



Introduction to Critical Thinking

Unit of Study Outline

1. Unit of study information

This course focuses the points of analogical reasoning, comparative reasoning, induction, and application of critical reasoning strategies to practical and theoretical problems. The course is concerned with the development of potential capacities in the part of mind known as “intellect”. Thinking activities are organized after theories introduction. It is designed to gain thinking capacity by practice rather than dry lecture.

2. Pre-requisite units and assumed knowledge

Basic English reading and writing skills

3. Learning aims and outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

- Develop the ability to analyze critically the arguments of others,
- Construct well-reasoned arguments of your own on a variety of topics
- Become a critical thinker by learning skills enable to start take charge of the ideas that run one’s life.
- Think consciously, deliberately and skillfully.

4. Weighting of final grade

Grading will be based on mid-term exam, final exam and participation in class, rate of each part is as below:

10% - Comments/questions on each day’s readings

20% - Performance in discussion section

30% - Mid-term exam

40% - Final exam

5. Grading

A	100-95	A-	94-90	B+	89-87
B	86-83	B-	82-80	C+	79-77
C	76-73	C-	72-70	D+	69-67
D	66-63	D-	62-60	F	59 or lower

6. Policies

Attendance Policy

Attendance in class is mandatory for all students enrolled in the course. Any excused absence must be discussed directly with the teacher. Being late to class within 15 minutes will be recorded as 1 LATE and being late over 15 minutes will be recorded as 1 ABSENCE. 3 LATES equal to 1 ABSENCE. 20% absences of the total teaching hours will cause an F (a failing grade) directly. However, students are still welcome to continue to attend class. F students have no right to drop this course anymore. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the attendance grade by 1 point. Each excused absence will result in the lowering of the attendance grade by 0.5 point.

Participation Policy

Students should participate in their chosen classes actively and effectively. The Participation Grade is related to the Attendance Grade. Students' final attendance grade is the maximum of their participation grade.

Participation grade will be based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to taking part in class discussions and activities, completing assignments, being able to answer questions correctly, obeying class rules, and being prepared for class, frequent visiting your instructors and chatting in English during their office hours is highly recommended.

Policy on Assignments and Quizzes

Students should finish their assignments completely and punctually. Assignment should be submitted on the date appointed by the instructor. If a student cannot hand in the assignment on time, the reasonable excuse will be

needed. Late assignments will receive a maximum grade of 80. An assignment that is late for 3 days will be corrected but receive 0.

You are recommended print all your assignment in the uniform format with the heading of Student's Pledge of no cheating. Written assignment or printed ones without the uniform heading of pledge will receive a maximum grade of 80.

It is mandatory to have weekend assignment every week. Any weekend assignment should be submitted on first class of next week.

It is mandatory to have holiday assignment on the public holidays. Any holiday assignment should be submitted on the first day on returning to school.

Students are required to do a multitude of presentations during the course.

Plagiarism

Any form of cheating is NEVER tolerated. Any student ONCE caught cheating on a quiz, assignment or examination will receive a 0 for that particular work of the whole semester. At the beginning of the semester the definition of plagiarism will be carefully explained. When any thoughts or writings of another person are used, the sources must be clearly identified (using quotes, bibliography and giving reference).

Classroom Policies

1. No eating, cellular phones, electronic dictionaries, smoking, chatting or drowsing in class.
2. Please speak in English rather than Chinese in class.
3. Students are not allowed to attend class without textbooks.
4. Stand up when answering questions.
5. Respect classmates' ideas, opinions, and questions of your classmates.
6. You are welcome to visit the instructor's office in his/her office hours.
7. Take good care of the laboratory facilities. Do not splash water on the desktop.
8. When each class is over, hang the earphone on the hanger. Put the trash into the trash-bin.
9. All your classroom involvement, performance and after-class communications with instructor will affect your participation score.
10. All communications with the teacher must be in English, both inside and outside class time.

7. Texts and other recourses

Chaffee, John (2009) Thinking Critically by John Chaffee, 9th ed. Heinle

Cengage Learning.

Useful Websites:

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/>

8. Teaching methods

Employ several strategies, including textbook reading, class discussions, informal lectures, individual and group exercises, dialogues and papers.

9. Week by week topic and study guide

Week 1	Thinking	Living and “Examined” Life
		A Roadmap to your mind
		Working Toward Goals
		Thinking About visual information
		Thinking Activities
Week 2		An organized Approach to Making Decisions
		Discovering “who” you are
		Living Creatively
		Thinking Activities
Week 3	Thinking Critically	Carefully Exploring Situations with Questions
		Thinking Independently
		Viewing Situations from Different Perspectives
		Supporting Diverse Perspectives with Reasons and Evidence
		Discussing Ideas in an Organized Way
		Becoming a Critical Thinker
		Analyzing Issues
		Thinking Activities
Week 4	Solving Problems	Thinking Critically About Solving Problems
		Solving Complex Problems
		Solving Nonpersonal Problems
		Thinking Activities
Week 5	Perceiving and Believing	Actively Selecting, Organizing, and Interpreting Sensations
		Perceiving and Believing
		Believing and Perceiving

		Types of Beliefs: Report, Inferences, Judgments
		Reporting Factual Information
		Inferring
		Judging
		Thinking Activities
Week 6	Constructing Knowledge	Believing and Knowing
		Knowledge and Truth
		Thinking Critically about Your Beliefs
		Using Perspective-Taking to Achieve Knowledge
		Beliefs Based on Indirect Experience
		Evaluating Online Information
		Thinking Activities
Week 7	Midterm Exam	
Week 8	Language and Thought	The Evolution of Language
		Symbolic Nature of Language
		Using Language Effectively
		Using Language to Clarify Thinking
		Thinking Activities
Week 9		Using Language in Social Contexts
		Using Language to Influence
		Thinking Activities
Week 10	Forming and Applying Concepts	What Are Concepts?
		Structure of Concepts
		Forming Concepts
		Applying Concepts
		Defining Concepts
		Relating Concepts with Mind Maps
		Thinking Activities
Week 11	Relating and Organizing	Chronological and Process Relationships
		Comparative and Analogical Relationships
		Causal Relationships
		Thinking Activities
Week 12	Thinking Critically About Moral Issues	What is Ethics?

		Your Moral Compass
		The Thinker's Guide to Moral Decision-Making
		Thinking Activities
Week 13	Constructing Arguments	Recognizing Arguments
		Evaluating Arguments
		Understanding Deductive Arguments
		Constructing Extended Arguments
		Thinking Activities
Week 14	Reasoning Critically	Inductive Reasoning
		Empirical Generalization
		Fallacies of False Generalization
		Causal Reasoning
		Causal Fallacies
		Thinking Activities
Week 15		Fallacies of Relevance
		The Critical Thinker's Guide to Reasoning
		Thinking Activities
Week 16	Thinking Critically, Living Creatively	Living a Life Philosophy
		Deciding on a Career
		Thinking Critically about Personal Relationships
		The Thinker's Guide to Healthy Relationships
		Choosing the "Good Life"
		Thinking Activities
Week 17	Final Exam	