

P105: Critical Thinking

This is an online course.

Instructor: Scott Blackwell; you may call me Scott or Mr. Blackwell, whichever you feel comfortable with.

How to contact me and when I will be available:

Normally, I will be available to answer questions from 2 pm to 8 pm Monday through Friday. Questions posted after 8 pm will be answered by 2 pm the next day. Any questions posted after 2 pm should be answered by 8 pm that evening. I will not keep regular hours during the weekend, but I may log-in several times. So, if you post a question during the weekend, do not expect to get an answer from me until Monday at 2 pm. However, your classmates may answer that question before I do.

You have three main means to communicate with me in this course:

Forums: Here all students can see your questions and comments and reply to them. Most of your questions or comments will be posted in the Oncourse Forums. This is the quickest way to get in touch with me and I will always answer these questions first.

Oncourse E-mail: Only use Oncourse e-mail. There is no reason to use my regular university e-mail. Also, only use Oncourse e-mail for personal questions and issues. If you ask a question that pertains to the whole class, I will answer it in the Forums.

After I have answered all of the Discussion Forum questions, I will check e-mail messages. Remember, I only answer personal or grade questions in Oncourse e-mail. Please do not send e-mail to my university account.

Telephone Calls: My phone number is 765-480-2919. Only telephone or text me when you have an emergency situation.

Course Structure:

The course is divided into eight, two-week modules. All course work will be done using the Oncourse learning platform. Specifically, we will be using the following tools in this course:

Modules:

In the Modules section you will find the instructions for each two-week section.

Assignments:

All individual homework assignments will be submitted in the Assignments 2 tool. All homework instructions and assignments will be found in this tool.

Blogs:

All Learning Blogs will be posted in the Blogs Beta Tool. You can also access the weekly instructor blog in this tool.

Forums:

All group exercises will be posted in the Forums tool. Also, class questions about homework, technical problems, suggestions, and feedback can be posted in the Forum tool.

Tests and Surveys:

You can access the module quizzes and the exams through the Tests and Surveys tool.

Chat Room:

Each week you will have the opportunity to chat with me during my virtual office hours in the chat room.

Resources:

Homework answers, exam study guides, chapter outlines, handouts, and useful websites can be accessed through the Resources tool in Oncourse.

Announcements:

Important notices will be posted in the announcements tool, including my weekly virtual office hours.

Gradebook:

You can access all of your grades through the Oncourse Gradebook tool.

Navigating this Course:

Modules

This course is divided into eight, two-week Modules. Instructions for the modules are found in the Module area of Oncourse. Just click the Modules tab to enter the Modules area. Each of the modules may be subdivided into the following sections: Reading Assignment, Homework Assignment, Quiz, Learning Blog, Group Assignment, and Exam.

Learning Guides

The first thing you want to do is click on the Modules tab and look at the Learning Guide for each Module. The learning guide contains learning objectives, readings, homework assignments, and links to handouts and web resources. The learning guide briefly tells you what is going to happen in that particular module. It's a good idea to

print off the learning guides. All of the guides are contained in a folder labeled "Learning Guides" in the Resources area of Oncourse.

Reading Assignment

First, look at the reading assignment for the module. All of the chapters in the book are set up in a similar fashion. Each chapter begins with a list of learning objectives. Then there are readings and illustrations. Interspersed amongst each section of reading are a series of homework exercises. The end of each chapter has a "Recap" which summarizes the main ideas. Then, there is a long series of "Additional Exercises." If an exercise has an orange triangle beside it, the answer can be found in the back of the book. Pages 501 - 508 contain a "Glossary" of terms.

Homework Assignment

Each Module you will complete and submit an individual homework assignment. All of the homework problems will come from the exercises in the *Critical Thinking* book. All of the exercises, instructions, and due dates can be accessed by clicking the Assignments tab. Make sure you read the instructions carefully. Most exercises will require you to do more than what the book instructs you to do. If I have additional instructions, I will clearly indicate those in the Modules and in the Assignment instructions for that module's homework. Your homework will always be due by Sunday of the second week of the Module. No late homework will be accepted. However, you can turn in homework early.

Learning Blog

Each Module you will post an entry in Blogs. Instructions for each entry can be found in the Module for that week in the section labeled "Learning Blog." Most of the blog entries will require you to do some sort of Internet research. You will include pictures and web links in your blog entries. The purpose of the blogs is for you to apply the ideas and terms in the chapter to actual cases and examples. Your blog entries will be due by Sunday of the second week of the Module. No late entries will be accepted. However, you can turn in entries early.

In order to familiarize yourself with Blogs Beta, click on the link below.

<BLOGS BETA INSTRUCTIONS>

By Wednesday, I would like you to set up a profile in Blogs Beta, and post a test blog which includes a picture and a web link. Just label your post "test." After you have posted your test blog, I will give you feedback on it and help you troubleshoot any problems.

Group Assignment

Each Module will have a group assignment. I have placed you into groups randomly. To see what group you're in, click on the Roster tab. Then click Group Membership.

Each group has access to a Group Introduction Forum, a Group Homework Forum, and a Group Leader forum. You should only be able to see your group's Introduction and Homework forum. You will not have access to the other groups' Introduction and Homework forums. These forums have due dates, so it is important for you to do postings on time. For each Module, one group member will be designated Group Leader. The names of the group leaders for each Module will be listed under the Group Leader forum for that week. Group leaders do not have to do initial postings. Group Leaders only post to the Group Leader forum.

For each module, all group members, except the group leader, need to make their individual postings by Friday of the first week of the Module. No late postings will be accepted. The Group Leader's job is then to make sure the postings are correct and choose what he or she considers the best answers to the exercise questions. The Group Leader will post these answers to the Group Leader forum by Wednesday of the second week of the Module. Then, group leaders and the rest of the group members can respond to these postings.

Quizzes

Each module has an ungraded quiz. These can be accessed by clicking on the Tests and Surveys tab. Then just choose the appropriate quiz. There is no time limit on the quizzes, and they can be taken as many times as you want. The quizzes are meant as a self-assessment instrument. You should take them after you have completed all of the other assignments in the Module. Then, you can use the quiz in order to test your knowledge of that Module. You can also use the quizzes to help study for the exams. There are no due dates for the quizzes.

Exams

There are three non-cumulative exams. These can be accessed by clicking on the Tests and Surveys tab. Then just choose the appropriate exam. The exams will usually consist of fifty questions, a combination of true / false, multiple choice, and short answer. The exams will mirror the homework exercises and the quizzes. Usually, exams will be open for two weeks. These exams only figure as part of your grade, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ or less, so don't become too stressed out about them.

Course Learning Outcomes:

After taking this course, you should understand and be able to use the basic rules of critical thinking and be able to exercise critical thought in a variety of settings.

This course satisfies the following General Education Requirements in the Critical Thinking skills area:

Outcome 1: Students will recognize issues that have alternative interpretations

Component 1: Students will understand and respect the potential differences in the perspectives of others

Component 2: Students will summarize the explicit and implicit aspects of an issue

Component 3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the influences of audience and context on an issue

Outcome 2: Students will compare the perspectives of others to their own

Component 1: Students will articulate their own perspectives and recognize potential personal bias

Component 2: Students will question the underlying assumptions of self and others

Outcome 3: Students will assess the quality of supporting evidence

Component 1: Students will consider the literature and new research in the field

Component 2: Students will assess the accuracy and relevance of supporting evidence

Component 3: Students will use a variety of techniques to assess the quality of supporting evidence

Outcome 4: Students will assess the implications and consequences that result from proposed conclusions

Component 1: Students will identify the pros and cons of different theoretical approaches

Component 2: Students will articulate the implications and consequences of an argument

Component 3: Students will compare recommendations resulting from applying different theoretical frameworks

Required Text:

1. Critical Thinking, Tenth Edition. Brook Noel Moore and Richard Parker. New York: McGraw Hill, 2012.

You must have this edition.

ISBN # 978-0-07-803828-0

Attendance Policy and Withdraw Policy:

Since this is an online course, there is no attendance policy. However, assignments and discussion forums do have due dates that you need to be aware of. If you are no longer in the class, please contact me immediately. That way I can take you out of your group. Also, if you stop coming to class and do not officially withdraw from the class, you will receive a Failing grade for the course.

Policy on Late Assignments and Exams:

Late homework assignments, learning blogs, discussion forum postings, and exams will not receive any credit. If you are having difficulties with an assignment, please contact me. If you become ill or incapacitated, please contact me. If you are having technical problems, please contact me. In certain instances, I may be able to extend a deadline; however, you have to contact me three days before the deadline to make arrangements. If you do not contact me, and you miss a deadline, you will receive no credit for that assignment.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty:

Academic integrity (honesty) in regard to cheating is expected of everyone. Cheating on papers, tests or other academic works is a violation of University rules. If you are caught cheating you will fail this course.

Special Needs Statement:

If you need special accommodations or course adaptations because of a disability, please contact Tracy Springer at Disability Service 765-455-9301.

Course Assignments:

8 Individual Homework Exercises

20 points each x 8 = 160

8 Learning Blogs

20 points each x 8 = 160

7 Group Exercises

20 points each x 8 = 160

2 Group Leader Exercises

20 points each x 2 = 40

3 Exams

50 points each x 3 = 150

Total Points 670

Grading Scale:

Percentage grades will be used for all graded work:

A = 93-100%

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76

C- = 70-72

D = 60-69

F = 0-59