Course Syllabus for “Practical Logic” (PL 252-01)

(4 credits, Woods College of Advancing Studies)

Boston College, fall 2013, Dr. Peter Kreeft (office: Stokes 231N)

Class meets Tuesday evenings 6:30 PM – 9 PM from 9/3/13 to 12/10/13 (final exam date).

Room: see room schedule in McGuinn 100

Office hours for students in WCAS: before, during the break, and after class Tue. evenings;

Also please see daytime office hours posted on my office door.

Office phone: 617-552-3871; home phone: 617-527-2952; email: kreeft@bc.edu

**Course description:** A complete course in the theory and practice of the traditional Aristotelian logic (ordinary-language logic rather than mathematical, or symbolic, logic) that every educated person in the history of Western civilization learned until less than a century ago. Includes both material and formal logic, both deductive and inductive, with emphasis on practice, practical applications of principles, and many exercises.

This is not a lecture course because the textbook, SOCRATIC LOGIC by Peter Kreeft, contains all the principles and explanations that would be in class lectures. Instead of lectures, the class will consist of the following four segments, in order:

(1) discussion of the assigned chapters in the book, in preparation for the weekly quiz; questions about both principles (rules) and applications (exercises) in the book;

(2) the weekly quiz, consisting of (a) 10 easy questions, (b) 8 medium-difficulty questions, and (c) 2 more challenging “stretch” questions. Some of these questions will be taken directly from the exercises in the book.

(3) Correcting and grading the quiz, learning from your mistakes;

(4) An introduction to the next assignment (what to emphasize, practical hints, etc.).

When there are a lot of questions (the more, the better), this (segment (1)) will take up half the class and come before the 15-minute break; if there are fewer questions, the break will come after the quiz and before we correct it.

**Course objectives,** as mandated and specified by the official course template for BCWCAS courses:
1. “The student will demonstrate (knowledge, skill and/or competency as appropriate for the course) across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender and age in (topic) as demonstrated by (examples).” (*This protocol is 100% irrelevant since the principles of logic have a 0% variation due to culture, gender, or age, like the principles of arithmetic. They are a priori, universal, and unchangeable, though their formulations are linguistically and culturally plural, changeable, and relative.*)

2. “The student will demonstrate ethical (knowledge, skill and/or competency, as appropriate for the course) pertaining to (topic) as demonstrated by (examples).” (*This protocol also is not relevant since both the principles and the practice of logic can be used for either good or evil of any kind. Logical consistency and moral goodness are not functions of each other, or deducable from each other, either inversely or directly. The Devil would probably score 100 on my logic tests, but so would Jesus, while pre-fallen Adam and Eve would quite possibly flunk them all, but so would an insane, sociopathic drug-addicted Yankees fan.*)

3. The primary objective of the course is to form the mind of the student in logical habits, so that his/her thought is naturally ordered by the three standards of (a) clarity of concepts, (b) truth (at least probable and reasonable truth) of judgments, and (c) consistency of arguments, in deductive logic, and the standards of probability and relevance in inductive logic.

4. To that end, a secondary objective is to inform the student’s mind with the main principles in each of these three divisions of deductive logic, so that these principles can order his/her practice both in forming better concepts, judgments, and arguments himself/herself and in evaluating the concepts, judgments, and arguments of others which he/she meets in speech or writing.

5. And to that end, the tertiary objective is to be able to demonstrate this competency (a) on the quizzes that will be given on each section of this course, (b) on the comprehensive final exam, and (c) on the extra credit original work in which he/she will construct or evaluate longer arguments and logical discourses.

**Grading:** There will be (a) a final comprehensive exam at the end, and (b) 12 quizzes before that, one each week. Only your 10 highest grades will count. Some class days, when 2 chapters are covered rather than 1, may have 2 quizzes rather than 1; this will give you more than opportunities to drop low grade quizzes. **Absences count for zeros. There are no makeup quizzes.** Your final grade will be calculated on the combination of these two grades, (a) and (b), with the higher grade counting 2/3 and the lower grade 1/3. Extra credit work will be factored in afterwards, proportionate to both its quality and quantity. Extra credit is not guaranteed to raise your grade, but it cannot lower your grade; if it is lower than your other grades, it is dismissed. Extra credit assignments will be given out during the course, especially at the end. It can be handed in as late as a week after the final exam. You will pick up an Answer Key after the final exam so you can calculate your own grade instantly and determine whether or not you want to do extra credit work after the final exam.

Required Text: SOCRATIC LOGIC, 3rd edition (St. Augustine’s Press) by Peter Keeffe

The course meets the 4 credit hours of instructor-led time requirement by meeting for 2 ½ hours per week in class and requiring an average minimum of 6-10 hours per week study time.

Course Schedule, “Practical Logic” (PL 252-01), Dr. Keeffe, BC, WCAS, fall 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment in SOCRATIC LOGIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Introduction (The 3 Acts of the Mind) and Chapter 1 (Understanding)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>Ch. 2 (Terms)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Ch. 3 (Material Fallacies)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Ch. 4 (Definition)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Ch. 5 (Judgment)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>Chs. 6 &amp; 7 (Immediate Inference)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>10/29</td>
<td>Ch. 8 (Reasoning) &amp; Ch. 9 (Kinds of Arguments)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>Ch. 10 (Syllogisms) &amp; Ch. 11 (Validity)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Ch. 12 (Harder Syllogisms)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/19</td>
<td>Ch. 13 (Compound Syllogisms)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>Ch. 14 (Induction)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Ch. 15 &amp; 16 (Practical and Philosophical Applications of Logic)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>final exam</td>
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WCAS Grading System
The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

Boston College Mission Statement

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation’s finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Important Policies
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html

Written Work
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].
Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate's notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.