

# History of Logic & Reasoning

Phil C119

# Instructor Info —



John Kardosh

Office Hrs: T, TR 2:15-3:15

jkardosh@humnet.ucla.edu

# Course Info -

Prereq: None

Summer Session C: TR

3:15pm-5:20pm

Zoom

# Section Info ——

2A: T 10:30 - 11:20; 2B: TR 12:30 - 1:20

### Overview

This course will investigate the motivations that led many early modern philosophers and scientists to abandon the logical and dialectical methods of their medieval and Renaissance predecessors. We will focus especially on the work of René Descartes, whose chief methodological treatise, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, presents an influential critique of logic and dialectic.

The first two weeks of our course will attempt to motivate and contextualize Descartes' critique. We will look at some of the key developments in logic, dialectic, and scientific methodology from Aristotle to the medieval and Renaissance periods. We will also look at contemporary research in the philosophy and psychology of reasoning and logic.

In the last two thirds of the course we will focus on: (1) the reasons many early modern philosophers and scientists, like Descartes, advocate that we abandon logic and dialectic, not just as methods for conducting scientific inquiry, but more broadly as methods for teaching us how to reason; (2) the methods for conducting scientific inquiry and the rules for reasoning they instead advocate.

Like many of his intellectual contemporaries, Descartes was both a scientist and a philosopher. He developed his methodological considerations alongside his contributions to the sciences. Thus, we will also be looking at small portions of his geometry and physics to get a sense of how his methodological outlook relates to his scientific output.

### Material

#### **Required Texts**

You won't need to purchase any textbooks for this course. All required readings will be posted to our BruinLearn website.

#### Supplementary Texts

The following texts are not required, but if you have the time, they will help you prepare for our class:

- Parsons, Terrence. *Articulating Medieval Logic*. Cambridge University Press. 2014. See Chapter 1.
- Copenhaver, Brian. "Philosophy as Descartes Found It" *Routledge Companion to Sixteenth Century Philosophy*. Ed. Lagerlund, H. and Hill, B. Routledge. 2017.
- Matthews, Michael. *The Scientific Background to Modern Philosophy*. Hackett. 1989.

#### Grading Scheme

- Midterm Paper (5 6 pages): 40%
- Final Paper (6 7 pages): 50%
- Section Participation or Discussion Board Posts: 10%

Detailed instructions for the paper assignments will be posted to BruinLearn. There will be a weekly discussion board for students who need to participate asynchronously. To earn full participation credit for discussion board posts, you will need to make five, one-page long contributions throughout the quarter.

# FAQs

Do I need a background in logic, math, or physics to succeed in this course?

No. I will presume no prior background in logic, math, or physics, and I will explain any technical notions that come up in our readings.

Will class be held online or in person?

The class is currently scheduled to meet online. Students who can attend synchronously are encouraged to do so. For students who require an asynchronous option, I will make the Zoom recordings available on our class website.

## How will participation be assessed?

Students will earn participation credit by contributing to the conversation in their discussion sections. Students who must take the class asynchronously, or those who are uncomfortable participating in class, can earn participation credit by posting to our online discussion board.

### Learning Objectives

- Acquire a background in the philosophy and history of logic, reasoning, and the methodology of science.
- Acquire skills in analytical reading and writing
- Acquire tools for evaluating arguments
- learn to frame critical questions and comments using collaborative annotation software

### Accommodations

Students with learning needs that require special accommodations are encouraged to consult with UCLA's Center for Accessible Education (CAE). Details of the services CAE provides, including the protocol for letters of accommodation, can be found on their website: https://www.cae.ucla.edu. Also please do not hesitate to contact me, if there's anything you think I can do to make the class more accessible.

#### Academic Integrity

Students are expected to know and to follow the university's guidelines for academic honesty. Academic misconduct can occur in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. When in doubt about whether some academic practice is acceptable, ask your instructor for assistance. Always err on the side of caution. Any suspected violation of university policy regarding academic conduct will be reported directly to the Office of the Dean of Students, without exception. UCLA's policies on academic and intellectual integrity can be found at:

- https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode
- https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity