 6.
- ✓ Module 3 is due by the end of Wk. 9: 11:59 p.m. Sun., Apr. 3.
- ✓ Module 4 is due by the end of Wk. 12: 11:59 p.m. Sun., Apr. 24.
- ✓ Module 5 is due by the end of Wk. 15: 11:59 p.m. Sun., May 15.

Your grade will be partially determined by how many modules you complete by their due dates, but you may complete modules after their due dates have passed. The modules won't close. You are, of course, more than welcome to work ahead.

Modules 1-5 have the following components:

- A [Welcome Page](#) that briefly introduces you to the module.
- [Learning Resources](#) that include
  - [A Handbook](#) for the chapter in the module.

The handbook for each chapter summarizes the important points of each chapter. And the handbooks are cumulative, so the material in the Chapter 3 handbook contains all of the material in the handbooks Chapters 1 and 2, for example. Consequently, the handbook for the last chapter you complete can serve as a summary of your learning and a guide to its application. It's a good idea to read the handbook before you read the chapter in order to get a sense of the material covered in the chapter.
  - [A Reading Schedule](#) for the chapter in the module.
  - [A Chapter](#) for you to read.

Each chapter is designed to help you master an important set of skills, so please do read the chapters. I know they can look long, but I've tried to write them in an accessible way, as if I were teaching you one-on-one. The reading schedule is intended to serve as a suggested reading guide to keep you on track while preventing you from becoming overwhelmed.
  - [More Practice Exercises](#).

Critical Thinking is a bit like math in that it's one thing to be able to follow somebody else doing it and quite another thing to be able to do it yourself. These practice exercises are optional, but a great way for you to solidify your understanding!

- [Assessments](#)

- Each module will have a set of assessments.

Beneath the name of each assessment, you'll see:

- A [date](#). This is simply due date for the module. You may complete the assessments after that date. The assessments won't close.
- The [number of points](#) that the assessment has.
- The [score that you need to achieve](#) in order to count as completing that assessment. You may take each assessment as often as you need in order achieve that score. (Learning doesn't need to be stressful.) Once you've achieved the required scores on each of the assessments in a module, you will be able to progress to the next module. (If a module isn't open for you, check to see what assessment or task you still need to complete in the previous module.)

## [2\) Earning Participation Points](#)

One (1) participation point will be available each week. You may earn the participation point for the week by attending one (1) class period that week.

I'll cover the same material on Monday and Wednesday, so it doesn't matter which day you attend. (The idea is that you can spend the other class period working on the modules.)

Although your grade will be partly dependent upon your attendance, missing one participation point won't impact your grade. (More on grading below.) If you should need to miss a larger number of classes due to illness, quarantine, family emergency, military service obligations or a school or team related event, please let me know and I'll be happy to work out some arrangement with you.

## [How Grades will be Assigned](#)

Your grade will be determined by:

- 1) the number of Canvas modules that you complete by the last day of finals week.
- 2) the number of Canvas modules that you complete by their due dates, and
- 3) the number of participation points you earn.

(If Canvas shows you a cumulative percentage score or some other similar statistic, just ignore it.)

| Column A                                |   | Column B   |   | Column C                    |   |       |
|---|---|--|---|-----------------------------|---|-------|
| Modules Completed by end of Finals Week | & | Number of Modules Completed by their Due Dates   | & | Participation Points Earned | = | Grade |
| None or Module 0                        | & | (Not applicable)   | & | 0                           | = | F     |
| Modules 0-1                             | & | (Not applicable. This only counts if all modules are completed by the end of Finals Week.) | & | 4                           | = | D     |
| Modules 0-2                             | & | (Not applicable. This only counts if all modules are completed by the end of Finals Week.) | & | 4                           | = | D+    |
| Modules 0-3                             | & | (Not applicable. This only counts if all modules are completed by the end of Finals Week.) | & | 5-8                         | = | C-    |
| Modules 0-4                             | & | (Not applicable. This only counts if all modules are completed by the end of Finals Week.) | & | 5-8                         | = | C     |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | None   | & | 5-8                         | = | C+    |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | Complete <u>any one</u> module by its due date.  | & | 9-12                        | = | B-    |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | Complete <u>any two</u> modules by their due dates.  | & | 9-12                        | = | B     |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | Complete <u>any three</u> modules by their due dates.                                      | & | 9-12                        | = | B+    |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | Complete <u>any four</u> modules by their due dates.                                       | & | 13-15                       | = | A-    |
| Modules 0-5                             | & | Complete <u>any five</u> modules by their due dates.                                       | & | 13-15                       | = | A     |

To determine your grade:

- Look down Column A (how many modules you've completed) until you've found your row.
- If you've completed all five modules, look down Column B (how many due dates you've met) until you've found your row.
- Staying in your row, look at Column C (how many participation points you've earned).
  - If your participation points either fall within or exceed that range, your grade will be the grade in that row.
  - If your participation points fall below that range, look up Column C until you find the row that captures your participation points. Your grade will be the grade in that row.

## Teacher and Course Evaluations

I will be administering anonymous teacher and course evaluations at the end of the semester and there will be regular opportunities for you complete anonymous Canvas surveys to let me know how things are going for you as the semester progresses. Your feedback is very useful to me!

And (I hope obviously), if something concerns you about the course at any time, please feel free to talk to me about it. I may or may not be able to change the thing that concerns you, but if I can't change it, I'll at least explain it. And I won't take your concern personally or be upset with you for sharing it with me.

## The Philosophy Major or Minor

This course will give you valuable skills no matter what your major is, but if you find yourself enjoying this course, you might want to consider majoring or minoring in philosophy. (Philosophy as a second major goes well with anything and we have kept the number of credits required for our major relatively low to make it as easy as possible for students to double major.)

We also offer a philosophy major with a concentration in religious studies and a philosophy major with a concentration in environmental ethics.

If you would like to chat with me about possibly declaring a philosophy major or minor, just let me know! I'll be happy to oblige!