

TRIVIUM: ART OF LOGIC

COURSE SYLLABUS

[2023]



DESCRIPTION

The Trivium always exists as a whole: any attempt to divorce logic from grammar and rhetoric, or any of these three from each other, such that one studies one and not the others, results in an inadequate command of each and therefore an inadequate command of language. Thus, although this study *focuses* upon logic, it does not do so to the exclusion of its sisters in the Trivium. Propositions are studied in the context of sentences, and syllogisms and complex arguments in the contexts of paragraphs and essays. As a whole, the eyes of our Trivium program concerns the objects of **symbolic signification**—a point which we will discuss regularly.

The primary channel of study along which we will progress in this course concerns logic as a reflective art whereby we consider our own powers and operations of intellectual understanding, especially as these unfold through language (with a particular eye to the English language, but also sometimes with regard to Latin). The primary *object*, however, of which this reflective art seeks understanding, is the **illative relation**: that connection which draws forward our own inferential action. We will therefore, in pursuit of understanding this object, contemplate the three acts of the intellect, the nature and properties of terms, of propositions, of syllogisms, and rigorously practice the ability of instilling these reflective considerations into our common use of language and efforts at linguistic communication.



METHOD

The Art of Logic course is 12 weeks long, with one brief recorded lecture and one discussion session each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from *Logic as a Liberal Art: An Introduction to Rhetoric & Reasoning* by R.E. Houser. More advanced readings will be included each week, with a provisional list given in the syllabus. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor and ask insightful questions about language and thinking. In addition, the nature of logic demands direct practical habituation: as such, there are problem sets included in the primary reading which are to be completed each week. Difficult problems may be discussed in our live sessions, at prompting of instructor and student alike. Additionally, the weekly threads, which will be posted every **Friday**, will allow students the opportunity to communicate with the instructor and with one another about concepts and problems asynchronously throughout the week.

READING

There is one primary text for the Art of Logic course: *Logic as a Liberal Art: An Introduction to Rhetoric & Reasoning*, by R.E. Houser (Catholic University of America Press, 2020). Secondary recommended texts include but are not limited to: I.M. Bochenski's *History of Formal Logic*; John Buridan's *Treatise on Consequences*; Sr. Miriam Joseph's *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric*; Scott Sullivan's *Introduction to Traditional Logic*; Jacques Maritain's *Formal Logic*; John of St. Thomas' *Outlines of Formal Logic*. The instructor may provide supplementary readings from semiotics, as well. **Readings are subject to change.**

LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 15 to 45-minute audio or video lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific).

DISCUSSION

Though study of logic can mostly occur asynchronously, a discussion period may be fruitful to deepening our understanding and increasing our conversance with the nuances of the acts of the intellect as well as their expression in language. Accordingly, two discussion sessions will be held every week, on **Mondays from 6:00–6:45pm ET** and **Thursdays from 12:00–12:45pm ET**.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material and a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Each Lesson in Houser's *Logic as a Liberal Art* contains a problem set which students may complete at their own pace and on which they may receive feedback from the instructor, if so desired. Many other logic textbooks offer their own problem sets as well and these may be supplied for supplemental work. There will be a **Final Exam** due on **August 10**.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Discussions on May 8 May 11	Origins of Logic Lecture: Art of Reasoning Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Houser, <i>Logic as a Liberal Art (LLA)</i>, Lesson 5. Aristotle Invents Logic—Twice.• Houser, <i>LLA</i>, Lesson 6. Aristotle Organizes the Logic of Discovery and Proof. Advanced: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poincot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Author's Introduction.
Discussions on May 15 May 18	Signs of What Lecture: Logic and Semiotics Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesson 7. Language, Thought, and Reality.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 8. Categories: Working toward Definitions by Answering the “What?” Question. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poinsot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 1, c.2, Definition and Division of Signs.
Discussions on May 22 May 25	<p>Distinctions of Terms</p> <p>Lecture: Concepts and Expression</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 9. Clarifying Concepts through Division and Collection of Terms. Lesson 10. Aristotle’s Predicables. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poinsot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 1, c.3-6, Division of Terms, Nouns, and Verbs.
Discussions on May 29 June 1	<p>Relation between Cause and Definition</p> <p>Lecture: Logic and Science</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 11. Answering the “Why?” Question: Causes. Lesson 12. Different Kinds of Definitions. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poinsot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 2, c.1-3, Sentences, Demonstration, and Definition.
Discussions on June 5 June 8	<p>Basics of Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Role of the Copula</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 13. Statements and Propositions. Lesson 14. Properties of Categorical Propositions. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poinsot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 2, c.6-9, Propositions.
Discussions on June 12 June 15	<p>Kinds and Contexts of Categorical Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Language and Thinking</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 15. Recognizing the Kinds of Categorical Propositions. Lesson 16. Categorical Propositions in Context. <p>Advanced:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinsoot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 2, c.9-12, Supposition.
<p>Discussions on</p> <p>June 26 June 29</p>	<p>Manipulations of Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Dexterity of Linguistic Thinking</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 18. Opposition. • Lesson 19. Conversion. • Lesson 20. Obversion. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinsoot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 2, c.14-19, Manipulation of Propositions.
<p>Discussions on</p> <p>July 3 July 6</p>	<p>Conditional Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Contingency and Necessity in Thinking</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 21. Hypothetical Propositions. • Lesson 22. Advanced Conditional Propositions. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinsoot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 2, c.20-23, Advanced Propositions.
<p>Discussions on</p> <p>July 10 July 13</p>	<p>Modes of Inference & Categorical Syllogisms</p> <p>Lecture: Reasoning and the Argument</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 23. Two Kinds of Reasoning. • Lesson 24. The Categorical Syllogism. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinsoot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 3, c.1-3, Consequences and Induction. • Buridan, <i>Treatise on Consequences</i>, Book 1, c.1-3, Consequences in General.
<p>Discussions on</p> <p>July 17 July 20</p>	<p>Understanding and Extending Categorical Syllogistic Reasoning</p> <p>Lecture: Rhetorical Presentation of Illative Inference</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 25. Validity of Categorical Syllogisms. • Lesson 28. Enthymemes and Epicheiremas. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinsoot, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 3, c.4-6, Forms of Syllogism.

<p>Discussions on</p> <p>July 24 July 27</p>	<p>Hypothetical Arguments</p> <p>Lecture: Revisiting Contingency and Necessity</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 30. Hypothetical Arguments. <p>Advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poinset, <i>Outlines of Formal Logic (OFL)</i>, Book 3, c.11-13, Validity of Consequences.
<p>Discussions on</p> <p>July 31 August 3</p> <p>Final Exam Due August 10</p>	<p>Induction and the Complex Argument</p> <p>Lecture: Ordering Thought toward Truth</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 32. Induction. • Lesson 33. Complex Arguments.