



DEPAUL

School of Continuing and Professional Studies

Critical Thinking Undergraduate Course Information Guide

Course Number: LL 270- 4 credits, 10 Weeks

Delivery Formats: Online Async, On Campus, Online: Sync

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Course Description

In this course, students are introduced to the basic concepts behind the skills of effective listening, dynamic thinking, and persuasive argumentation and have an opportunity to practice these skills within an active and experiential context. Through peer and small group activities, problem-based exercises, and self-evaluation skills, students will develop effective habits of thinking that can be employed in subsequent learning experiences.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze purpose, audience, context and conventions in comprehending and creating texts in various genres for different situations.
- Engage in composition as an iterative process and applies a variety of strategies to conceptualize, develop and revise compositions.
- Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, syntax, and punctuation through practice in composing and revising.
- Self-assess to leverage strengths and address challenges for ongoing improvement as a writer.

Learning Strategies and Resources

Some learning activities, assignments and deadlines will vary depending on the delivery format of the course and may differ slightly from what is presented in this document.

This course aims to a) make students more aware of their own thinking processes; b) help them develop those processes; and c) help them bring those skills to bear on

college-level intellectual activity. This involves an emphasis on the skills and strategies of close reading and analysis as well as practice in the recognition, construction and evaluation of arguments. In pursuing these goals, we touch on principles of logic, styles of persuasion and techniques of propaganda. We also consider some methods of thinking outside the box. The course presents a variety of readings, exercises and projects designed to help students develop competence in reflecting on experience, connecting assertions with evidence, engaging the ideas of others and bringing multiple perspectives to bear on complex issues.

Required Readings

You do not have to purchase a textbook for this course. All readings for the course appear in the course itself. These consist of a) the Introduction & Overview sections which accompany each course module; and as b) Ares – electronic reserve – readings that are embedded in each module and which appear under the heading “Additional Readings” in the Content for each module. Selected articles posted on Electronic Reserve, at the [DePaul Library](#).

Learning Deliverables

Deliverables included graded Discussion posts and module exercises and three short papers.

Assessment of Student Learning

In assessing your work, your instructor will look for:

- knowledge and comprehension of pertinent concepts, issues and texts
- a scope of discussion that goes beyond what is covered in the texts
- thoughtful engagement with the material, i.e., with questions or conflicts raised or implied by the material
- Evidence of one of these elements equates with a C; evidence of two with a B: and evidence of three with an A.

Distribution of Grade Points

| Graded Assignments | Percentage of Final Grade |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Personal Narrative Essay | 15% |
| Argument Analysis Paper | 20% |
| Play On A Word project | 20% |
| Exercises | 35% |

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| Discussion | 10% |
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Grading Scale

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|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| A = 95 to 100 | A- = 91 to 94 | B+ = 88 to 90 |
| B = 85 to 87 | B- = 81 to 84 | C+ = 77 to 80 |
| C = 73 to 76 | C- = 69 to 72 | D+ = 65 to 68 |
| D = 61 to 64 | F = 60 or below | INC |

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Course Schedule

| Week or Module Title or Theme | Readings / Learning Activities | Graded Assignments |
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| Week 1, Module 1: Thinking Critically | Read Introduction & Overview: Thinking Critically Read Chaffee, Excerpts, pp. 52-53 Read Staples, Black Men in Public Spaces Read Cisneros, Only Daughter | 1.1 Introduction Discussion 1.2 Times Bandits? Discussion Begin 2.2 Play on a Word, Part 1 Begin 3.1 Personal Narrative Essay |
| Week 2, Module 2: Perceiving; Using Language | Read Introduction & Overview: Perceiving; Using Language Read Chaffee, Excerpts, pp. 132-142; 230-235 | 2.1 Module 2 Exercise 2.2 Play on a Word, Part 1 Submission Form 2.3 Collateral Damage Discussion |

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| Week 3, Module 3: Believing and Knowing | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Believing and Knowing</p> <p>Read Chaffee, Excerpts, pp. 178-185</p> <p>Read O'Harrow, Conspiracy Theory Wins Converts</p> | <p>3.1 Personal Narrative Essay</p> <p>3.2 O'Harrow Article Discussion</p> <p>3.3 Jesdanun Article Discussion</p> <p>Begin 4.2 Play On A Word Definitions</p> |
| Week 4, Module 4: Reporting, Inferring, Judging | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Reporting, Inferring, Judging</p> <p>Read Chaffee Excerpts, pp. 152-153; pp. 370-393</p> <p>Read Feakes article</p> | <p>4.1 Sorting Reports Inferences and Judgments</p> <p>4.2 Play On A Word definitions collected so far</p> <p>4.3 Moral Dilemmas Discussion</p> |
| Week 5, Module 5: Reasoning Deductively | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Reasoning Deductively</p> <p>Read O'Reilly, Kevin, ed., "Was the United States Justified in Dropping Atomic Bombs on Japan?"</p> <p>Read Erikson, Of Accidental Judgments and Casual Slaughters</p> <p>Read Jefferson, Declaration of Independence</p> | <p>5.1 Exercise 5: Deductive Reasoning</p> <p>5.2 Dropping Atom Bombs Discussion</p> |
| Week 6, Module 6: Reasoning Inductively | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Reasoning Inductively</p> <p>Read Chaffee, Excerpts, pp. 456-457</p> <p>Optional Read Tidwell, The Intoxicating Birds of New Guinea</p> | <p>6.1 Inductive Reasoning Exercise</p> <p>6.2 Reactions to Crime Discussion</p> <p>6.3 Play on a Word, Part 1: All Definitions Collected</p> |

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| Week 7, Module 7: Fallacies and Appeals to Emotion | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Fallacies and Appeals to Emotion</p> <p>Read Vidal, Drugs</p> <p>Read Rosenthal, The Case for Slavery</p> | <p>7.1 Module 7 Exercises</p> <p>7.2 Rock Music and Suicide Discussion</p> <p>Begin 9.1 Argument Analysis Paper</p> <p>Begin 10.1 Play on a Word Project, Part 2</p> |
| Week 8, Module 8: Rhetoric and Persuasion | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Rhetoric and Persuasion</p> <p>Read Pratkanis and Aronson, Our Age of Propaganda</p> | <p>8.1 Persuasion vs Propaganda Discussion</p> <p>Continue working on 9.1 Argument Analysis Paper</p> <p>Continue working on 10.1 Play on a Word Project, Part 2</p> |
| Week 9, Module 9: Going Beyond the Given | <p>Read Introduction & Overview: Going Beyond the Given</p> <p>Read de Bono, "Vertical and Lateral Thinking"</p> <p>Read Dorman & Edidin, "Original Spin"</p> | <p>9.1 Argument Analysis Paper</p> <p>Continue working on 10.1 Play On A Word project part 2</p> |
| Week 10, Module 10: Questioning Authority | <p>Read Sabini and Silver, "Critical Thinking and Obedience to Authority"</p> <p>Read Perkinson, "The Educated Person: A Changing Ideal"</p> | <p>10.1 Play on a Word Project Part 2</p> <p>10.2 Milgram Experiment Discussion</p> |

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Course Policies

For access to all SCPS and DePaul University academic policies, refer to the following links:

[SCPS Student Resources Website](#)

[DePaul Student Handbook](#)

The [D2L Course Website](#) for this course.

Course Syllabus

The official syllabus for this course that includes course dates, instructor information and quarter specific details will be provided by the course instructor by the start of the course and available on the course D2L website.

Course Registration

To find out when this course will be offered next, you can go to the [SCPS Registration website](#) for details on how to register for the course.

For information on how this course can apply to your program, contact your academic advisor.

School of Continuing and Professional Studies

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