# University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus

*Course syllabus*

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| **Course Title** | Logic, Reasoning and Critical Thinking |
| **Course Prefix, Number, and Section** | PHIL-1120-501 |
| **Professor** | Dr. Daniel Murphy |
| **Term** | Fall 2026 |
| **Meeting Times** | Online |
| **Email Address** | dmurphy5@unm.edu |
| **Course Access** | https://canvas.unm.edu/ |

## General Course Information

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| **Welcome to PHIL-1120!** | I'm Dr. Daniel Murphy, I love teaching philosophy, researching, writing, and being able to enjoy academic life, in which I've been working for well over ten years. In this course, our focus is on logic and critical thinking, one of the major branches of philosophy. Many philosophers would say that it is the branch of philosophy that many of us deal with on a regular basis - it is important to both our personal lives and careers, and is useful in many different aspects of our studies as well.<br><br>On a more personal note, I also like reading the great works in world literature (as time permits), and inevitably, the ideas in those great novels connect with many important philosophical ideas and issues. But things indeed get busy, so there is often not enough time to squeeze it all in! |
| **Course catalog description** | *PHIL-1120: Logic, Reasoning and Critical Thinking* helps students learn how to analyze, critique and construct arguments in context, in other words, how to read and write argumentative essays.<br>Meets New Mexico Lower-Division General Education Common Core Curriculum Area I: Communications.<br>This is a three credit-hour course delivered in an entirely asynchronous online modality during the Fall 2026 semester. |
| **Learning outcomes** | Drawing upon introductory elements of argumentative reasoning, and as well upon other resources and perspectives, students will be challenged to hone and apply their reasoning and critical thinking skills by analyzing, critiquing, and defending different points of view, positions, and arguments.<br><br>By the end of the course, students should be able to:<br><br>- Understand and work with basic concepts of argumentative reasoning<br>- Identify components of arguments (premises, conclusions, etc.)<br>- Identify and work with certain basic types of arguments (also in context)<br>- Distinguish between deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning<br>- Identify fallacies and apply basic elements of argument evaluation (also for arguments presented in context)<br>- Develop well-formed arguments in written pieces so as to support positions they are defending |
| **Textbook and readings** | David Kelley, *The Art of Reasoning* 4th ed. (Norton, 2014). |

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| | In addition to the textbook readings, there will also be other readings that will be freely available online and/or in .pdf format on UNM Canvas. |

## Academic Calendar

| **Week/Date(s)** | **Brief description of topics and readings – see UNM Canvas for assignments, pages to read and study, due dates, .pdf readings, and other details for each weekly cycle** |
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| Week 1: 8/17 – 11:30 pm on 8/23 | Introduction to course |
| Week 2: 8/24 – 11:30 pm on 8/30 | Mullen reading |
| Week 3: 8/31 - 11:30 pm on 9/6 | "Introduction", "Language and Reasoning", and Chapter 1 (classification) in Kelley text |
| Week 4: 9/7 – 11:30 pm on 9/13 | Chapter 3 (propositions) in Kelley text |
| Week 5: 9/14 – 11:30 pm on 9/20 | Harrington reading |
| Week 6: 9/21 – 11:30 pm on 9/27 | Chapter 4 (argument analysis) in Kelley text |
| Week 7: 9/28 - 11:30 pm on 10/4 | Chapter 4 (argument analysis) in Kelley text (cont.) |
| Week 8: 10/5 – 11:30 pm on 10/11 | Chapter 5 (fallacies) in Kelley text |
| Week 9: 10/12 – 11:30 pm on 10/18 | Chapter 5 (fallacies) in Kelley text (cont.) |
| Week 10: 10/19 – 11:30 pm on 10/25 | Chapter 6 (categorical propositions) in Kelley text (cont.) |
| Week 11: 10/26 – 11:30 pm on 11/1 | Chapter 6 (categorical propositions) in Kelley text |
| Week 12: 11/2 – 11:30 pm on 11/8 | Chapter 7 (categorical syllogisms) in Kelley text |
| Week 13: 11/9 – 11:30 pm on 11/15 | Chapter 7 (categorical syllogisms) in Kelley text (cont.) |
| Week 14: 11/16 – 11:30 pm on 11/22 | Chapter 12 (inductive generalizations) |
| Week 15: 11/23 – 11:30 pm on 11/29 | *As this week is Thanksgiving week, there are no new assignments or readings.* |
| Week 16: 11/30 – 11:30 pm on 12/6 | Last week of course (final exam-essay due on 12/6) |

## Course Components: Required Assignments

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| **11 Quizzes (38.5%)** | The maximum credit (total point value) that can be earned for each quiz is 100 points. Each quiz is worth 3.5% of the overall grade for the course. Some quizzes are shorter, and some are longer. The grading system for these quizzes will be as follows:<br>90 - 100 points: "A" range<br>80 - 90 points: "B" range<br>70 - 80 points: "C" range<br>60 - 70 points: "D" range<br>Fewer than 60 points: "F" |
| **1 Final Exam-Essay (15%)** | The maximum credit (total point value) that can be earned for the final exam, which will be an essay assignment, is 100 points. The essay is worth 15% of the overall grade for the course. For additional rubric and grading information, see below. |
| **2 Short Essays (15%)** | The maximum credit (total point value) that can be earned for each of these essays, which are shorter than the final exam-essay, is 100 points. These essays are each worth 7.5% of the overall grade for the course. For additional rubric and grading information, see below. |
| **9 Discussion Forum Assignments (31.5%)** | The maximum credit that can be earned for each forum assignment is 100 points. Each forum assignment is worth 3.5% of the overall grade for the course. For additional rubric and grading information, see below. |

## Grading Rubrics for Essays and Discussion Forum Assignments

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| **Grading rubric for essay assignments** | *The essays will be evaluated using the criteria listed below. Study these criteria carefully. Simply putting in time and doing all of the work will not guarantee a high grade. Quality is what counts!*<br><br>**Criteria for "A" range grades:** Students show that they understand the material very well and are able to construct an essay which expresses the relevant ideas, concepts, and arguments in their own words, which incorporates their own insights, and which is presented in a clear, well-organized form. The essay has a well-supported thesis, incorporates relevant distinctions, definitions, and other issues raised by the materials covered. The essay has solid supporting evidence and arguments. The essay is well-written and has few or no grammatical mistakes and/or mechanical errors. The assignment directions have been followed, and the essay has been submitted on time.<br><br>**Criteria for "B" range grades:** Students show that they understand the material well but their own contribution is more limited. The arguments and/or evidence provided are not as convincing, and the materials covered are less well incorporated. There may be a few issues regarding the clarity of writing, grammar, syntax, and/or other mechanical errors, but generally, the essay is still easy to follow. All assignment directions have been followed, and the essay normally has been submitted on time.<br><br>**Criteria for "C" range grades:** The essay reflects that students understand some issues, but miss some important points. The essay is not as well-written and lacks some clarity, but it can still be followed. The arguments and/or supporting evidence are unconvincing, perhaps because key issues are missed or because the writing (grammar, syntax, etc.) is poor enough to significantly affect the content of the essay. Some |

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| | assignment directions were not followed. The essay may have been submitted late.<br><br>**Criteria for "D" range grades:** The essay does not show sufficient understanding of the key issues. The content that the essay was meant to treat is substantially missing. The supporting evidence and/or supporting arguments for the thesis are missing, sparse, or of poor quality. The writing itself is generally of poor quality, with numerous clear flaws and errors in grammar, syntax, and/or other mechanical errors, so that the essay runs the risk of being unintelligible. Some or most of the assignment directions were not followed. The essay may have been submitted late.<br><br>**Criteria for an "F" grade:** The essay shows little understanding of the key issues. The content that the essay was meant to cover is largely or entirely missing. Supporting evidence and supporting arguments are very sparse, of very poor quality, or not present at all. Writing is very disorganized, with many significant flaws and errors in grammar and syntax, to the point that the essay cannot be understood at all. Most or all of the essay assignment directions were not followed. The essay may have been submitted late.<br><br>An A essay will be recorded as 95/100 points<br>A- essay will be recorded as a 91.5/100 points<br>B+ essay will be recorded as 88/100 points<br>B essay will be recorded as 85/100 points<br>B- essay will be recorded as 81.5/100 points<br>C+ essay will be recorded as 78/100 points<br>C essay will be recorded as 75/100 points<br>C- essay will be recorded as 71.5/100 points<br>D+ essay will be recorded as 68/100 points<br>D essay will be recorded as 65/100 points<br>F essay will be recorded as 50/100 points or 0/100 points (incomplete or violating academic integrity) |
| **Grading rubric for discussion forum assignments** | *Posts made on* UNM Canvas *by the assignment deadline will be graded using the criteria listed below.*<br><br>A range: Post has substantial content. It is well organized and very well written, with conciseness, style and insight. Post normally has at most one grammatical, spelling, or punctuation mistake. Post stands out as a short written piece.<br>B range: Post has substantial content which reflects and responds to the forum topic, is relatively well organized, and is acceptably written. Post likely contains one or more grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes. Post is satisfactory for the demands of the assignment, but does not stand out.<br>C range: Post has a little more substantial content, but drifts off topic and/or suffers from weak organization, and also likely has several grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes. Post is marginally acceptable as a short written piece.<br>D range: Post has a bit of substantial content. However, it makes only marginal reference to course content, readings, or forum topic, and contains several grammatical, spelling, or punctuation mistakes. It likely suffers from a combination of these kinds of deficiencies, and post is also poorly organized. Post is mostly unacceptable as a short written piece. |

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| | F: Post has very little substantial content, does not seriously reflect the course content, readings, or forum topic, contains numerous significant grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes, and likely suffers from a combination of these kinds of deficiencies. Post is very badly organized. Overall, post is unacceptable as a short written piece.<br><br>An A post will be recorded as 95/100 points<br>A- post will be recorded as a 91.5/100 points<br>B+ post will be recorded as 88/100 points<br>B post will be recorded as 85/100 points<br>B- post will be recorded as 81.5/100 points<br>C+ post will be recorded as 78/100 points<br>C post will be recorded as 75/100 points<br>C- post will be recorded as 71.5/100 points<br>D+ post will be recorded as 68/100 points<br>D post will be recorded as 65/100 points<br>F post will be recorded as 50/100 points or 0/100 points (incomplete or violating academic integrity) |

## Course Policies (1): Submitting Assignments Online; Missed and Late Assignments

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| **Submitting online assignments: general remarks** | Above is the list of the assignments that will receive grades, and as well the basic week-by-week plan of the course (academic calendar). More specific information about the pages for the readings will be found on UNM Canvas. On UNM Canvas, you will also find the graded assignments for each week, with specific due dates. In order to be able to receive full credit for the graded assignments, you will have to complete the graded assignments by their specified deadlines. Here are a few additional details regarding each of the different kinds of assignments:<br><br>**For quizzes:** You will submit your replies to quiz questions on UNM Canvas directly, which normally will automatically grade the quiz and present you with your score out of 100.<br><br>**For discussion forum assignments:** Please make sure that you follow the instructions for each assignment, and that you post in the appropriate forum on UNM Canvas (do not attach a separate document which contains your forum assignment, and do not email your forum assignment to me). There are prompts and instructions for each discussion forum, along with a due date for each post that you are required to make in a forum assignment.<br><br>**For the short essays and the final exam-essay:** You are to write or cut/paste your essay directly into the appropriate place on UNM Canvas for the essay assignment (you should not attach a separate document which contains the essay, and you should not email your essay to me).<br><br>*For all assignments, please make sure you click on the appropriate buttons on UNM Canvas when you are ready to submit the assignment, in order to complete the submission of the assignment properly! Not doing this properly may result in the assignment getting to me late or in not getting to me at all, and in that case you are likely to lose credit.* |

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| **Policy for essays not turned in** | As a general rule, if an essay is not turned in then it will receive a grade of 0 points, and a student could receive an F for the course if either or both of the essays are not turned in. All final decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this policy is normally maintained. |
| **Policy for essays turned in late** | I reserve the right to subtract part of a letter grade (from a B+ to a B, for example) for each day that any part of an essay is late. If an essay is late, then students have one week after the original essay deadline to submit the essay. Once that week is up, the student normally receives a 0 for the essay, and normally the essay will no longer be accepted. All final decisions regarding late essays will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this lateness policy is typically maintained. |
| **Policy for forum assignments not turned in** | As a general rule, any forum assignment not turned in will receive 0 points, and a student could receive an F for the course if one or all of the forum assignments are not turned in. All final decisions regarding forum assignments not turned in will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this policy is normally maintained. |
| **Policy for forum assignments turned in late** | I reserve the right to subtract five points for each day that any part of a forum assignment is late. If any part of the forum assignment is late, then students have 48 hours after the forum assignment deadline to submit the forum assignment. Once the 48 hours are up, the student normally receives a 0 for the forum assignment, and normally the forum assignment will no longer be accepted. All final decisions regarding late forum assignments will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this lateness policy is typically maintained. |
| **Policy for making an empty or nearly empty post in a forum assignment** | If a student makes an initial empty post (a post with no other text or content) or a nearly empty post in a forum assignment, normally the student loses at least 15 points from the final score for the assignment. Also, more credit (up to 50 points) might be deducted from the final score. The student also might end up receiving a 0 for the assignment.<br><br>This policy (see above) will also normally hold for all other posts made in the discussion forum, i.e. empty or nearly empty reply posts and/or any other empty or nearly empty posts the student makes in the discussion forum. |
| **Policy for quizzes not turned in** | As a general rule, any quiz not turned in will receive 0 points, and a student could receive an F for the course if several of the quizzes are not turned in. All decisions regarding quizzes not turned in will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this policy is normally maintained. |
| **Policy for quizzes turned in late** | I reserve the right to subtract ten points for each day that a quiz is late. If the quiz is late, then students have 48 hours after the quiz deadline to submit the quiz. Once those 48 hours are up, the student normally receives a 0 for the quiz, and normally the quiz will no longer be accepted. All final decisions regarding late quizzes will be made on a case-by-case basis, but do note that this lateness policy is typically maintained. |

## Course Policies (2): Grading, UNM Canvas Usage, Communication, etc.

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| **Grading Criteria and Weighting** | **Grade component weighting**<br>Quizzes 38.5%<br>Short essays 15%<br>Final exam-essay 15%<br>Discussion Forums 31.5% |

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| | **Final Course Grade**<br>Throughout the course, you can look to UNM Canvas to see your overall percentage to date. This allows you to see how you are doing in the course. The percentage margins that correspond to the final overall letter grade for the course are as follows:<br><br>*Weighted total grade between…*<br><br>93.5% and up to 100% = A<br>89.5% and less than 93.5% = A-<br>86.5% and less than 89.5% = B+<br>83.5% and less than 86.5% = B<br>79.5% and less than 83.5% = B-<br>76.5% and less than 79.5% = C+<br>73.5% and less than 76.5% = C<br>69.5% and less than 73.5% = C-<br>66.5% and less than 69.5% = D+<br>59.5% and less than 66.5% = D<br>any percentage less than 59.5% earns an F for the course |
| **UNM Canvas Usage** | Especially as this is a fully online course, students need to have regular access to a computer and Internet for email, submitting assignments on UNM Canvas, and accessing all course content on UNM Canvas. The course is run through UNM Canvas, and the course requires that students know how to use UNM Canvas. Use of UNM email by students is required. |
| **Communication and receiving grades and feedback** | Students are welcome to contact me about the course at any time. When a student contacts me by email, he/she can expect a reply within a day or so, including weekends.<br>In terms of receiving grades and feedback, quizzes are normally graded automatically through UNM Canvas, so students can expect to receive their grade on a quiz directly after having completed the quiz. For discussion forum assignments, students can usually expect to receive a grade and some comments on the assignment within a few days after the due date of the last post in the assignment. |
| **PowerPoint notes to guide you** | On our UNM Canvas platform, you will find several sets of notes (PowerPoint notes) that trace and reflect the readings and course content and are intended to help guide you with respect to the readings and assignments. These notes are recommended for your use as you progress through the course, but they are not required reading. |
| **Academic integrity and related issues** | Some points on academic integrity<br>All issues involving academic integrity and/or plagiarism will be dealt with according to UNM guidelines. As a general rule, a plagiarized essay (or an essay that violates academic integrity in other ways) normally receives 0 points, and more severe penalties (including an "F" for the course, and/or penalties more severe than that) are possible. Plagiarized discussion forum assignments (or a discussion forum assignment that violates academic integrity in other ways) normally receive 0 points, and more severe penalties (including an "F" for the course, and/or penalties more severe than that) are possible. Submitted quizzes that violate academic integrity normally receive 0 points, and more severe penalties (including an "F" for the course, and/or penalties more severe than that) are possible. |

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| | No generative AI use in this course<br>This course is meant to help you develop and demonstrate key knowledge and skills without the support of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools for submitted work. Using generative AI to complete submitted coursework in this course will interfere with the advantages in learning and understanding that this course offers you. You are expected to complete submitted work without any generative AI assistance. Prohibited generative AI use includes tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Grammarly's generative AI features, AI image generators, AI video or audio generators, AI code generators, AI paraphrasing tools, AI presentation generators, AI design tools, and similar technologies. The purpose of this course policy is educational, not punitive. The assignments in this course are aligned with specific learning processes and outcomes that support your future learning and expertise. Submitting AI-generated or AI-assisted in this course is inconsistent with course expectations and may violate UNM's academic integrity standards and Student Code of Conduct (also, see "Some points on academic integrity" above).<br><br>If AI use is suspected, I will use submitted coursework, assignment directions, conversations with you about your work and process, and this syllabus to determine whether academic misconduct occurred. If you are unsure if a tool or use is allowed, please ask before submitting the assignment.<br><br>Here is the link to the UNM Academic Integrity Guide for Students: https://studentconduct.unm.edu/academic-integrity/index.html<br><br>Here is the link to the UNM Student Code of Conduct: https://pathfinder.unm.edu/code-of-conduct.html |
| **Accommodations** | Accommodations: UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact Accessibility Resource Center at arcsrvs@unm.edu or 505-277-3506. |
| **UAP 2720 and 2740** | UAP 2720 and 2740. Our classroom and university should foster mutual respect, kindness, and support. If you have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or violence, please seek support and report incidents. Find confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the Arcoiris Center. UNM prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). All instructors are "responsible employees" who must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information, please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740. |

## Course polices (3): Other Policies

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| **Syllabus and auditing** | Any and all parts of the syllabus are subject to change; auditing of the course is not permitted |

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| **Deadlines and online coursework** | Odd things happen in cyberspace - computers crash, emails get lost, servers disconnect temporarily, and logins fail. Do not wait for the last minute to do your work. *Allow time to meet deadlines!* Have backup computer access should your computer fail, such as at a neighbor's or friend's place, or at work. As we will be using UNM Canvas for the course, make sure you know how to submit your assignments on UNM Canvas. I will give you the help that I can in terms of UNM Canvas usage, but ultimately, you are responsible for knowing how to use UNM Canvas, and you are responsible for getting any training you need in order to use UNM Canvas. You are also responsible for resolving all technical and IT-related issues that affect your using UNM Canvas for the course, and that affect any aspect of your participation in the course.<br>You are responsible for submitting your assignments on time, no matter what kinds of problems you might have – including (but not limited to) personal problems, time management problems, work problems, family problems, and computer/IT problems. Exceptions for turning in assignments late – for whatever reason – will be made only in the most extraordinary of circumstances, and will be made on a case-by-case basis. |
| **IT/UNM Canvas/email-related technical problems** | You are responsible for resolving any IT/technical issues, including those involving UNM Canvas, so that you can complete your assignments on time and engage with the course normally. If you claim that any kind of IT or UNM Canvas issue has inhibited you from completing the assignments on time and/or submitting them in the correct fashion, then I will do what I can to help. However, there are limitations to how much I can help, and in cases where you need more technical help with UNM Canvas, you are responsible for going to the relevant UNM technical staff and for getting an assessment of the problem and why it inhibited your completing the assignments, and you are also responsible for getting the problem resolved. |
| **Extra credit and end of course** | Opportunities for extra credit assignments are occasionally made available to students. However, if I decide to make extra credit opportunities available to the class, then I will announce this to the class toward the end of the course. Do note that the amount of credit to be earned from these possible opportunities is usually rather minimal. So in any case, students should not expect to depend on possible extra credit assignments to boost their grade very much.<br><br>The course ends on **11:30 pm on Sunday, 12/6/26.** Normally, no assignments will be accepted after this deadline. Assignments which have *already* received a grade of 0 due to poor performance, lateness, academic integrity violations, etc. will normally *not* be considered for submission or re-submission before or after the **12/6/26 deadline** (so, any grade of 0 will normally remain a 0). |
| **Tips for Success** | The following is a collection of tips/comments that are meant to assist you in doing as well as possible in online PHIL-1120. Please consider these remarks and let me know if you have questions. Good luck!<br><br>**(1)** *Communicate!* As this course is a fully online course, you need to be willing and ready to communicate with the class online, primarily through UNM Canvas (especially in discussion forum assignments), and you need to be willing and ready to communicate with me online regularly throughout the course. |

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| | **(2)** *Be precise in your study and mastery of the course content*. The course concentrates on a basic study of important concepts in logical reasoning and critical thinking. Over the duration of the entire course, skills in reading texts about making and assessing arguments, and skills in writing precisely, are quite important. Sometimes, this can be difficult and time-consuming, so be sure to plan accordingly. At all times, be sure to be precise, clear, and consistent in your efforts.<br><br>**(3)** *Know how to use UNM Canvas*. Of course, this is essential for our online course. Know how to find the items and documents for the course.<br><br>**(4)** *Avoid using your cell phone to complete and submit assignments.* LMSs (learning management systems – ours is UNM Canvas) are sometimes difficult to access and work with through cell phones. Trying to complete our course primarily through your phone is risky – assignments might not be submitted properly, etc. Students who do well in the course usually are the ones who are primarily using a laptop, tablet, or other computer – and not a cell phone – for the course. My recommendation is that when you are completing and submitting assignments, use a computer to work with UNM Canvas, and not your cell phone.<br><br>**(5)** *Be sure to read the syllabus carefully and be sure to check your UNM email often (at least a couple of times a week), and to access UNM Canvas often.* The most successful students typically do these things.<br><br>**(6)** *Be sure you have access to the book.* While we will not be studying every part of the book, most assignments are derived from this book.<br><br>**(7)** *Plan your time accordingly and turn in your assignments on time*. Take into account all of your other commitments and obligations (study, work, family, etc.) and as well possible problems and obstacles (ongoing illness, etc.) There are weekly deadlines for assignments, and the policies for submitting assignments by their deadlines will be enforced (see syllabus for these policies). Students who are quite attentive to their assignments, and who do the work and submit assignments consistently and on time, usually put themselves in a position to do as well as possible.<br><br>**(8)** *Be prepared for a good deal of studying on your own, reading, and self-preparation in order to learn the material and complete the assignments*. To be able to take responsibility for your own studying is part of the nature of all courses, and this is especially the case for online courses.<br><br>**(9)** *Take advantage of help from your classmates (help that does not violate the UNM rules regarding cheating, plagiarism, and academic integrity) and from your instructor.* To help guide you in your efforts, there will be PowerPoint notes and discussion forums, etc. But in any case, always feel free to get in touch with me at any time, and I will get back to you directly with your questions and concerns.<br><br>**(10)** *Take advantage of the conditions for the quizzes.* Note that all the quizzes are untimed. Also, students can take each quiz twice. Both attempts must be completed by the deadline for the quiz. If you submit your quiz and are not happy with the score, you can take it a second time. Your final score for the quiz is the higher of the two grades, so |

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| | you have nothing to lose by taking the quiz a second time. Once you submit the quiz a second time, your two attempts for the quiz are used up.<br><br>**(11)** *Follow the instructions for assignments.* Performing well on assignments demands a range of skills – one of those skills is the ability to follow the instructions for assignments. |