PHIL 1010, CRITICAL THINKING
EXERCISES DUE THURS, 9/25

EXERCISES 4.1 (Sections 1-1.2)

D. Provide two examples of uncontroversial empirical statements that you have read in one of your textbooks from your other courses. Be sure to provide a complete citation. See pp. 213-214 of the book.

I can’t provide actual answer because I don’t have your textbooks. What I am looking for is an uncontroversial statement of the observations of a person.

E. Find two examples of testimonial statements in one or more of your textbooks for your other courses. Be sure to provide a complete citation. See pp. 213-214 of the book.

I can’t provide actual answer because I don’t have your textbooks. What I am looking for is an uncontroversial statement of the observations of a person. In this case, they will be observations that someone other than the author of the book made and then reported to the author of the book.

EXERCISES 4.2 (Section 1.3)

B. Determine which, if any of the following, would make good premises because they are uncontroversial definitional statements.
1. Blue is the most popular color.
   No.
2. Green is the color of grass.
   No.
3. According to the American Heart Association, “Coronary heart disease is America's No. 1 killer.”
   No.
4. According to the American Lovers of Fried Foods Association, high cholesterol makes us healthy.
   No.
5. Cats and dogs make good pets.
   No.
6. My roommate claims that I snore.
   No.
7. My roommate claims that there are humans on Mars.
   No.
8. There are plenty of spiders around.
   No.
9. Spiders are arachnids, which are animals that have eight legs.
   No.
10. According to Dr. Nous, an independent psychologist in Macon, GA, everyone should eat 30 large pizzas per day.
    No.
11. Spiders are very often poisonous.
    No.
12. SCUBA means self-contained underwater body apparatus, according to the dictionary.
    Yes.
13. Your phone must be pretty old since it does not have an alarm clock function on it.
14. “Abra Kadabra,” said Houdini, as he unlocked the chains on his arms.

15. Women are from Venus, and men are from Mars, according to a renowned psychologist.

EXERCISE 4.3 (Sections 1.4-1.4.5)

E. Determine whether each of the following would be a good premise and why, or why not. (In other words, are they empirical statements, testimony, definitions, fallacious appeals to inappropriate experts, the fallacy of accent, proper citation of experts, uncontroversially false statements?)

1. There are at least five planets visible to the naked eye.
Yes, uncontroversial empirical statement.

Yes, uncontroversial empirical statement.

3. The subprime mortgage crisis has been a financial disaster, according to my neighbor who watched the nightly news last night.
Yes, uncontroversial empirical statement.

4. Kate Kelley, of the Wall Street Journal reported that “Mr. Blankfein is set to be paid close to $70 million this year, according to one person familiar with the matter.” (Cited above in #2)
No. Inadequate identification.

5. You probably decided whether or not to accept #4 as a premise based on the credentials reporter Kate Kelly. But should Kate Kelly accept the claim about Blankfein’s salary, based on the testimony of “one person familiar with the matter”?
No.

6. Five volunteers watching the republican presidential debate in Miami, in December, 2007, were wearing electrode-studded headsets that track electrical activity in the brain. When presidential candidate Mitt Romney said he was the only candidate to have gotten the problem of healthcare solved, “there was a pronounced shift in activity in their prefrontal lobes. ‘They liked what they were hearing,’ said Brad Feldman, an analyst with EmSence Corp., the company that conducted the test to monitor voters’ brains. (As reported by Alexandra Alter, Wall Street Journal, December 14, 2007, W1). Suppose Feldman’s claim is offered as a premise. Should it be assumed? Whose authority is at issue here, the reporter’s or the analyst, or both?
No. The authority is Feldman but he is biased because he works for the company that makes the tests.

7. “People say one thing in a focus group and do another thing in the voting booth” says Alex Lundry, research director for TargetPoint, a campaign strategy consultancy.” The Wall Street Journal, December 14, 2007, W6).
No.

Yes, uncontroversial definition.

Yes, uncontroversial empirical statement.


No, the interpretation of a book is controversial.

Note: you do not need to do exercises 11-15 of 4.3 E so, while they are in the book, they are not here.