



Syllabus

Course Number/Title: PI 200 Philosophy of Thought and Logic (Critical Thinking)

Department: Humanities

Required Text: Thinking Critically

Year: Fall 2012

Credit Hours: Three

Days/Time: T-R 9:25am-10:40am

Instructor: Dr. Michael Thompson

Room #: BMC 710

Office Hours: As Posted

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Course Placement: Freshman or Sophomore

Pre-requisite: None

Rationale

This course fulfills a humanities course requirement in the Transfer and Articulation agreement. The student should be more successful in his/her career and in everyday life with the improvement of critical and creative thinking skills.

Course Description

The purpose of the course is to improve every student's skill in thinking more critically and creatively in order to make more informed decisions. The student will have a clearer understanding of the thinking process and learn various approaches to thinking effectively. Higher-order intellectual abilities will be practiced while integrating the student's personal experiences with interdisciplinary problem-solving activities. The student will apply critical thinking skills to make more informed decisions in everyday life and in solving larger social issues.

Course Learning Objectives

The student shall exhibit the following objectives:

1. practice and evaluate a variety of problem-solving experiences and strategies
2. increase self-awareness while applying concepts to personal experiences
3. improve communication and argumentative skills in written and spoken forms
4. recognize and apply terms used in this course
5. increase awareness of and make more informed decisions about current issues
6. increase skills in analyzing, synthesizing, integrating and thinking holistically
7. distinguish between fact and opinion and detect bias
8. apply steps and models in thinking creatively and critically
9. practice appropriate workplace skills

Course Competencies

The student shall successfully complete the following competencies:

Module 1Chapter 1: Thinking

1. define and compare the terms--thinking, thinking critically, thinking creatively
2. explain and apply the thinking process models--working towards goals, making decisions and living creatively--to better understand our world and to make informed decisions
3. identify with all students in class by use of the discussion board introductions,

Chapter 2: Thinking Critically

1. explain and apply six qualities of critical thinking—think actively, carefully explore situations with questions, think independently, view situations from different perspectives, support diverse perspectives with reasons and evidence, discuss ideas in an organized way
2. begin dialogue on Wiki Project, Discussion Board, and Digital Story.

Chapter 3: Solving Problems

1. identify personal and non-personal problems that interfere with success
2. apply the five steps to solving a problem
3. moderate and participate in discussion boards

Module 2Chapter 4: Perceiving

1. heighten awareness of our perceptions and how they relate to our thinking effectively
2. analyze situations using the three-step process of perception: selection, organization and interpretation
3. critically analyze a controversial image you have chosen and share your critique with the other members of the class

Chapter 5: Believing and Knowing

1. compare the relationship between perceiving, believing and knowing
2. assess beliefs based on direct and indirect experiences
3. describe beliefs that you consider to be interpretations, evaluations, conclusions, and/or predictions
4. evaluate the accuracy of a belief as to whether it should be knowledge

Chapter 8: Relating and Organizing

1. define and explain the advantages of using mind maps
2. organize information by preparing mind maps
3. moderate and participate in discussion board, prepare 2-5 minute dialogue for digital story, research wiki page topics.

Module 3Chapter 10: Constructing Arguments

1. construct an extended argument
2. evaluate the soundness of arguments in terms of their truth and validity
3. define terms: argument, deductive argument (reasoning), premise, reason, conclusion, cue words
4. explain four reasons why we construct arguments: to decide, explain, predict, persuade

5. construct sound deductive and inductive arguments
6. apply 9 elements of reasoning while researching, organizing, writing, revising and analyzing your argumentative paper (due session 28)
7. analyze and frame issue for argumentative exercise using 9 elements of reasoning

Chapter 11: Reasoning Critically

1. define and identify the following: inductive argument (reasoning), empirical generalization, causal reasoning, fallacy of reasoning
2. explain and apply three key criteria in evaluating empirical generalizations
3. explain and identify fallacies of inductive reasoning: fallacies of false generalization, causal fallacies, fallacies of relevance
4. explain and apply the five steps when using the scientific method
5. complete 3-5 minute dialogue for digital story.
6. moderate and participate in discussion board.

Module 4

Chapter 6: Language and Thought

1. define language and its relationship with clear thinking
2. improve reading skills, usage of dictionaries, and critical comprehension skills
3. explain and apply four meanings of words: semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, perceptual
4. improve language skills to improve clear, effective thinking and communication
5. analyze language to clarify thinking—improve vague language and ambiguity
6. analyze language for social communication—language styles, slang, jargon and dialect
7. analyze language to influence people—euphemisms, emotive language and advertising
8. successfully demonstrate skills learned in this course through Digital Story Project and presentation.

Chapter 12: Thinking Critically, Living Creatively

1. explain and apply four productive strategies to create a life philosophy
2. present a debate covering the topic chosen by your team (beginning on session 29)
3. summarize skills learned in this course by successfully completing Meta-Cognition Exercise.
4. moderate and participate in discussion board.

Module 5

Chapter 9: Reporting, Inferring, Judging

1. name the three basic types of beliefs we use to make sense of our world
2. distinguish and apply the terms: reporting, inferring, and judging
3. evaluate reports, inferences, and judgments

Chapter 7: Forming and Applying Concepts

1. define concept
2. apply the concept model by naming, explaining, and applying its properties, signs & referents
3. discuss the conceptualizing process in becoming sophisticated learners
4. complete Wiki Board Project by Saturday, 2/14/09 6pm.
5. successfully complete Final Disposition Exercise by Saturday, 2/14/09 6pm.

Method of Instruction

Methods of instruction will be by means of lecture, cooperative learning, completion of written and oral assignments, and usage of resources, i.e. textbook, current events, videotapes, library, transparencies, handouts, local speakers. Class attendance and participation are imperative. Course activities and/or the schedule may be modified in the best interest of student learning. The instructor also expects the student to:

1. come prepared to carry your full share; study in advance, read, and think. Anything less is selfish.
2. learn how to listen. Set yourself to understand the point of view and contributions of others in the group. It is by looking at an issue from the point of view of others who may differ from you that your own thinking will be clarified and enriched.
3. expect to get and give stimulation. Remember that it is critical and creative thinking that we seek. Conceptions are ever in process of reconstruction.
4. expect to get new insight. All should profit, for the group is wiser than its members individually.
5. cultivate new approaches to thinking critically and creatively. Be willing to take risks in expanding your cognitive process of thinking.
6. be open to new ideas. Ideas are always in the making. To suppose that you settled a point of view beyond improvement is to admit that you have stopped growing.

Method of Evaluation

Evaluation of the student's achievement is based upon the criteria located under Course Requirements. Also, if the student misses at least one-third of the class sessions without discussing extenuating circumstances with the instructor, the student will receive an F in the course. Some assignments are completed during class time and cannot be made up unless the student's absence is excused. The student is encouraged to tally his/her grade in the course anytime during the semester by adding the points earned thus far on assignments and tests, and then dividing the student's score by the total points possible thus far in the course. The grading scale is as follows: A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=below 60%. The student may accumulate up to twenty points extra credit by participating in activities recommended by the instructor—five points for attending an event and five points for analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating it in one-hundred typed words or more; five points for being involved in a community service and five points for reflecting upon it in one-hundred typed words or more. The last day to receive extra credit is the Monday prior to Finals Week. If a student is found to be cheating or plagiarizing, he or she could receive an F in the course. This includes signing the attendance sheet for a student who is not in class that day.

Course Requirements

The class will be held as an informal discussion group that will encourage cooperative learning. Lecture will also be incorporated. Group and individual projects, tests, reading and writing activities which relate the course and to each student's personal experiences will be important components of the class. The student's participation will be instrumental to the success of the course. The assignments and points possible

are as follows:

Wiki Project 1 mind map, and 2 assigned topic narratives, 600-1000 words with an image and 2 references.	200 points
12 Discussion Room Tickets – 5 take aways each week (late tickets will not be accepted)	60 points
Digital Story Collaboration Project 2-5 minute “story” with images, voice over, and background music demonstrating critical thought and creativity.	300 points
Issue Framing Exercise Frame and argue topical point in class exercise	100 points
Meta-Cognition Problem Solving Exercise	40 points
Critical Thinking Final Exam	100 points
Total Points Possible	800 points

Assignment Policy

It is imperative that assignments are turned in and oral assignments are presented when requested during class time. Failure to give a presentation on an assigned date will result in a grade of 0, unless the student notified the instructor beforehand with an excused reason for the absence. Failure to complete a written assignment will result in a 20% reduction in the grade per day the assignment is late (excluding weekends). If the assignment is not received before or during the class period it is due, there is an automatic 20% reduction in the grade. Written proof of an excused absence may be requested in order not to lose points. The requirements of the make-up assignment may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Students who know they will be absent—such as to participate in school activities—need to notify the instructor in advance and, in most cases, hand in the assignment before the absence. Each student is responsible for obtaining information about a class session that he/she missed or will miss. Students are encouraged to share current events, personal experiences and beliefs during class discussions.

Critique of your assignments using the 9 elements of reasoning

Correct any weaknesses in your assignments as you evaluate your assignments against the nine elements of reasoning listed below. Critique assignments by answering the following ten questions.

1. What is your POINT OF VIEW? For example, is it too narrow, too broad, based on false or misleading information, contradictory, fair, clearly stated, and/or consistent?
2. What is the PURPOSE (other than to complete an assignment)?
3. WHAT QUESTION IS AT ISSUE or WHAT PROBLEM SHOULD BE SOLVED? Is it clearly stated?
4. What evidence, experiences, data or resources is your position based upon? Is your

- INFORMATION relevant, adequate, consistent and accurate?
5. What CONCEPTS are you trying to communicate? Are your concepts clear, relevant and do they have depth?
 6. What ASSUMPTIONS do you take for granted as being true? Are they justifiable or are they contradictory?
 7. What CONCLUSIONS may the reader form after interpreting your information?
 8. What JUSTIFICATION(S)--or reasons--do you provide to support your conclusion? How well do they support your conclusion?
 9. What may be the IMPLICATIONS or CONSEQUENCES of your preparing and sharing your assignment?
 10. How would you EVALUATE your assignment based upon the Nine Elements of Reasoning?

Test Policy

The student is expected to take tests on the days they are scheduled. The time and the content of excused make-up tests will be determined at the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance will be taken each day. The instructor expects students to be punctual, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class activities. There is usually a direct correlation between class attendance and student success. If a student misses at least one-third of the classes before midterm, the instructor has the option to withdraw the student from the course with a WF (Withdraw Failure). If the student misses one-third of the classes at the end of the term without discussing extenuating circumstances with the instructor, s/he may receive an F in the course. Each student is responsible for obtaining information about a class session that s/he missed. For more information, refer to Assignment Policy and Test Policy.

Academic Integrity

Colby Community College defines academic integrity as learning that leads to the development of knowledge and/or skills without any form of cheating or plagiarism. This learning requires respect for Colby's institutional values of quality, service and integrity. All Colby Community College students, faculty, staff, and administrators are responsible for upholding academic integrity.

Cheating is giving, receiving, or using unauthorized help on individual and group academic exercises such as papers, quizzes, tests, and presentations through any delivery system in any learning environment. This includes impersonating another student, sharing content without authorization, fabricating data, and altering academic documents, including records, with or without the use of personal and college electronic devices.

Plagiarism is representing or turning in someone else's work without proper citation of the source. This includes unacknowledged paraphrase, quotation, or complete use of someone else's work in any form. It also includes citing work that is not used and taking credit for a group project without contributing to it.

The following procedure will be used for students who violate the policy:

- First Offense – Student will receive a zero for the assignment and the student will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
- Second Offense – The student will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs and removed from the class.
- Third Offense – The student will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs and dismissed from the college.

Any questions about this policy may be referred to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Syllabus Information Disclaimer

I reserve the right to change any information contained in this document, when necessary, with adequate notice given to the student. Notice shall be given in the classroom during class. No other notice is required. It is the students' responsibility to keep up with any changes, modifications, adjustments or amendments that are made to this document.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is the responsibility of each student with a disability to notify the college of his/her disability and to request accommodation. If a member of the class has a documented learning disability or a physical disability and needs special accommodations, he/she should contact Student Support Services, which is located in the Student Union.

Equipment

Available in the classroom: Video Recorder, Audio Recorder, Monitor, Overhead Projector, Elmo Presentation Stand; Available outside the classroom: Computers

Bibliography

"A Walk Through the 20th Century with Bill Moyers: WW II: The Propaganda Battle."
Prod. Corp. for Entertainment Learning. New York, 1984

"Brain Sex, Sugar & Spice." Prod. Primedia. 1992.

Chaffee, John. Thinking Critically. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Recommended Resources

Refer to the brochure on databases distributed by the H.F. Davis Memorial Library.