



Informal Logic **(The Art of Argument)** *yearlong course 2021-2022*

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

This course is intended for students in grades 7-9, or higher, who would like to be able to produce sound arguments and who would be like to recognize flaws in their own and others' arguments. Students who do not have prior experience in academic writing may need some extra coaching with writing assignments.

Please note: This is a writing intensive course. Students will complete several short writing assignments and one slightly longer analysis paper (roughly 3-4 pages). Upon successful completion, the student will earn one high school credit.

Class Dates: First class: September 7th. Last class: May 26th (see below for more details).

Class Times: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00am — 12:15pm (EST).

Instructor: Dr. Francie Longshore.

E-mail: flongshore.scholeacademy@gmail.com.

SCHEDULE FOR INFORMAL LOGIC:

CLASS SESSIONS DATES:

Classes will take place on Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00am — 12:15pm (EST) for 32 weeks and 64 classes on the following dates* --

September (8): 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30

October (8): 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28

November (7): 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, [Thanksgiving Break], 30

December (5): 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, [Christmas Break]

January (6): [Christmas Break], 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27

February (6): 1, 3, 8, 10, [Winter Break] 22, 24

March (10): 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31

April (6): 5, 7, [Holy Week/Easter], 19, 21, 26, 28

May (8): 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26 [End 2nd Semester]

Holidays (no class):

Monday, September 6, 2021 (Labor Day)

Monday, November 22–Friday, November 26, 2021 (Thanksgiving)

Monday, December 20, 2021–Friday, January 7, 2022 (Christmas and New Year's)

Monday, February 14–Friday, February 18, 2022 (Winter Break)

Monday, April 11–Friday, April 15, 2022 (Holy Week/Easter)

**Please note the above dates and times are the anticipated class sessions for this course. However, all dates are subject to change as the instructor's circumstances might dictate (e.g. illness, family emergency). Any classes canceled by the instructor will be made up at an alternate time designated by the instructor.*

FORMAL LOGIC COURSE MAP:

Quarter 1

1. What is Logic? (Introduction)
2. Fallacies of Relevance (Unit I): *ad Fontem* Arguments (c. 1)
3. Fallacies of Relevance (Unit I): Appeals to Emotion (c. 2)

Quarter 2

1. Fallacies of Relevance (Unit I): Appeals to Emotion (c. 2, con.)
2. Fallacies of Relevance (Unit I): Red Herrings (c. 3)
3. Fallacies of Presumption (Unit II): Fallacies of Presupposition (c. 4)

Quarter 3

1. Fallacies of Presumption (Unit II): Fallacies of Induction (c. 5)
2. Fallacies of Clarity (Unit III)(c. 6)

Quarter 4

1. Cumulative Review
2. Fallacy Detection – Students read, discuss, and write about fallacies in “real world” documents.
3. Final Paper

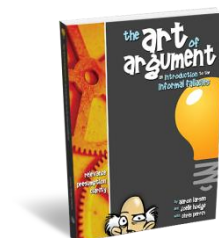
The chapter numbers from the textbook are provided as a guide. Course content will also include short excerpts from articles and texts and supplemental information provided by the teacher. Please note that a particular section may run slightly long or short based on student interest and need. For this reason, the quarter markings may be slightly off, even though we will complete all the material and in this order.

Note to parents: Some of the texts we will read are controversial or on controversial topics, but all chosen texts will be classroom appropriate (e. g. no inappropriate language, age appropriate, no potentially traumatizing content) and chosen for their logical interest rather than to push any particular agenda, political or otherwise. During in-class discussions, our concern will be with the logic of the argument, rather than with its truth. Discussion of the truth of an argument will be reserved for student writing assignments that are not shared with peers. With reference to logical analysis of arguments, I always like to remind students that just because something is true doesn't mean a particular argument in favor of it is a sound argument. Meanwhile, just because something is false, doesn't mean a particular argument in favor of it contains any informal fallacies or formal flaws.

OFFICE HOURS: During office hours students may raise questions, seek assistance, or review class material. I am available to answer questions immediately after each class session; students should feel free to stay online after class to ask a question or touch base. If a longer discussion is desired, please email me or talk to me right after class to set up a time to meet with me on Zoom. Note: Office hour meetings are meant to be occasional and relatively short. If more one-on-one time is needed, I would suggest contacting the tutoring center. If you would like me to be your tutor, please let me know. If you would like someone else to tutor you, also please let me know; I would be happy to supply you/your tutor with a list of topics or assignments you might want to work on or review.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

The main course text is *The Art of Argument: an Introduction to the Informal Fallacies*, which is available from Classical Academic Press (www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com).



OPTIONAL COURSE TEXTS:

Scholé Academy recommends that papers and essays be submitted using basic MLA style. The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* — 7th Edition may be a helpful resource. If you prefer, you may also use Chicago/Turabian style for this course, since that is the style guide used by academic philosophers.

FORMAL LOGIC COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed for junior high and high school students who want to learn how to identify logical flaws in the texts they read and the arguments they encounter in the real world, partly so they can avoid logical fallacies in their own arguments. Students will study informal fallacies as tools to promote clearer and more logical thinking. They will complete the entire *Art of Argument* textbook and will then apply what they have learned to a variety of written texts (and the occasional in-class video). They will write a number of short reflection and analysis papers of increasing sophistication, culminating in a short paper analyzing a text of their own choosing (approved by me).

By the end of the school year, a successful student should be able to identify informal fallacies in the arguments they read, observe online and on the news, and encounter in discussions with peers, teachers, and others.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: HABITS OF MIND

Successful students in this course will possess certain *habits of mind*. Most, if not all of us, are continually in the process of developing these habits, and we will have ample opportunity to build these habits together over the course of the school year. Principal among these habits are:

1. **ability to stay on-task:** Since we only have 2.5 hours together on any given week, we will need to be very conscientious about how we use our time. Simply put, we don't have much time to goof around. Sometimes you will be asked to work with a small group of peers to discuss and complete an assignment and then report your findings to the class as a whole. Since I won't always be with you in the breakout rooms, your group will need to be able to stay on-task on its own. You will also need to be on-task during at-home independent work time.
2. **growth mindset:** Studies have shown that individuals who have a growth mindset, as opposed to a "closed mindset," are happier and more successful in both school and life in general. Someone who has a closed mindset prefers to stay within their comfort zone; they are afraid of failure; and they are reluctant to try new things, partly because they don't think of themselves as someone who is able to change for the better. In contrast, a person with a growth mindset willingly steps outside their comfort zone, thinks of failure as an opportunity to learn, and enjoys trying new things and challenging themselves in new ways. By the end of this course, it is my hope that all of us will have our thinking challenged in new ways and that we will see the value of stepping outside of our comfort zones in order to learn something new.
3. **independent depth of inquiry** – Much of this course will be based on independent student work and reflection. You will read sections of your textbook, as well as excerpts from various texts and articles, in order to prepare for class discussions. You will also have plenty of time to produce written analyses and reflections of what you read and what we discuss in class. A successful student will spend the necessary time to read carefully, think deeply, and analyze thoroughly. Try to think of what you read and write not as assignments to complete, but as opportunities to process and learn more deeply.
4. **intellectual curiosity** – If you have younger siblings, you've probably noticed that toddlers ask a lot of questions, particularly the question, "Why?". They also tend to get really excited about things, including things many teenagers and adults ignore or take for granted, things like a caterpillar crawling on the ground or a freshly-made mud puddle. Part of the reason we want our class to be "restful" is so that we have time to stop and admire the logical equivalent of a "cater-

pillar,” for example, to marvel at a particularly interesting argument or turn of phrase. Although logic is a rigorous discipline, there is also plenty of room for creativity and wonder. In fact, you will be a better logician if you have plenty of creativity and wonder, and if you frequently stop to ask, “Why?”

5. **kindness and respect** – Most importantly, a successful student in this course is one who sees the class as a team and class members as individuals who deserve kindness, respect, and the opportunity to have their voices heard. This means listening to both teachers and peers when they talk, trying to make room for others to join in the discussion, and “reading charitably” (we will talk about what this means in class). There will be lots of opportunities to argue and debate in this class, but the number one rule is: Attack the argument **but never the person**. A good logician knows the difference.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS IN ACTION

Students will be following the sequence of study contained in *The Art of Argument*. The ultimate goal is to be able engage with this type of logic outside of the classroom and apply the skills learned in class as they engage the world around them. To that end:

Homework will generally consist of carefully reading and marking texts in preparation for the next class day’s discussion; sometimes students may be asked to write about a question and turn in their written work on Schoology. Students will sometimes be asked to read and analyze news articles or other texts in preparation for class; these texts will be made available to students on Schoology. All reading homework must be completed prior to the beginning of class, since our class discussion will require having read the homework assignment. Note: Students and parents, if you find a text or text excerpt that is classroom appropriate and that includes an interesting example of a fallacy, please send it my way. I would love to use these in class.

At least once per month, students will be asked to write a slightly longer reflection or analysis of a written argument or class discussion. These will also be turned in on Schoology, and I will return them to the student with extensive written feedback. For the final paper, students will have ample time to work and will turn in multiple drafts, and will receive and respond to my feedback along the way.

Important: Class discussions are a central component of this course. This means, at a minimum, that each student must arrive to class on time with the homework reading fully prepared. While you are on the Zoom call, your camera should be turned on (if you are having technical problems, please let me know) and you should be in as quiet an environment as possible. For those with noisy households, headphones are definitely recommended. *If you are not comfortable speaking in a Zoom discussion, please arrange to meet with me as soon as possible so we can talk about ways to help you get involved and become more comfortable sharing your thoughts in front of the group (this is all part of developing a growth mindset).*

STUDENT EVALUATION: GRADING

While this course will be “restful” and hopefully enjoyable, Scholé Academy recognizes the need to provide grades for students who will be using this course as part of their prepared college transcript. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow achievement goals for mastery of this discipline. Attaining a mastery of Logic is its own reward.

I will give extensive written feedback on assignments through the free online grading system, Schoology. I do not write point or letter grades on individual assignments, as this puts too much emphasis on the grade rather than the learning experience. However, at the end of each quarter, families will receive an email from me outlining their student’s overall progress (i. e. What’s going well? What are some areas to

work on?). And at the end of the year, you will receive a final course grade of *magnā cum laudē* (with great praise), *cum laudē* (with praise), *satis bene* (sufficient, satisfactory), or *nōn satis* (not sufficient).

Ideally, every student who works diligently should do praiseworthy work (*cum laudē*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the *magnā cum laudē* students. Students who do adequate but not praiseworthy work will receive a grade of *satis*. *Nōn satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy. If at any point, a student is in danger of dropping below *satis*, I will contact their family so we can remedy the situation (this might include redoing an assignment or receiving tutoring).

Note: Parents, if your student needs a letter-grade transcript for the purpose of college admissions, please email me at the end of year, and I will send a transcript to the requesting parent.

STUDENT EVALUATION: MASTERY PORTRAIT

- At the completion of this course, *cum laudē* students will know all twenty-eight fallacies discussed in *The Art of Argument*. They will be able to name, define, and identify these fallacies in the arguments they encounter.
- They should also be able to recognize and evaluate fallacious arguments in their own writing and should be developing the ability to avoid such arguments altogether.
- In the process, a successful student will have grown in their practice of the habits of mind identified above, as well as in their understanding of and appreciation for the role of informal logic in seeking and attaining truth.

STUDENT EVALUATION: ASSIGNMENTS, TYPES & WEIGHTS

Students' grades are based on:

First Semester:

1. Class Participation: 40%
2. Reflection Papers: 40%
3. Quizzes (identification of terms and multiple choice identification of fallacies): 20%.

Second Semester:

1. Class Participation: 40%
2. Reflection Papers: 20%
3. Final Paper (including drafts): 20%
4. Quizzes (identification of terms and multiple choice identification of fallacies): 20%

Note: Since the goal is to master the subject by the end of the year, the final grade will weigh the second semester slightly more heavily (First semester = 40% of final grade; Second semester = 60% of final grade).

STUDENT EVALUATION: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are on their honor to abide by [Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy](#) which assumes the personal cultivation of Student-Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook. Among other things, this means all your work must be your own, unless you are working on a written assignment where you are permitted to refer to someone else's work, in which case you must correctly cite the information you are referring to.

If you refer to information that is not common knowledge and/or that is an opinion obtained through any source, you must cite it. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism. **Note:** *A plagiarized assignment will result in a failing grade.* We will discuss the topic of plagiarism in class, but please feel free to ask if

you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism. You should also consult your chosen style manual (MLA or Turabian/Chicago) for specific direction on obtaining, quoting, and paraphrasing sources.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:

We will be using the free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook.

Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the *Discovery of Deduction* School-ology assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

Francie Longshore is new to Scholé Academy this year but not new to classical education or online teaching. Most recently, she served as the lead humanities teacher at an ecumenically-minded classical Christian school in Portland, Oregon. Courses she taught there include every level of high school Latin, the senior humanities seminar, and a doctrine course. For the past two summers, she also taught an online essay writing course for gifted eighth-tenth graders. Prior to teaching middle and high school students, she spent several years dabbling in academia, including earning an M.A. in Christian Thought (Trinity Divinity School), an M.A. in Medieval Studies (Catholic University of America), and a Ph.D. in philosophy (Catholic University of Leuven, [Belgium]), as well as teaching theology and philosophy, including introductory logic, to college undergraduates.

Francie currently lives in St. Helens, Oregon with her husband, two homeschooled children, and three self-taught cats. She plays a mean game of Scrabble, enjoys a good play on words, and has a weakness for iced coffee and homemade blueberry muffins.