

## **Proposal for PHIL P105: Critical Thinking to be added to Category IV: Critical Thinking of the Indiana University Kokomo general education requirements**

The Critical Thinking category has four outcomes associated with it. This course meets those outcomes in the following ways:

### **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 influence of audience and context on an issue

Several chapters in the course textbook focus on writing issue-based essays, presenting the steps of the writing process: invention, drafting, revising, and proofreading. In addition, the Appendix includes several opposing viewpoint essays on relevant issues such as flag burning, lowering the legal drinking age, paying college athletes, and legalizing steroid use in professional sports. These chapters also teach students how to do audience analyses. The section on logical fallacies allows students to understand the importance of looking at the overall context of an argument. Overall, course quizzes, exams, homework assignments, discussions, and student blogs will allow students to demonstrate that they can recognize issues that have alternative interpretations.

### **Outcome 2: Students will compare the perspective 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

A large section of the class is devoted to recognizing and understanding two main groups of logical fallacies: fallacies of relevance and fallacies of insufficient evidence. In addition, students explore the issues of vagueness, over-generality, semantic and syntactic ambiguity, and the emotive power of language. Doing this allows them to see the underlying assumptions used in arguments. Students will also learn barriers to critical thinking, such as egocentrism, socio-centrism, relativism, and wishful thinking. Overall, course quizzes, exams, homework assignments, discussions, and student blogs will allow students to demonstrate that they can compare the perspective of others to their own.

### **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

The course textbook focuses on finding, evaluating, and using research sources. Students will learn how to do key word and subject word searches and use Boolean operators correctly. They will learn how to evaluate internet sources, including webpages. Also, students will learn how to quote, summarize, and paraphrase sources and how to avoid plagiarism. In addition, one chapter of the course textbook focuses on media literacy, showing students how to analyze and evaluate mass media sources, check for bias and selectivity in sources, and critically examine advertising. Overall, course quizzes, exams, homework assignments, discussions, and student blogs will allow students to demonstrate that they can 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

Throughout the course students will learn how to recognize, analyze, diagram, and evaluate different types of inductive and deductive argument forms, including inductive generalizations, statistical arguments, arguments from analogy, and causal arguments. They will also evaluate arguments for validity, soundness, strength, and cogency. In addition, they will explore the scientific method, understanding the principles of testability, verifiability, and falsifiability. They will also learn how to distinguish science from pseudoscience by doing an in-depth analysis of astrology. Overall, course quizzes, exams, homework assignments, discussions, and student blogs will allow students to demonstrate that they can assess the implications and consequences that result from proposed conclusions.