

TRIVIUM

ART OF LOGIC I: BASICS OF ARGUMENTATION

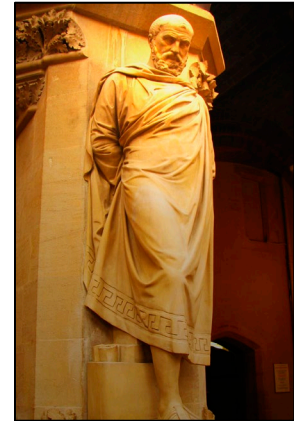
COURSE SYLLABUS

[GENERAL]



DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIVIUM

The Trivium—consisting in the three arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric—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.



Our Trivium program consists in **eight courses**, to be taken in sequence:

1. Art of Grammar I: Foundations
2. Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation
3. Art of Rhetoric I: Discovery of Arguments
4. Art of Grammar II: Composition
5. Art of Logic II: Advanced Argumentation
6. Art of Rhetoric II: Styles of Persuasion
7. Grammar & Rhetoric: Literature and Philosophy
8. Philosophy of Logic¹

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary channel of study along which we will progress in the first two courses of logic concerns the object of study 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.

¹ Philosophy of Logic doubles as a Philosophy Seminar.

The first course, Basics of Argumentation, will focus on terms, propositions, and basic forms of categorical and hypothetical syllogisms. Here our principal goal is to establish the habits of discerning logical structure, principally as it appears in real prose argumentation. While logic often is taught as though one could strip away all the nuance of natural language, the approach taken here emphasizes the practice of questioning and discerning the true significance of usual patterns of speech. Though artificial methods of symbolization and analysis of operations have a utility (and a place, even, to a small extent, in this course), as an integral part of the Trivium we treat logic as concerned with the full breadth of human language.

METHOD

The Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation course is 10 weeks long, with one brief recorded lecture and one discussion session each week. Each lecture and discussion session are structured around a reading from *Logic as a Liberal Art: An Introduction to Rhetoric & Reasoning* by R.E. Houser. 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**. Student answers are to be uploaded to a designated folder before the end of each week. Difficult and exemplar problems will frequently be discussed in our live sessions, at prompting of instructor and student alike.

Additionally, the weekly threads will allow students the opportunity to communicate with the instructor and with one another about concepts and problems asynchronously throughout the week. This practice is strongly encouraged to keep student minds' engaged with logical thinking between class sessions.

READING

There is one primary text for the Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation 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*; 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). Though they will avoid straying into topics too abstruse, these lectures will serve to engage students in reflection upon the acts of the intellect and the symbolic signifiers thereof, and will, as such, be of crucial importance to engaging fully with the study of logic.

DISCUSSION

Though one can gain much knowledge studying logic independently and asynchronously, often there are questions best answered in live conversation. Moreover, there are depths and nuances of reasoning which may be better discerned through the immediate presence of an instructor. The intellectual act is, after all, vital: witnessing and participating in its execution aids us all. Accordingly, two discussion sessions will be held every week at times TBD.

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.

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, both to help introduce some difficult concepts and to provide additional opportunity for practice. There will be a **Midterm Exam** due at the break and a **Final Exam** due at the end of the course.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Week I	<p>Defining Logic</p> <p>Lecture: Art of Reasoning</p> <p>Required:</p> <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.
Week II	<p>Logic in Semiotic Realism</p> <p>Lecture: Logic and Semiotics</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 7. Language, Thought, and Reality. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 8. Categories: Working toward Definitions by Answering the “What?” Question.
Week III	<p>Distinctions of Terms</p> <p>Lecture: Concepts and Expression</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 9. Clarifying Concepts through Division and Collection of Terms. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 10. Aristotle’s Predicables.
Week IV	<p>Causes and Definitions</p> <p>Lecture: Logic and Science</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 11. Answering the “Why?” Question: Causes. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 12. Different Kinds of Definitions.
Week V	<p>Basics of Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Role of the Copula</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 13. Statements and Propositions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 14. Properties of Categorical Propositions. • Scott Sullivan, <i>Introduction to Traditional Logic</i>, 85-92. <p style="text-align: center;">MID-TERM EXAMINATION DUE TBD</p>
	BREAK
Week VI	<p>Propositional Context and Opposition</p> <p>Lecture: Language and Thinking</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 15. Recognizing the Kinds of Categorical Propositions. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 16. Categorical Propositions in Context. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 18. Opposition.
Week VII	<p>Hypothetical Propositions</p> <p>Lecture: Contingency and Necessity in Thinking</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 21. Hypothetical Propositions. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 22. Advanced Conditional Propositions.
Week VIII	<p>Categorical Syllogisms</p> <p>Lecture: Reasoning and the Argument</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 24. The Categorical Syllogism. • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 25. Validity of Categorical Syllogisms.
Week IX	<p>Hypothetical Arguments</p> <p>Lecture: Revisiting Contingency and Necessity</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Lesson 30. Hypothetical Arguments.
Week X	<p>Review & Exam</p> <p>Lecture: The Practice of Logic</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houser, <i>LLA</i> – Review. • The final examination will be posted at the end of the final class. Students will have one week to complete the examination, which must be uploaded to Teams before 11:59pm ET at the end of that week.

	FINAL EXAMAMINATION DUE TBD
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