

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Department Information:

Division: Humanities  
Department: Adult Literacy and College Preparation Skills  
Course ID: READ 102  
Course Title: Critical Reading as Critical Thinking  
Units: 3  
Lecture: 3 hours  
Prerequisite: Read 100 OR English 101

**Catalog and Schedule Description:**

This course explores the relationship of critical reading and critical thinking, including emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills with application in the interpretation, analysis, criticism, and advocacy of ideas encountered in academic reading.

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One**

**III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:**

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- A. Identify the relevant evidence and experiences needed to make a decision, solve a problem, or create new knowledge;
- B. Clarify the facts, concepts, evidence, and relationships that contribute to addressing questions and solving problems;
- C. Evaluate the quality and sufficiency of evidence and other forms of support for a position;
- D. Revise arguments and findings based on critical reflection
- E. Recognize the explicit and implicit features in communication (reading, writing, speaking, and listening);
- F. Assess accurately similarities and differences in points of view;
- G. Monitor their own comprehension and apply various strategies to clarify their own thoughts and actions;
- H. Demonstrate the ability to be organized, persistent, and focused in thinking, inquiry, and communication;
- I. Read analytically and demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the interpretation and analysis of ideas encountered in academic and professional readings;
- J. Locate, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information and integrate knowledge across discipline boundaries;
- K. Demonstrate intellectual inquiry and reflective judgment through an awareness of their own thinking, perspective, and biases;
- L. Organize one's thoughts and communicate clearly and effectively in speaking, listening, and writing;
- M. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively in collaborative group settings; and
- N. Develop lifelong learning and leadership skills for workplace and professional success.

**IV. CONTENT:**

- A. Introduction
  - 1. Definitions of critical thinking
  - 2. Prominent features of critical thinking
  - 3. What critical thinking is not
  - 4. Impediments to critical thinking
- B. Critical thinking within a field or discipline
  - 1. Thinking biologically
  - 2. Thinking sociologically
  - 3. Thinking philosophically
  - 4. Thinking musically and artistically
  - 5. The logic of the field or discipline

6. The logic of physics
7. Learning the vocabulary of the discipline
8. Trusting the discipline
- C. Elements of reasoning
  1. The nuts and bolts of critical thinking
  2. The elements of reasoning
  3. Analyzing a piece of reasoning using the elements
  4. Trusting the process
- D. Standards of critical thinking
  1. Clearness
  2. Accuracy
  3. Importance, relevance
  4. Sufficiency
  5. Depth and breadth
  6. Precision
  7. Understanding and internalizing critical thinking standards
  8. Evaluating around the circle
  9. Standards check
- E. Fallacies
  1. Fallacies of evidence
  2. Fallacies of reasoning
  3. Fallacies of language
  4. Fallacies of pseudo arguments
- F. Arguments
  1. Inductive and deductive arguments
  2. Analysis of different types of statements, including fact, opinion, belief, and prejudice
  3. Analysis of evidence for claims, including clear definition, detailed support, and generalizations
- G. Putting it all together
  1. The core process of critical thinking
  2. Thinking through important critical thinking questions
  3. Thinking critically about questions
- H. Research
  1. Locating and evaluating research
  2. Comparing and contrasting arguments within research

**V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

- A. Lecture
- B. Class and group discussion
- C. Written assignments
- D. Simulations
- E. Critical evaluation of videotapes

**VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:**

- A. Reading: From your packet, read Ehrenreich's essay entitled, *The silenced majority: Why the average working person has disappeared from American media and culture*. Discuss in small groups the view presented by the author and the various argumentative strategies she employs to support her view. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments presented?
- B. Presentation: Locate and read an academic journal article in the biological sciences field. Prepare a one-page summary of the article. Be sure to include a discussion of the author's hypothesis, methods, evidence, and conclusion. Then, prepare a 10-minute speech to

present your findings to the class.

- C. Writing: Select a discipline problem (your choice). Research the topic using academic journals. After evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of existing research, determine the questions about the problem that remain unanswered. In a 4-6 page proposal, design a research project that you believe would address those unanswered questions. Be sure to use the research to support your rationale and design.
- D. Critical Thinking: Watch a videotape of a presidential debate. Prepare a 6-8 page paper in which you address all of the following issues:
  - 1. Describe the issues discussed in the debate.
  - 2. Evaluate the arguments presented by the candidates and determine who won on each issue. Be sure to explain your findings in terms of class concepts.
  - 3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each participant's arguments and approach.
  - 4. Describe the philosophical biases you believe were evident in the participants' arguments.

#### VI. EVALUATION:

##### A. Methods of Evaluation:

- 1. Objective and subjective examinations (for lecture and reading assignments). Typical questions include:
  - A. Drawing a conclusion about a class based on too few or atypical examples is which of the following types of fallacies?
    - i) false analogy
    - ii) hasty generalization
    - iii) false cause
    - iv) slippery slope
  - B. Explain how language, thought, and perception affect argument construction.
- 2. Subjective evaluation of student writing. Students are evaluated on their ability to apply course concepts to what they read or experience, to present clear, well-reasoned arguments supported by evidence, and their ability to logically refute the arguments of others.

##### B. Frequency of Evaluation:

- 1. One midterm examination
- 2. One final examination
- 3. A minimum of four written assignments, two of which are major research papers related to argument analysis.
- 4. At least one oral presentation

#### VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

- A. Nosich, Gerald M. Learning to think things through: A guide to critical thinking across the curriculum. Prentice Hall, 2001.
- B. Browne, M. Neil and Keeley, Stuart M. Asking the right questions: A guide to critical thinking (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Prentice Hall, 2004.
- C. Diestler, Sherry. Becoming a critical thinker: A user friendly manual (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Prentice Hall, 2000.

#### IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

Individual instructors may compile reading packets of journal article examples and other essays for use in the class.

**PREREQUISITE COURSE**

**Target Course:** Reading 102, Critical Reading as Critical Thinking

**Prerequisite Course:** Reading 100, College Academic Reading

**Instructions:**

- 1) List exit competencies (skills) from Prerequisite Course. These skills are listed in the “Student Outcomes” section of the Course Outline (“upon completion of the course, the student should be able to...”)
- 2) Indicate which of the listed exit competencies (skills) are necessary entry skills needed for success in the target course. Mark with an “X” each needed skill.
- 3) Indicate the degree of importance of each needed entry skill for course success, using the following rating scale:

1=Critical

2=Very Helpful

3=Desirable

**Skills Analysis**

Entry skills in Target Course	Exit Skills Provided by prerequisite course (Mark with an X if needed, and indicate prerequisite course (if more than one).	Degree of Importance (Rate 1 – 3)
Employ several methods of vocabulary development, including word attack, context clues, word analysis and dictionary use.	x	1
Use interpretive skills in writing cohesively about literature, showing knowledge of concepts of characterization, setting, tone, plot and style.	x	1
Use a number of approaches for reading and comprehending college level texts.	x	1
Employ analytical reading skills that emphasize seeing relationships between main ideas and supporting details.	x	1
Summarize accurately and completely the main idea and key details of an article or chapter.	x	1
Compose critical analysis papers that show skill in evaluating evidence, noting inferences, drawing conclusions, and comparing/contrasting.	x	1
Employ appropriate study skills such as note-taking, outlining, Mapping, and SQ3R.	x	1

**PREREQUISITE COURSE**

**Target Course:** Reading 102, Critical Reading as Critical Thinking

**Prerequisite Course:** English 101, Freshman Composition

Skills Analysis 1=Critical                      2=Very Helpful                      3=Desirable

Entry skills in Target Course	Exit Skills Provided by prerequisite course (Mark with an X if needed, and indicate prerequisite course (if more than one).	Degree of Importance (Rate 1 – 3)
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| <p>A. Compose effective college-level essays which illustrate that the students can do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the purpose of their writing and make writing decisions based on that purpose</li> <li>• Identify an audience for their writing and make writing decisions based on that audience</li> <li>• Select a subject appropriate for a writing assignment and narrow its focus</li> <li>• Construct an effective thesis statement</li> <li>• Support a thesis with sufficient and appropriate evidence</li> <li>• Use a variety of rhetorical modes</li> <li>• Use a variety of methods of development</li> <li>• Organize ideas logically</li> <li>• Revise essays for unity, coherence, clarity, concision, and tone</li> <li>• Edit for errors in grammar, usage, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul> | x | 1 |
| <p>B. Compose effective college-level research papers which illustrate that the students can, in addition, do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use standard library sources to gather information</li> <li>• Use Internet sources to gather information</li> <li>• Evaluate the validity of sources</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to take notes that summarize, paraphrase and quote from sources</li> <li>• Organize information into an outline for the paper</li> <li>• Integrate paraphrased and quoted material into the text</li> <li>• Use proper citing techniques following MLA format</li> <li>• Construct a works cited page following MLA format.</li> </ul>   | x | 1 |
| <p>C. Demonstrate the ability to read college-level prose for main ideas, support, style and tone.</p>   | X | 1 |