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: X Yes __No

   For WI Courses: X All sections __Selected Sections are WI.

   Method(s) of Instruction: X Lecture
   __Discussion
   __Web-enhanced
   __Web-only
   X Other: Small group activities

   Includes Lab: __ Yes X 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