

PHIL 102: Critical Thinking & Reasoning – Spring 2010

WNC – Monday & Wednesday 2:30-3:45 (C01) – Cedar 315

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: None

Transferability within Nevada: Transfers as a 3-credit class in Critical Thinking.

This course links to the following “General Education Student Learning Outcomes” in the 2009-2010 WNC catalog http://www.wnc.edu/academics/general_education/ :

Students who complete a degree at WNC are expected to demonstrate they:

1. have college-level skills in reading, writing, and oral communication.
2. have problem solving, creative, and critical thinking skills.

Instructor: Susan Priest

Email: spriest@wncc.edu

Office: Cedar 311

Phone: 775-445-3318

Office Hours (1/25 – 5/10/10): Monday and Wednesday 4:00 – 5:30 PM; Tuesday & Thursday 4:00 – 5:00 PM. *I am also available at other times, by appointment.*

****NOTE – Office Hours may change during the semester, but I will announce this online and update my website if this happens.**

MY Website: www.susanpriest.com *Check it out and tell me what you think! Class syllabi and other helpful hints are located on the website.*

This is an Enhanced Class: Login to WebCampus: (online learning platform):

<http://webcampus.wnc.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>. If you have never done this before read first time directions here: <http://www.wnc.edu/webcampus/login.php>. IF you have problems with your log in, contact the Reference Librarians at (775-445-3227.) They will help you. Please, also let me know if you are experiencing difficulty.

Take advantage of your instructor's Office Hours ☺!

I) **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Covers non-symbolic introduction to logical thinking in everyday life, law, politics, science, advertising; common fallacies; and the uses of language, including techniques of persuasion.

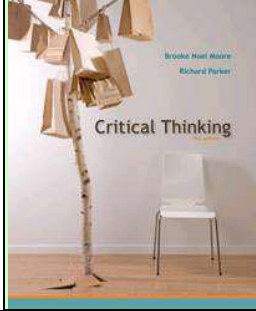
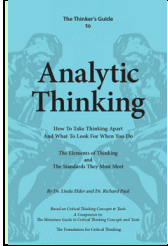
II) **COURSE OBJECTIVES – The Successful Student Will:**

- A) Identify and understand the parts of an argument, the logic of deductive and inductive arguments, common fallacies, common rhetorical devices, and the difference between moral legal and aesthetic reasoning;
- B) identify the elements and standards of reason as tools to analyze arguments, texts, and images in the media and the modern world;
- C) analyze arguments in everyday life, law, politics, education, advertising, media and other fields of knowledge;
- D) practice critical thinking skills in everyday life and oral communication; and
- E) demonstrate critical thinking skills in college-level writing.

III) **METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:**

This class will be taught with an emphasis on class discussion. Other methods will include mini-lectures, film analysis, debates, and other analytical exercises.

IV) **REQUIRED READING: Bring BOTH books to class every session!!!**

	<p>TEXT (TX) <i>Critical Thinking, 9th Edition</i>. Brooke Noel Moore and Richard Parker, McGraw-Hill: 2009.</p>
	<p>READER (RD) <i>Analytic Thinking</i>, Linda Elder and Richard Paul, Foundation for Critical Thinking: 2007.</p>

V) **COURSE REQUIREMENTS/CALENDAR – STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY:**

A) **Preparation & Participation**

50 Points

Being prepared and participating includes **completing the reading assignments, coming to class with questions, preparing for formal discussion days, writing response papers and practicing the philosophical exercises, as needed.** Use the Calendar of Assignments, on pages 5-6 of this syllabus, to prepare for class and as a guideline to help you stay on track.

The discipline of philosophy and the study of critical thinking, in particular, require your active participation and practice, practice, practice.

Be Prepared & Participate:

- “90% of success is showing up.” *Woody Allen*
- Without you class is not the same. Plan to attend every session.
- You will receive **two points** for every class you attend and in which you participate (except for Final Exam Day.)
- If you are late to class, leave early or do not participate you will receive a fraction of those **two points**.
- For this course, absences in excess of 3 classes may be considered excessive. If you have an emergency, please contact the instructor.
- Poor Attendance = Poor Grade

A word on class discussions in Philosophy 102: We will be actively practicing argumentation in this class. By argument I do not mean verbal attacks or accusations, but the practice of honestly examining the rationality and logic of ideas. To that end, it will be important for all of us to take a civilized approach to discussions both by practicing respect and not mistaking honest inquiry for personal attacks.

B) Discussions & Writing Assignments

250 Points

Formal Discussions -- in-class (80 points) – Every class period there will be opportunities for discussion, but four times during the semester there will be “formal discussion” that will be graded by the instructor and through peer evaluation. These discussions are designed to extend our appreciation of the interdisciplinary field of the Humanities, and to practice fair-minded critical thinking. **If you want to earn full points for these discussion exercises, you must be present on the designated day.** On the designated day, the class will be divided into 3-5 small groups that will discuss an assigned topic. To prepare for these formal discussions, each student will type up questions and ideas about the designated topic ahead of time. Each student will earn 10 points from the instructor on the quality of questions they type up and bring to class that day and up to 10 points from the average of scores they receive from peer evaluations. Topics and instructions will be handed out in-class at least 1 week prior to the formal discussion day, and then posted online. **If you miss the designated “discussion” class day, you may make-up ½ the points by submitting a series of questions to the instructor, but you will automatically lose 10 points for not being present in class.**

- ❑ **Discussion #1 (20 points) – Topic – Analyzing Arguments -- (Week 3)**
- ❑ **Discussion #2 (20 points) – TBA (Week 6)**
- ❑ **Discussion #3 (20 points) – TBA (Week 10)**
- ❑ **Discussion #4 (20 points) – TBA (Week 14) – May be Structured as Class Debate**

Online Writing Assignments (120 points) – These are opportunities to practice using the elements and standards of reason, and the language of critical thinking to analyze arguments from different domains of knowledge (e.g., media, politics, academics, and everyday life.) They will be submitted in WebCampus (CE8) and sometimes Turnitin.com. Complete prompts and directions for these assignments will be posted online. **Late writing assignments will lose 5 points per week, and will not be accepted more than two weeks after the date they are due.**

- ❑ **Homework #1: Analyzing Arguments (40 points) - Week 4**
- ❑ **Homework #2: TBA (40 points) -- Week 8**
- ❑ **Homework #3: TBA (40 points) – Week 12**

Final Critical Thinking Assignment ~ Self-Assessment Project (50 points): Ultimately, critical thinking is a process that must be applied to your life. Critical thinking is only useful so long as we apply it to our own life and work. Your final writing assignment will be a critical reflection of your own work in this class utilizing the Intellectual Standards – Explicit directions are posted in WebCampus (Blackboard/CE8). **DUE the end of WEEK 15.**

HOW YOUR WRITING WILL BE EVALUATED: The following are some general guidelines that I will be following when I grade your written work, both questions for the formal discussion and writing assignments:

- All writing (including questions for formal discussions) will follow standard practices of English Grammar. For full-credit you will write in complete sentences. Please, NO “text message” symbols or shortcuts will be accepted.
- You are not being asked to write a research paper and/or search for sources. However, if you do consult other resources in writing any homework assignment or in your Final Self-Assessment Paper you must use MLA (Modern Language Association) format to cite your sources. **(Otherwise you will be plagiarizing.)**
- I will use the **CARS-L** method of evaluating the form and content of your writing. Is your writing **Clear, Accurate, Relevant**, have you used **Sufficient support**, and is your writing **Logical**?

**NOTE: READ the Grading Forms (Rubric) Attached to each homework/writing assignment and the Final Self-Assessment to get further clarification on grading.

C) ASSESSMENTS, QUIZZES & EXAMS

250 Points

PRE- and POST- Critical Thinking Assessment (50 points): At the beginning of the semester and at the end of the semester, you will be required to take a non-graded assessment of your critical thinking skills. The idea is that you will earn 25 points for taking these pre- and post- critical thinking assessments. This is an opportunity to measure your own development from the beginning to the end of the course.

QUIZZES (75 points): 5 quizzes will be given in class throughout the semester covering material from the required reading and lectures. (These quizzes may contain True/False, Multiple Choice and Short-Answer Questions.) Each quiz will be worth 25 points. I will drop the “2” lowest quiz grades. There are no make-up quizzes; if you miss a quiz day you will earn a “0.” ***Quizzes will be on Weeks 2, 5, 7, 11 and 13.***

EXAMS (125 points): There will be 2 major exams covering the material from the required reading, lectures and discussions. **These exams will take an entire class period.** These exams may contain “take-home” essays that you prepare ahead of time. The exams will be a mixture of true/false, multiple choice, short answer questions, and/or essays. I will post a study guide a week or two before these exams begin with more information about the topics covered and possible essay questions. ***Mark Your Calendar with These Dates --***

- **Mid-Term (75 points): March 31, 2010 – 2:30-3:45.**
- **Final-Exam (50 points): May 19, 2010 – 2:30-3:45. (NOTE: This exam is a course requirement. Translation: you must take this exam to pass the class.)**

There are no make-up “Exams” -- As a general rule, I do not allow “make-up” exams. You need to write these time frames down and show up on these days if you want these points. In cases of EXTREME hardship and emergency, you **MUST** contact the instructor **BEFORE** these time frames to inquire about alternative arrangements.

CALENDAR of Topics, Reading, Discussion, Writing, Quiz & Exam Due Dates:

WK	Date	Topics	Reading (To Be Completed)	Assignment DUE:
1	1/25/10	Introductions & SYLLABUS – <i>Why study Critical Thinking?</i>	SYLLABUS	<i>After class – learn how to login to WEBCAMPUS to access additional online material.</i>
	1/27/10	Introducing the 8 Elements of Thinking & The Intellectual Standards <i>What is Critical Thinking?</i>	RD: 4-13	Pre-Assessment in Critical Thinking (in-class, first half) 25 points
2	2/1/10	Elements & Standards Continued -- Critical Thinking Basics: The Language of Arguments	TX: Chapter 1 (p.1-40)	
	2/3/10	Critical Thinking Basics: The Language of Arguments	TX: Chapter 1 (p.1-40)	Quiz #1 (in-class, second half) 25 points
3	2/8/10	Two Kinds of Reasoning	TX: Chapter 2 (p.41-68)	
	2/10/10	Two Kinds of Reasoning	TX: Chapter 2 (p.41-68)	Formal Discussion #1 – Analyzing Arguments 20 points
4	2/15/10	No Class – President’s Day		No Class - Holiday
	2/17/10	Clear Writing	TX: Chapter 3 (p. 69-104)	Writing Assignment #1 – DUE by 2/19/10 40 points
5	2/22/10	Clear Writing Continued Credibility – <i>Words, Images (& related issues)</i>	TX: Chapter 3 (p. 69-104) & Chapter 4 (p.105-146)	
	2/24/10	Credibility – <i>Words, Images (& related issues)</i> Analyzing Articles	TX: Chapter 4 (p.105-146) RD: 28-34	Quiz #2 (in-class, second half) 25 points
6	3/1/10	Persuasion through Rhetoric -- <i>Case Studies</i>	TX: Chapter 5 (p. 147-182)	
	3/3/10	Persuasion through Rhetoric -- <i>Case Studies</i>	TX: Chapter 5 (p. 147-182)	Formal Discussion #2 – Topic TBA 20 points
7	3/8/10	Psychological and Related Fallacies	TX: Chapter 6 (p. 183-210)	
	3/10/10	Psychological and Related Fallacies		Quiz #3 (in-class, second half) 25 points
8	3/15/10	More Fallacies	TX: Chapter 7 (p. 211-253)	
	3/17/10	More Fallacies	TX: Chapter 7 (p. 211-253)	Writing Assignment #2 – DUE by 3/19/10 40 points
	3/21/10 – 3/28/10	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES		
9	3/29/10	Catch-UP, and REVIEW for MID-TERM EXAM		
	3/31/10	MID-TERM EXAM (Covers Chapters 1-7)		Mid-Term Exam 75 points

10	4/5/10	Deductive Arguments I: Categorical Logic	TX: Chapter 8 (p.254-296)	
	4/7/10	Deductive Arguments I: Categorical Logic	TX: Chapter 8 (p.254-296)	Formal Discussion #3 – Topic TBA 20 points
11	4/12/10	Deductive Arguments II: Truth-Functional Logic	TX: Chapter 9 (p.297-345)	
	4/13/10	Deductive Arguments II: Truth-Functional Logic	TX: Chapter 9 (p.297-345)	Quiz #4 (in-class, second half) 25 points
12	4/19/10	Inductive Arguments	TX: Chapter 10 (p.346-384)	
	4/19/10	Inductive Arguments	TX: Chapter 10 (p.346-384)	Writing Assignment #3 – DUE by 4/21/10 40 points
13	4/26/10	Causal Arguments	TX: Chapter 11 (p.370-418)	
	4/28/10	Causal Arguments	TX: Chapter 11 (p.370-418)	Quiz #5 (in-class, second half) 25 points
14	5/3/10	Moral, Legal & Aesthetic Reasoning	TX: Chapter 12 (p.419-454)	
	5/5/10	Moral, Legal & Aesthetic Reasoning	TX: Chapter 12 (p.419-454)	Formal Discussion #4 – Topic TBA 20 points
15	5/10/10	<i>Wrap-Up & Review</i>		DUE: Post-Critical Thinking Test (in-class) 25 points
	5/12/10	<i>Wrap-Up & Review</i>		Final Critical Thinking Self-Assessment Project Due by 5/14/10 – 50 points <i>Last Day to withdraw from the class is May 14th.</i>
16	5/17/10	TBA - Optional		
	5/19/10	FINAL EXAM – 2:30-3:45		FINAL EXAM – 50 points

VI) **ASSIGNMENTS FOR INSTRUCTOR – My Commitment to you:**

- I will come to class on time.
- I will give this class 100% of my attention while we are meeting.
- I will prepare and deliver class lectures, bringing in relevant additional sources.
- I will facilitate class discussions and seek to create a respectful forum.
- **I will grade writing assignments and quizzes promptly.** *Exception: I may not turn late papers back promptly.*
- I will make myself available for your class related questions and concerns during office hours or by appointment, as needed.
- I will assign final grades to each student using the following criteria:

VII) GRADES:

The final grade will be determined by the course requirements:

- **Preparation & Participation** 50 points
- **Discussions, Homework & Project** 250 points
- **Pre- and Post-CT Assessments & Quizzes** 125 points
- **EXAMS (Mid-Term & Final)** 125 points
550 points

Points Earned	Grade Received
512 - 550 points	A
495 - 511 points	A-
479 - 494 points	B+
457 - 478 points	B
440 - 456 points	B-
424 - 439 points	C+
400 - 423 points	C
385 - 399 points	C-
369 - 384 points	D+
330 - 368 points	D
Below 330 points	F

NOTE: If you wish to withdraw from the course, rather than receive the grade that you have earned, it is your responsibility to withdraw. I do not assign a “W” for a final grade. If you have earned less than 330 points after the Final Exam, you will receive a “F” for the course. If you run into problems, ask for help (445-3318). May 14th is the last day to drop a full-term class with a “W.”

VIII) FINAL NOTES:

- A. **CAVEAT FROM INSTRUCTOR ON COURSE CONTENT:** As the course progresses there may be a need to modify topics, offer additional readings and handouts, assign additional assignments, and/or change the calendar of assignments to meet course objectives. If I make a formal change I will announce it in-class and in writing on WebCampus. NOTE: I may decide to give extra-credit, but I may not. If I decide to give extra-credit, this opportunity will be given to everyone in class.
- B. **DISABILITY STATEMENT:** WNC supports providing equal access for students with disabilities. Susan Trist (DSS coordinator) is available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that students may require. Please contact Susan (445-3275) at your earliest convenience. The Disability Support Services Office is in the Bristlecone Building, Room 103.
- C. **REVIEW OF CLASSROOM POLICIES:**
- **RESPECT:** This says it all about my expectations of classroom behavior. See WNC’s “Principles of Community” (p.3, 2009-2010 Catalog) for more details. Also, make sure to read WNC’s “Student Code of Conduct” to know your rights and responsibilities

- **ATTENDANCE:** Please contact instructor with questions or concerns related to attendance. If you miss more than 3 classes it will begin to lower your grade. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed when you are absent. If you miss a formal discussion day, you will only be able to make-up 10 out of 20 points.
- **LATE WORK:** I accept late writing assignments, but you will lose 5 points per week. In addition, you will not be able to submit a paper more than 2 weeks late.
- **MAKE-UP QUIZZES & EXAMS:** There **are no make-up quizzes or exams**. I drop the 2 lowest quiz grades. Please contact the instructor with questions or concerns related to this policy.
- **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Honesty is the best policy. Learn to avoid plagiarism in writing assignments. Cheating on quizzes/tests or writing assignments will be considered an automatic F for that quiz/test.
- **CELL PHONES & Other Electronic Devices:** Must be OFF and put away during class. NO TEXTING! Class is only 75 minutes...your people can wait.
- **YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK FOR HELP:** Don't forget that IF you have any questions on any aspect of the course, please do not hesitate to contact me. You may always send me an email spriest@wnc.edu OR call me at 445-3318.