Office Information
Office Location: Faculty Center, Rm. 276
Office phone: 825-6035
Office Hours: MW 10-11; TR 10-11:30; and by appointment

E-Mail Address
andrew.piker@tamucc.edu

Course Description
This course is an introduction to some basic principles and techniques used in the analysis, construction, and evaluation of arguments. We will study and practice: a) methods of identifying the structure of an argument, b) different kinds of reasoning, and c) various ways of recognizing good or faulty reasoning.

Learning Outcomes
In this class, students will be expected to:
1) demonstrate an ability to understand and represent the structure of arguments;
2) evaluate both deductive and inductive reasoning;
3) construct and revise arguments

Late Assignments and Incompletes
Students who miss a test or fail to turn in another assignment on time for a good reason will be given a chance to make up the assignment and turn it in during the same or following week, at a time arranged with the instructor. An incomplete for the course is possible only in cases in which the course work is nearly complete, and the student has a legitimate reason for not completing the course work by the end of the semester.

Attendance, Late Arrivals, Early Departures
Attendance is not required, but is strongly recommended (and taken into account in borderline grade cases). The material studied in the class is cumulative – later material builds upon and presupposes understanding of earlier material – so students who miss classes tend to have difficulty catching up. Also, much of our class time will be devoted to working on in-class exercises, so that students can practice and develop their reasoning skills with help from their classmates and the instructor. Missing in-class exercises negatively impacts students’ grades directly (in-class assignments, together with homework assignments, constitute 10% of the overall course grade) and indirectly (if students do not develop their skills sufficiently by completing the in-class assignments, they may not be adequately prepared for homework assignments, quizzes, the test, or the final).
Arriving late or leaving early disrupts the class and is strongly discouraged.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the presentation of work as one’s own, that was in fact produced by another author (e.g., the submission of a paper as one’s own work, when it was written by someone else; or the submission of a portion of a paper written by another author, without citing the source of the material). University policy strictly prohibits plagiarism. Plagiarized work will be assigned a grade of “F.”

**Disabilities Accommodations**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at:

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. The last day to drop a class for the spring semester is April 10, 2020.

More Student Support
CASA (Center for Academic Student Achievement; includes Writing Center, tutoring services, etc.): 825-2977
Student Support Services: 825-3266
Counseling Center: 825-3266

Written Assignments
First test (20% of your overall grade); second test (25%); final exam (25%); a paper of at least 3-5 pages (20%); in-class and homework assignments, including a progress report on your paper, to be discussed in class (10% total for the in-class and homework assignments).

The in-class and homework assignments will include a variety of exercises designed to develop reasoning skills. The quizzes, test, and final exam will consist of short answer questions (true/false, multiple choice, definitions, etc.), and exercises similar to those included in the in-class and homework assignments. In the progress report, you will begin formulating an argument on a topic of your own choice; you will further develop that argument in the paper that is due at the end of the course.

Important Dates
Last day to add a class: January 28
Last day to drop a class: April 10

Reading
No required textbook

If you would like to order a textbook, the recommended one is The Elements of Reasoning, 5th, 6th, or 7th edition, Ronald Munson and Andrew Black, Wadsworth/Cengage

Many hand-outs (to be distributed in class, and posted on Blackboard)

Course Schedule
All page numbers indicate readings from the optional Munson and Black text, 6th edition

January 22 Introduction
The Nature and Structure of Arguments
pp. 1-15
27 **Analyzing Arguments**
Arrow and Keyword Diagrams
pp. 16-27

29 Arrow and Keyword Diagrams, continued

February

3 Arrow and Keyword Diagrams, continued

5 **Evaluating Arguments**
Validity and Soundness
pp. 28-36

10 Venn Diagrams
pp. 76-89

12 Venns, cont’d.

17 **Propositional Logic**
Compound Statements; Truth Functions
(Hand-Out)

19 Review

24 **Test**

26 Symbolization
pp.49-53; and 63-64

March

2 **Paper Progress Report Due**
Progress Report Discussion

4 Symbolization, cont’d.

9 **Spring Break**

11 **Spring Break**

16 Argument Forms
pp. 53-59

18 Proofs
pp. 60-63

23 Proofs, cont’d.

25 Proofs, cont’d.

30 Proofs, cont’d.

April

1 Review

6 **Test**

8 Truth Tables
(hand-out)
13 Truth Tables, cont’d.
15 Informal Fallacies
    pp.124-145

20 Fallacies, cont’d.
22 Fallacies, cont’d.

27 Fallacies, cont’d.
29 Review
    Paper Due

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 11, 1:45-4:15