

Master Syllabus

1. Course Information

College: College of Liberal Arts
Department: Philosophy
Course Title: Critical Thinking
Course Designation and Number: PHL 200
GE Area(s): VI: College Component

Writing Intensive: Yes No

For WI Courses: All sections Selected Sections are WI.

Method(s) of Instruction: Lecture
 Discussion
 Web-enhanced
 Web-only
 Other: Small group activities

Includes Lab: Yes No

Prerequisites: None

2. Objectives

GE Program Objectives:

...to sharpen critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

GE Area Six Objectives:

- a. Communicate with individuals who are in the student's major, in allied fields, and non-specialists.
- b. Understand important relationships and interdependencies between the student's major and other academic disciplines, world events and life endeavors.
- c. Meet objective (b) of GE Area One: develop logical and fair arguments, and observe appropriate writing conventions.

Course Objectives and GE Learning Outcomes:

Critical Thinking develops students' reasoning skills: their ability to recognize the differences between facts and opinions, to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, to identify unstated assumptions, to detect bias, to recognize fallacious reasoning, and to evaluate claims, definitions and arguments. It helps students cultivate clear, disciplined and independent thinking that is readily applicable to their academic, social and personal pursuits. Critical Thinking also helps students apply their newly developed reasoning skills in their writing, which enables them to convey their ideas more clearly and effectively.

Program general learning outcome(s) addressed:

Sharpens critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills

Area one learning outcome(s) addressed:

Develop logical and fair arguments, and observe appropriate writing conventions

Area six learning outcome(s) addressed:

Communicate with individuals who are in the student's major, in allied fields, and non-specialists

Understand important relationships and interdependencies between the student's major and other academic disciplines, world events or life endeavors

For WI Courses: WAC Objectives

- Improves writing proficiency through writing assignments
- Uses writing as a tool for learning what one knows and does not know

Typically, instructors in PHL 200 use the following kinds of assignments: essay questions on quizzes and examinations and/or formal critical papers/projects. Some also use one or more of the following kinds of assignments: reading journals; in-class reading responses; electronic class discussion groups (through chat rooms or email); In all sections of PHL 200, all or nearly all the course grade is based on written assignments. Students who cannot complete the writing-intensive portion of the course will not receive a C or better in the course grade.

3. Suggested Course Materials

Text: A textbook devoted to the development of critical thinking skills such as: *Critical Thinking* by Brooke Noel Moore and Richard Parker

4. Suggested Methods of Evaluation

Three tests and the collection of homework and/or a written project are recommended.

5. Grading Policy

All GE courses are graded A-F.
WI component is graded Pass/Unsatisfactory.

6. Suggested Weekly Course Outline Including Typical Assignments

- Wk 1: Overview of the nature of critical thinking and its application in writing
- Wk 2: Different types of claims and how to evaluate them
- Wk 3: Identifying and distinguishing between arguments, definitions, descriptions and explanations
- Wk 4: Review for Exam #1
Exam #1
- Wk 5: The use and misuse of rhetoric
- Wk 6: Fallacies of reasoning
- Wk 7: Fallacies of reasoning (continued)
- Wk 8: Review for Exam #2
Exam #2
- Wk 9: Project on fallacies of reasoning due
Understanding and evaluating inductive, deductive, causal and moral arguments
- Wk 10: Understanding and evaluating inductive, deductive, causal and moral arguments
Review for Exam #3

7. Other

Syllabus distributed to students should employ the format approved by UCAP and must include:

- Instructor name, office hours, and contact information
- Office of Disability Services information
- Information on how grades will be determined
- Attendance policy