

FACULTY SENATE
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Approval Form

Department PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Title THE LOGIC OF EVERYDAY REASONING

Sponsor(s) ALBERT C. SHAW & JOHN E. WHITCRAFT No. of Credits 3

¹²⁶⁹
₅₆₉ COURSE SPECIALIZATION CONCENTRATION CERTIFICATION MAJOR PROGRAM

Approved by the department YES Graduate ()

Not recommended by the department Undergraduate (✓)

Information copies forwarded: YES Academic Dean; YES Chairperson, Curriculum Committee 60 COPIES

James H. Grace
Signature: Department Chairperson Date 12/23/77

DIVISION

Consultation on proposal has been held

Comments:

Alan Donovan
Signature: Academic Dean and/or Divisional Committee Date 1/9/78

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Proposal received 1-15-78

Open Hearing held 2-16-78

Returned to the department for the following reason(s):

Approved by the Curriculum Committee 2-16-78

Presented to Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate as information

ifications forwarded: Vice President for Academic Affairs

John E. Whitcraft
Signature: Chairperson, Curriculum Committee Date 2-17-78

Academic Dean

I have reviewed the final documents as approved and concur with same. Budget, faculty, library allocations and Academic Support Services are adequate for immediate implementation.

I have reviewed the final documents as approved and concur with same. Budget, faculty, library allocations and Academic Support Services for the current academic year are inadequate for immediate implementation or implementation in the next fiscal year. The earliest that the proposal might be implemented would be

HEGIS Taxonomy Number: 117.110

Date _____

Signature: Academic Dean _____

Copies forwarded: Chairperson, Curriculum Committee, Department Chairperson, Registrar

REGISTRAR

Approved course description received

Date _____

Signature: Registrar _____

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Official copy and approval sheet filed

Date _____

Signature: Vice President for Academic Affairs _____

- Note
- 1) Course proposal format is attached
 - 2) A copy of this approval form should accompany each proposal
 - 3) A copy of a proposed catalogue description of the course must accompany the proposal as a separate page.

Department of Philosophy and Religion

Glassboro State College

December 10, 1977

A Proposal to Add
to the Department's Offerings
the Course,

The Logic of Everyday Reasoning

I. Identification of the Course

- a. Title: The Logic of Everyday Reasoning
- b. Department: Philosophy and Religion
- c. Sponsor: Albert C. Shaw and John E. Whitcraft

2. Essence of the Course

- a. Essentials: The Logic of Everyday Reasoning is a course in informal logic which aims at improving students' reasoning in what they say and in how they respond to what others say, in how they argue, and in how they approach and solve problems. It is a three-credit, undergraduate course that should be offered to freshmen, and it has no prerequisites. If approved, the course will be offered by the Department of Philosophy and Religion beginning in the fall of 1978.
- b. Place in the Curriculum: The Department of Philosophy and Religion has no major program, but it views the content of this course as so significant that it would make The Logic of Everyday Reasoning a requirement for all majors if it did offer such a program. Indeed, the Department faculty's extensive experience in teaching formal logic and general philosophy and religion courses has led to the strong conviction that this course should be required of all students, and particularly of those whose majors are taken in the liberal arts and sciences. In keeping with this conviction, The Logic of Everyday Reasoning is proposed for general education, as an alternative to Introduction to Logic for that large segment of students whose needs would be met more appropriately with this course.

3. Ancillary Factors

- a. Staff Capabilities: Faculty of the Department of Philosophy and Religion are at present capable of offering a few sections of The Logic of Everyday Reasoning each year, particularly if, as is anticipated, sections of the new course replace some of the ten or more sections of Introduction to Logic currently offered.
- b. Library Facilities: Present library holdings in logic and philosophy, supplemented with some additional purchases made with Philosophy and Religion Department funds, will be adequate, at the outset, to establish reserve holdings and to facilitate student investigations.
- c. Resource Capabilities: As The Logic of Everyday Reasoning is presently conceived, it is a lecture and discussion course with no unusual needs for special rooms, equipment, or other resources.
- d. Uniqueness of the Course: The Logic of Everyday Reasoning is unique in at least three respects: First, it is unique in its concern and content, as there is no other course dedicated to informal logic at Glassboro. More specifically, there is no other course whose whole concern is with correctness in thinking and with a rational approach to problem-solving beyond the confines of a particular discipline. Second, the course is unique in its distinction from courses in formal logic. Formal logic is a highly abstract and technical study which, while it is most surely related to the errors of everyday thinking, is yet so dedicated to abstraction and to coming to grips with what its practitioners perceive to be the 'larger problems' that it has little concern for the relatively 'minor' matters considered here. Third, the course is unique in its distinction from courses in language because its focus is not the correction of errors in language usage, but the correction of errors in thinking that may or may not be reflected in errors in language usage. That is, one may commit fallacies in logic and then express those fallacies in faultless language, and while this might be a concern of the language teacher, it is the primary concern of the logic teacher.
- e. Special Objectives of the Course: The list that follows may not include all the outcomes The Logic of Everyday Reasoning will provide, and these objectives may be more general than a lengthier presentation might afford, but they are typical of what is anticipated. Students who successfully complete the course will

know all of the most common errors of reasoning as these errors are manifested in ordinary language;

understand that although these errors are known through language, they are errors of reasoning, and not errors in the use of language alone;

appreciate the significance of this knowledge through exposure to examples of faulty reasoning in contemporary literature, including newspaper and magazine articles, and speech;

speak and write more rationally as a result of this awareness of commonly made errors, and as a result of practice and criticism that sharpens that awareness;

know that what is sometimes vaguely called 'problem solving' may be more clearly understood through an analysis of methods used to solve problems;

be aware that such an analysis divides the task of problem-solving into a number of parts, each of which deserves attention;

be more able to solve problems as a result of this awareness, and as a result of practice at problem-solving and of critiques of that practice.

- f. Evaluation Procedures: Evaluation of student learnings will be based on how well students achieve these objectives. This achievement is to be measured by tests that require students to express their comprehensions and skills in writing, by and large, and in speech and other kinds of behavior less commonly.

4. Topical Outline (See Attachment A.)

5. Rationale for the Course: The very existence of Glassboro, indeed, the long tradition of education in Western civilization implies a commitment to the rational way of life. Instruction directed toward improving a student's ability to think and behave more rationally is thus most obviously appropriate to whatever set of college objectives is currently operative. Beyond such an obvious though important justification for offering this instruction is another: the need that students have for it, a need recognized by students, faculty, and others.

The dichotomy between formal and informal logic, mentioned in the paragraph on uniqueness above, is keenly felt by many students who come to the study of formal logic expecting what is presented in informal logic. For it is the uniform experience of the faculty who over the past 9 years have taught formal logic at Glassboro that this is indeed the case. Withdrawals from formal logic have at times been as high as 30% of the initial enrollment, and conferences with exiting students reveal that the failure to meet that expectation is a significant factor in most withdrawals. Thus, it seems fair to say that students themselves see a need for instruction in logic, the Department enrolls 10 sections each year, and that many of them see this to be a need for informal rather than formal logic, a need not currently met.

Discussions with the faculty of the Philosophy and Religion Department, individually and as a whole, reveal that there is general agreement that students do need the instruction offered in The Logic of Everyday Reasoning. A letter from Mr. Grace, Department Chairman, expressing the consensus view of the department attests to this and, further, expresses the faculty's conviction that this course should be made a required course for all students. (See Attachment B.) Similar expressions of the conviction that students do indeed need this instruction have been received from Professors Benimoff, Psychology, Borowec, Physical Science, Mitchell, English, and Reinfeld, Communications. (See Attachments C, D, E, and F.) Thus, it is fair to say that faculty recognize that students have need for instruction in informal logic.

Finally, justification for this course may be found in the recognition of student need that is implied by the proliferation of texts in informal logic in recent years. This development is evidenced not only in new texts devoted exclusively to informal logic, but in revised texts in formal logic which have been extended, in recent editions, to incorporate within their covers newly added sections devoted to informal logic. A sampling of titles of both sorts of texts is included in Attachment G. It is thus fair to say that the judgment that students need instruction in informal logic is shared not only by Glassboro's faculty and students, but by others associated with higher education as well.

6. Consultations: All faculty of the Department of Philosophy and Religion (excepting Mr. Sizemore, who is on sabbatical leave), Dr. Cell, Mr. Grace, Mr. MacIntire, and Dr. Tong, have been consulted concerning this proposal, and their responses have been strongly supportive. Mr. Grace has expressed their view in a letter appended as Attachment B.

Course Proposal: The Logic of Everyday Reasoning, page 5 of 5.

Professors Benimoff, Psychology, Borowec, Physical Science, Mitchell, English, and Reinfeld, Communications, have also been consulted, and their supporting letters are appended as Attachments C, D, E, and F.

Dean Donovan and Vice-President Brown have also been consulted, and their responses have been supportive and encouraging. They too see a need for the kind of learnings this course makes possible.

7. Catalogue Description: The Logic of Everyday Reasoning is a course in informal logic. It aims at improving the student's reasoning through a thorough exposure to common logical fallacies as these appear in ordinary language, and through a study of rational procedures for problem-solving. Opportunities are provided for extensive practice at discovering and overcoming the student's own logical faults in his writing and his speech, and for practice at rational problem-solving.

Attachment A

The Logic of Everyday Reasoning

A Topical Outline of the Course

I. Good and Bad Arguments

A. Fundamental Conceptions

1. Assertion and Argument
2. Sound and Fallacious Arguments
3. Four Criteria: Meaningfulness, Relevance, Consistency, Evidence
4. Deduction and Induction
5. Types of Fallacious Argument

B. Types of Fallacious Argument

1. Fallacious Arguments, Type I. This is a study of arguments which, though correctly reasoned, are based on non-existent, false, or misleading evidence. Typical of those studied would be arguments based on suppressed evidence, doubtful evidence, selected evidence, and doubtful evaluation.
2. Fallacious Arguments, Type II. This is a study of arguments whose reasoning is faulty because the argument is not relevant to the issues to which it purports to relate. Typical of those studied would be arguments characterized as resorting to ad hominem, guilt by association, straw man, false dilemma, and tokenism.
3. Fallacious Arguments, Type III. This is a study of arguments whose reasoning is faulty because the premisses are not properly related to the conclusions that are drawn from them. Typical of those studied would be arguments characterized as resorting to appeal to authority, provincialism, irrelevant reason, ambiguity, slippery slope, questionable cause, and questionable analogy.

C. Arguments in Everyday Language

1. Statistical Fallacies
2. Weak and Fallacious Political Arguments
3. Deceitful Arguments in Advertising and Public Relations
4. Fallacies Implicit in Manipulating the News
5. Implicit and Explicit Fallacies in Textbooks

II. Problem Solving

A. Problems and their Resolutions

1. Identifying a Problem Situation
2. Distinguishing Kinds of Problems
3. Reflecting on Problem Resolutions
4. Viewing the Problem and its Resolution as a Process
5. Analysis of the Process into Parts
6. Expressing Problems Clearly and Usefully

B. Forming Hypotheses

1. Gathering and Organizing Data
2. Evaluating Data
3. Reflection and Models
4. Producing Hypotheses

C. Evaluating Hypotheses

1. Recognizing and Using Assumptions
2. Developing Implications of Hypotheses
3. Agreement with Established Knowledge

D. Testing Hypotheses

1. Making and Interpreting Observations
2. Controlling Observations
3. Relevance of Observational Data
4. Problems with Induction

E. Drawing Conclusions

1. Stating the Conclusion
2. Justifying the Conclusion
3. Interpreting and Applying the Conclusion



Attachment B
State of New Jersey

GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08028

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION DEPARTMENT

December 16, 1977

TO: The Senate Curriculum Committee

FROM: James H. Grace, Chairperson of the
Philosophy and Religion Department

RE: THE LOGIC OF EVERYDAY REASONING

This is to certify that at a regularly scheduled meeting on December 12, 1977, the Department of Philosophy and Religion voted unanimously to approve the addition of the course entitled "The Logic of Everyday Reasoning" to our list of regular course offerings.

We are thoroughly convinced that a course such as this will be of significant value in improving the logical skills of our students whose writing difficulties may well be the result of their inability to think in a clear and coherent manner.

Signed James H. Grace



Attachment C

State of New Jersey

GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08028

December 7, 1977

Mr. Albert C. Shaw
Department of Philosophy
Robinson Hall
Glassboro State College

Dear Al:

As you know, for some time I have been very much concerned about the nature of student capabilities and their readiness for the types of courses which we teach at the college level. My attention at this moment is directed toward a type of student deficiency which I feel the Department of Philosophy, and you especially, can help to alleviate. It has seemed to many that a major difficulty that we have in teaching undergraduates for the past few years lies in a type of dissonance in which the demand is placed intellectually in the classroom upon logical thinking abilities and the student is, to a large extent, unready for this type of demand. It is not necessary at this point to explore the reasons behind such a deficiency though undoubtedly there have been a number of factors which have nurtured this present state of affairs.

Accordingly, I am requesting that the Department of Philosophy explore the possibility of developing a course in informal logic which is directly aimed at improving students' rational abilities through exposure to common logical facilities in ordinary language. It is hoped that such a course, through in - and out - of - class activities, would emphasize and seek to develop further basic problem solving abilities of students in such a way that those abilities would be generalizable to a wide variety of courses (not solely limited to psychology).

Therefore, Al, I wish you would bring this matter to the attention of your department's curriculum committee with a request to develop such a course that I know would meet with student interest and whose need is apparent to many of the serious faculty members of this college.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Murray".

Murray Benimoff
Professor of Psychology



Attachment D
State of New Jersey

GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08028

December 12, 1977

Al Shaw
Dept of Philosophy & Religion

Dear Al:

about two weeks ago you spoke to me of some thoughts you were having with regard to deciding and teaching a course in logic for the layman. At the time my mind was occupied with some pressing personal matters, and my response, as I think of it now, may have seemed somewhat lukewarm. In the meantime the pressing events have been resolved; my mind has cleared; and I can offer a more thoughtful response to your ideas.

As I recall, your proposal was to introduce a course (elective I assume) to be known as Logic in Everyday Reasoning. This course was to consist of two main components:

1. Introduction to and study of the common logical fallacies and inconsistencies often present in the language and statements that impinge on the senses of the student from various sectors of his environment, i.e. politics, advertising, news media, education, etc.
2. To analyze and study some methods of problem solving - with particular emphasis upon the scientific method.

Attachment D

I realize that the above is probably most sketchy - one, because you were able to speak to me but briefly - and two, because I have undoubtedly forgotten a number of topics or issues that you mentioned. However, the basic notion is clear. I personally believe that your suggestion has considerable merit for helping the student dissect, understand, and effectively cope with at least some of those situations which seem to have (intentionally or not) as their purpose confusion, evasion or downright deception.

If you decide to develop your notions into an outline or syllabus I shall be most happy to read it and discuss it with you. It sounds quite interesting - I think you should give it a go.

My best wishes to you,
Alex.



Attachment E
State of New Jersey
GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08028

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

December 19, 1977

Mr. Albert Shaw
Philosophy/Religion Department
Glassboro State College

Dear Al:

I am delighted to hear of your proposal for a course in everyday logic. Years ago we used to teach that sort of thing as a necessary skill in the writing of expository prose, but nobody seems to be doing that anymore.

If I were making the rules, an introductory course in the elements of logic, especially the recognition of logical fallacies, would be a basic competence course required of all students. As you know, I am very interested in the skill of writing, both for students and for the rest of us. Nothing is more helpful to clear thought than good writing.

Writing is both the expression and the creation of intelligence, but neither of these things is possible to a person who can't think straight.

My congratulations on a splendid idea.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Mitchell".

Richard Mitchell
Professor of English

RM:js



Attachment F
State of New Jersey

GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08028

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
609-445-7187

December 8, 1977

Mr. Albert Shaw
Philosophy and Religion Department
Glassboro State College
Robinson Building

Dear Mr. Shaw:

I would like to encourage you to seek approval for the new course called Logic in Everyday Reasoning.

As you know, I teach basic writing and speech courses and it is my experience that most of our students come to us without preparation in the skills which your course would be designed to teach. Lack of reasoning skills prevents students from preparing essays and speeches which are properly organized and unified.

If you should get course approval, I would like to suggest that we put your course together with Communications 101 and set up a team teaching situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Reinfeld".

George Reinfeld
Professor of Communications

GR:bs

Attachment G

Recent Texts Intended for Courses in Informal Logic

- Annis, David B., Techniques of Critical Reasoning. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Company, 1974.
- Blyth, John W., A Modern Introduction to Logic. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.
- Engel, S. Morris, With Good Reason. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976.
- Kahane, Howard, Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1971.
- Michalos, Alex C., Improving Your Reasoning. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.
- Little, Winston W., Wilson, W. Harold, and Moore, W. Edgar, Applied Logic. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1975.
- Munson, Ronald, The Way of Words. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.
- Scriven, Michael, Reasoning. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1976.

Recent Texts in Formal Logic with Sections in Informal Logic

- Baum, Robert, Logic. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1975.
- Barker, Stephen F., The Elements of Logic. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1974.
- Barry, Vincent E., Practical Logic. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976.
- Carney, James D., and Scheer, Richard K., Fundamentals of Logic. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1974.
- Carter, K. Codell, A Contemporary Introduction to Logic. Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1977.
- Kaminsky, Jack, and Kaminsky, Alice, Logic: A Philosophical Introduction. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1974.