

28970 Critical Thinking and the Art of Argumentation Spring 2006

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ... that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. Philippians 3

Course Description:

This course examines the means by which we convince ourselves and others that something is true. Of special interest here are the pitfalls to logical thinking that prevent us from coming to the truth.

Course Objective:

The goal of this course is to help students become adept at making a persuasive case for the truth of the Christian worldview.

Reading List:

- [EC] Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- [G&E] Robert Greene and Joost Elffers, *The 48 Laws of Power* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2000).
- [NCM] Nancey C. Murphy, *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1994; republished 2001 by Wipf & Stock).

Semester Grade:

- (1) Mid-term exam — 20 percent positive.
- (2) Comprehensive final exam — 30 percent positive.
- (3) Exercises — 50 percent positive. Exercises appear at the end of each chapter in NCM. Answers to all these exercises need to be written out and handed in at each class time.
- (4) Punctual class attendance — up to 10 percent negative.
- (5) Full class participation — up to 10 percent negative.
- (6) Pop quizzes — up to 20 percent negative.

Readings:

- (1) NCM, ch. 1. EC, pp. 2-26.
- (2) NCM, ch. 2. EC, pp. 27-83.

**NOTE: (1) and (2) need to be read before the first class meeting.
Exercises for chs. 1 & 2 of NCM need to be written out and handed
in by end of second week of classes.**

- (3) NCM, ch. 3. EC, pp. 84-119. G&E, Laws 1-4.
- (4) NCM, ch. 4. EC, pp. 120-140. G&E, Laws 5-8.
- (5) NCM, ch. 5. EC, pp. 141-183. G&E, Laws 9-12.
- (6) NCM, ch. 6. EC, pp. 184-213. G&E, Laws 13-16.
- (7) NCM, ch. 7. EC, pp. 214-255. G&E, Laws 17-20.
- (8) NCM, ch. 8. EC, pp. 256-291. G&E, Laws 21-24.
- (9) NCM, ch. 9. EC, pp. 292-336. G&E, Laws 25-28.
- (10) NCM, ch. 10. EC, pp. 337-376. G&E, Laws 29-32.
- (11) NCM, ch. 11. EC, pp. 377-410. G&E, Laws 33-36.
- (12) NCM, ch. 12. EC, pp. 411-447. G&E, Laws 37-40.
- (13) NCM, ch. 13. EC, pp. 448-483. G&E, Laws 41-44.
- (14) NCM, ch. 14. EC, pts. V & VI (esp. pp. 517 ff.). G&E, Laws 45-48.