



Course Syllabus: **A-PHIL1101 Intro to Critical Thought**
Professors: Christopher Cone, Th.D., Ph.D., John Oglesby, MA., Marty Cochran, M.Ed.,
Stephen Lewis, Ph.D., Jeff Christianson, Ph.D.
Revision Date: 3/27/2026
Policies (Links): [Enrollment Agreement](#)
[Withdrawal and Refund Policy](#)
[Writing Style Policy](#)
[Standards of Intellectual Honesty](#)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

PHIL1101 is an introduction into the various belief systems that constitute worldviews with an emphasis on issues of epistemology, logic, and critical thinking.

II. AGATHON PROFESSOR(S) BIO

John Oglesby is an associate professor for Agathon University. John Oglesby received his BS in Bible and Theology as well as his MA in Bible and Theology at Calvary University. He is currently working towards completion in his Doctor of Philosophy in Bible and Theology at Calvary University. John Oglesby has taught courses in Hermeneutic theory, philosophy, and worldview, amongst other relevant topics.

Dr. Christopher Cone is the professor of record for the course. He serves as President and CEO of [AgathonEDU Educational Group](#). Cone has served as President of Calvary University and as Research Professor of Bible and Theology, in executive and faculty roles at Southern California Seminary as Chief Academic Officer and Research Professor of Bible and Theology, and at Tyndale Theological Seminary as President and Professor of Bible and Theology. He has served in several pastoral roles and has also held teaching positions at the University of North Texas, North Central Texas College, and Southern Bible Institute. His articles are published at www.drcone.com, and he is the author and general editor of fifteen books.

III. COURSE TEXTS AND RESOURCES

Required Texts:

1. All AU courses use the Bible as a primary textbook. Translations used for coursework include any of the following: NASB, ESV, KJV, and NKJV. Other translations/versions may be used for complementary study and research.
2. Cone, Christopher, *Prolegomena on Biblical Hermeneutics and Method* (Hurst, TX: Tyndale Seminary Press, 2012), ISBN: 978-1938484032, \$21
3. Cone, Christopher, Article: Addressing Epistemological Questions, Electronic version provided. [Cone Article: Addressing Epistemological Questions](#)

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4. Descartes, Rene, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1911), Electronic Version Provided, 6–32.
 5. Hume, David, *Treatise of Human Nature: An Attempt to Introduce Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects* (London, Edinburgh: Clarendon Press, 1896), Electronic Version Provided, xvii–9.
 6. Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Will to Power* (New York, NY: Random House, 1967), Electronic Version Provided, 260–271.
 7. Poythress, Vern Sheridan, *Logic: A God-Centered Approach to the Foundation of Western Thought* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), ISBN: 978-1-4335-3229-0, \$45
 8. Nickel, James, *Mathematics: Is God Silent?* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2001), ISBN: 978-1-879998-22-3, [AMAZON-24] [DIGITAL]
 9. Clough, Charles, *Bible Framework, Part II: Buried Truths of Origins* (Bel Air, MD: Bible Framework Ministries, 1995), vii – 5.
[1] [DIGITAL] or [2] [PDF WEB DOWNLOAD], or [3] [PDF AU Download]
 10. Clough, Charles, *Bible Framework, Part IV: Disciplinary Truths of God’s Kingdom* (Bel Air, MD: Bible Framework Ministries, 1997), Electronic Version Provided, 2-18.
[1] [DIGITAL] [2] [PDF / AU Download]

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE AND OUTLINE

Module 1-Presuppositions in Critical Thought – Dr. Christopher Cone

Does everyone have presuppositions? Are there correct and incorrect first principles? Dr. Christopher Cone addresses the topic of presuppositions and their relationship with critical thought.

- **Module Assessment:** Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- **Module Reading Assignment:** **Cone, p. 11–85, 141–169**
- **Reading Content Assessment:** Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- **Interaction Assessment:** Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
- **Interaction Questions:**
 - What is a presupposition of critical thinking?
 - According to scripture, what should we be thinking?
 - What are the processes of critical thinking?
 - What is the transformative model from Romans 12:1-3?

Module 2-Hermeneutic Centrality in Critical Thought – John Oglesby

John Oglesby presents the importance and priority of hermeneutics within the discipline of Critical Thought. Why is hermeneutics so important? What is its relationship with critical thinking?

- **Module Assessment:** Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- **Module Reading Assignment:** **Cone, p. 153-265**
- **Reading Content Assessment:** Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- **Interaction Assessment:** Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial

posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical)

- Interaction Questions:
 - What is hermeneutics?
 - How does the proper (or improper) use of hermeneutics affect thinking?
 - What are the central processes of critical thinking?
 - What are the 4 Biblical pillars of hermeneutics?
 - What role does critical thought have in the interpretation of data?

Module 3-Transformative Models for Critical Thought – Stephen Lewis

Stephen Lewis presents biblical case studies of critical thinking and logic. Is there a biblical model presented? What prescriptions and models are found within the Scriptures?

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Module Reading Assignment: Cone, 75-140*
- *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Interaction Assessment: Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).*
- Interaction Questions:
 - What are the 4 pillars of learning?
 - What is andragogy?
 - What are the 6 guiding values for learning from a Christian perspective?
 - What are the learning objectives of transformative learning according to Romans 12:1-3?

Module 4-Epistemology and the Study of Knowledge: An Introduction – Dr. Christopher Cone

Dr. Christopher Cone asks- How do you know anything? Can facts be ascertained? If so, at what level and how might that be achieved? The study of epistemology asks questions of knowledge and how we, as mankind, might understand the reality in which we find ourselves. Epistemology has been ground-zero for debate amongst philosophers for millennia. The learner, after this module, will understand the foundational aspects of the questions of knowledge.

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Module Reading Assignment: [Cone Article: Addressing Epistemological Questions](#)*
- *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Interaction Assessment: Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).*
- Interaction Questions:
 - What are the 3 revelations of epistemology?
 - How does hermeneutics play a role in epistemology?
 - What are the processes of critical thinking?
 - What is the transformative model in Romans 12:1-3?

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Module 5-Epistemology: Comparing Systems – John Oglesby

John Oglesby presents and compares various systems of epistemology from the most influential thinkers such as Descartes, Hume, Nietzsche, and God. Is there a correct model of thinking? If so, which might it be?

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Module Reading Assignment: **Descartes, p. 6–32, Hume, p. xvii–9, Nietzsche, p. 260–271***
- *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Interaction Assessment: Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).*
- *Interaction Questions:*
 - What are the 4 epistemological systems presented?
 - Can we know truth / reality?
 - What is the source of authority?
 - How does the existence, or non-existence, of authority affect contemporary thinking?

Module 6-Introduction to Logic – Dr. Christopher Cone

Dr. Christopher Cone Christopher Cone presents an introduction to the world of Logic and presents various subcategories within the discipline.

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Module Reading Assignment: **Poythress, p. 24–79***
- *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Interaction Assessment: Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).*
- *Interaction Questions:*
 - What is logic?
 - What is truth?
 - What is the difference between inductive reasoning and inductive logic?
 - What is the relationship of faith and logic?

Module 7-Logical Fallacies – Marty Cochran

Marty Cochran presents a wide variety of logical fallacies which the Learner should avoid whenever working through arguments.

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
- *Module Reading Assignment: **Poythress, p. 80–164***
- *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*

- *Interaction Assessment:* Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
- *Interaction Questions:*
 - How is a fallacy of logic a counterfeit?
 - What are 3 types of fallacies?
 - How does a fallacy of logic reveal God? Give a fallacy, its name, type, and why is it a fallacy?

Module 8- Implications of Epistemology and Logic within Worldview – Stephen Lewis

Steve Lewis presents contemporary implications when working with logic and worldview. Critical thinking certainly impacts on those tough questions that philosophy tends to focus on, but it also impacts those day-to-day questions and conversations. After this module, the learner will understand the importance of critical thinking within various areas of life.

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate:* Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- *Module Reading Assignment: Cone, p. 267-344*
- *Reading Content Assessment:* Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- *Interaction Assessment:* Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
- *Interaction Questions:*
 - What are the implications behind epistemology and logic–thinking critically?
 - What if you get it wrong, or, you get it right?
 - Why does it matter and how does

Module 9-Science and Worldview – Jeff Christianson

Dr. Jeff Christianson addresses issues of Science, worldview, and critical thought. How does the discipling of thinking critically play out whenever undergirding science with the Biblical worldview?

- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate:* Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- *Module Reading Assignment: Nickel, p. 1-55; Clough (Part II), p. vii - 5*
- *Reading Content Assessment:* Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
- *Interaction Assessment:* Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
- *Interaction Questions:*
 - In what ways does one's understanding of science influence worldview? Or vice versa?
 - What is the difference between observable science and historical science?
 - What are some ways to answer someone's foolish opposition to a biblical principle?

Module 10- Technology and Critical Thought – Jeff Christianson

Dr. Jeff Christianson presents various areas of discussion within technology and critical thought such as the importance of thinking critically whenever approaching various forms of technology.

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- *Module Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
 - *Module Reading Assignment: Nickel, p. 195-226, Clough (Part II), p. 103-128, (Part IV), p. 2-18*
 - *Reading Content Assessment: Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)*
 - *Interaction Assessment: Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s) and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).*
 - *Interaction Questions:*
 - What is the relationship between science/technology, ethics, and sociopolitics?
 - How does one's view of evil impact how one ought to use science and technology?
 - Where have you noticed technology that can be used both ethically and non-ethically?
 - Why do both sides of socio-political controversy often claim to be backed by science?

Course Content Assessment

Undergraduate: Learners will complete a multiple-choice cumulative exam (faculty must provide the exam, which should include 5 questions from each module quiz or topic)

Course Competency Assessment

Undergraduate: Learners will Learners will select and complete any **1 of the 3** competency assignments. Specifics of the assessment *must* be preapproved by the Mentoring Professor:

1. Practical Engagement Component – a practical social engagement of 1 to 1.5 hours applying principles covered in the course, and a 1000-word report discussing: (1) Introduction of the Engagement, (2) Methodology, (3) Summary of What Happened, and (4) Benefits and Implications
2. Writing Component – a publishable quality paper of 3000-5000 words on an approved topic related to the course material.
3. Teaching Encounter Component – preparing, delivering, recording, and submitting a 20–40-minute teaching to a live audience on an approved topic related to the course material.

V. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

1. Learners will understand foundational aspects of epistemology and logic.
(CBULO 1, 2)
2. Learners will compare various understandings of epistemology.
(CBULO 4)
3. Learners will identify logical forms and fallacies among various arguments. (CBULO 1)
4. Learners will operate logically within their own worldview.
(CBULO 1, 2)
5. Learners will employ critical thinking when viewing the world.
(CBULO 1, 2, 5)

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. To prepare Learners for roles in transformative education teaching and service.
2. To provide Learners a foundation for effective individual and organizational leadership in diverse environments.

3. To ensure Learners demonstrate worldview foundation for empowering people and building communities.
4. To help Learners formulate a Biblical approach to transformative learning and leadership.

AU Learning Outcomes (AULOs)

1. *Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Research* – Learners will demonstrate the ability to think critically, solve problems, and conduct interdisciplinary research at a level appropriate to their program.
2. *Personal Growth* – Learners will understand how learning is related to personal growth, and will be challenged to grow in their thinking, communication, conduct, and engagement with others.
3. *Skills Development* – Learners will advance in skills related to their area of learning, demonstrating a level of competency appropriate to their program.
4. *Social Responsibility* – Learners will appreciate the diversity in, and value of others as designed by our Creator, and will grow in willingness and capability to serve others.
5. *Worldview Applications* – Learners will become capable of thinking from a worldview perspective and will understand the relationship of description and prescription, so that they can ground their actions in sound principles.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING (1000 Points)

1. Module Assessments (20 points each x 10) 200 Points
 - a. CLO 1 / PLO 3,4 / AULO 1,2
2. Module Interactive Discussion (20 points each x 10)200 Points
 - a. CLO 2 / PLO 3,4 / AULO 3,5
3. Reading Content Assessment (10 points each x 10) 100 Points
 - a. CLO 1 / PLO 3,4 / AULO 1,2
4. Content Assessment – (5 MC from each module x 5) 250 Points
 - a. CLO 3 / PLO 1,2 / AULO 4,5
5. Competency Assessment – Choose 1 from below..... 250 Points
 - a. CLO 3 / PLO 1,2 / AULO 4,5

[Agathon UAF Grading Policy and Assessment Rubrics Here](#)

VII. GRADING SCALE

Letter grades are given, which represent the following percentages:

- A - 94-100% - Excellent
- B - 86-93% - Above Average
- C - 78-85% - Average
- D - 70-77% - Inferior
- F - Below 70%)
- WP - Withdrew passing
- WF - Withdrew failing

Students receiving “D” or “F” grades in any course will be notified in the middle of the semester.

VIII. VIII. CARNEGIE UNIT CREDIT HOUR EQUIVALENT

Total Hours of Module Content:	20 hours
Total Hours of Reading Content:	40 hours
Total Hours of Minor Assessments:	30 hours
Total Hours of Major Assessment:	30 hours
Total Hours of Competency Assessment:	15 hours

Equivalent of 3 Credit Hour (135 hours of total course time)