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PM

Critical Thinking
PH 103 Fall 2000
Dr. C.R. Unni
Office Hours: T.Th 8-11 AM
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Course Description

Designed to be more than a study of non-formal reasoning methods, the course includes but is not limited to the study of logical fallacies. Assembling approaches from analytic philosophy, literary theory and cultural studies, the course models the rhetorical dimension of language and discourse. The course is useful to those who want to think, write and talk in a clear and straightforward manner.

Objectives

The critical thinking course will teach the student how to write ten different types of critiques of a text. The texts may be written words, films, Television programs or photographs.

1. Humanist critique
2. Structural/Poststructural critique.
3. Postmodernist critique.
4. Psychoanalytic critique.
5. Feminist critique.
6. Lesbian/Gay critique.
7. Marxist critique.
8. New historicism critique.
9. Cultural materialism critique.
10. Post colonial critique.

How the objectives relate to the catalog description

The objectives cover a wide variety of critical concepts and theories. The traditional critical thinking course just addresses the logical characteristics of arguments, deductive and inductive and limits its scope to discussing how such arguments can be evaluated and what logical fallacies one is likely to commit in developing and defending arguments. This course will not neglect the question of evaluating arguments, but it goes beyond just doing that. It introduces the student to a variety of texts among which are linguistic, films, and television texts. It examines three theories about where the meaning of these texts is located. (a) The meaning is in the historical context and author's intentions; (b) The meaning is in the text; (c) The meaning is in the attitude of the reader.

Method of Instruction

There will be a total of 42 meetings of 50 minutes each. The last two meetings will be set apart for evaluation, assessment and final review. The remaining 40 meetings will be used to present the 10 objectives. Each objective will be achieved through 4 meetings. In the first meeting, the basic *concepts* pertaining to that objective will be identified defined and discussed. In the second meeting, In the second meeting, the student will *learn* the application of the concepts by coordinating them with the readings from philosophers, In the third meeting the students will engage in collaborative learning by working with one another to produce examples of writing. Individual attention will be paid to students requiring such attention. In the fourth meeting the students will take a test which will assess their competence in the skill the particular objective-module defines.

How the course relates to the Marianist Values

The five characteristics of Marianist Universities as stated in the *Characteristics of Marianist Universities* are:

1. Education for formation of faith.
2. Excellence in education.
3. Educate in family spirit.
4. Educate for service, justice and peace.
5. Educate for adoption and change.

The course tries to build Marianist values into the very teaching. Thus in discussing the powers of reason and logic, the student is always alerted to the limits of rationality. The second characteristic of excellence in education is the very reason for offering a course such as critical thinking. It teaches the students how to argue for what they believe in and not just state their beliefs. Family spirit is always fostered by making students work collaboratively. Reminding students that they are to use their critical thinking skills to help others fosters justice and peace as ideals of conduct constitutes the service orientation built into the course. Also such skills are what are needed for the students to adapt to the social changes that they are likely to face in their work and life.

Texts

- Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999)

Recommended further reading

- Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)
- Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983)
- Stephen Lynn, *Texts and Contexts: Writing about literature with Critical Theory* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994)
- Roger Webster, *Studying Literary Theory: An Introduction* (London: Arnold, 1990)

Suggested Reference

- Edward Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (London, Routledge, 1998)

Requirements

Attendance	100 points
Participation	100 points
Module tests	500 points
Mid-Term	150 points
Final	150 points
Optional projects	500 points

Grading

900-1000 points =	A
800-899 points =	B
700-799 points =	C
600-699 points =	D
Below 600 points =	F

Schedule

Module	Objective	Concepts	Learning	Tutorial	Test
1	Humanist Critique.	8/28	8/30	9/1	9/6
2	Structuralist/Post-Structuralist Critique.	9/8	9/11	9/13	9/15
3	Postmodern Critique.	9/18	9/20	9/22	9/25
4	Psychoanalytic Critique.	9/27	9/29	10/2	10/4
5	Feminist Critique.	10/6	10/11	10/13	10/16
6	Lesbian/Gay Critique.	10/18	10/20	10/23	10/25
7	Marxist Critique	10/27	10/30	11/1	11/3
8	New Historicist Critique.	11/6	11/8	11/10	11/13
9	Cultural Materialist Critique.	11/15	11/17	11/20	11/22
10	Post Colonial Critique.	11/27	11/29	12/1	12/4

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Assessment survey (Qualitative)

Name: Last _____ First _____ Middle Initial _____

Student's Status: Day _____ Evening _____ Social Security No: _____

Age _____ Sex _____ Ethnicity _____

Hometown _____ Class Standing: F _____ S _____ J _____ S _____

Major _____ Minor _____

What are your academic plans? _____

When did you start at Chaminade? _____ When do you expect to graduate? _____

If you are given a test today, with what level of confidence will you be able to do the following? Put an X at the appropriate place.

NO	QUESTIONS	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Strongly disagree
1	Write a liberal humanist critique of a text.				
2	Write a structural/poststructuralist critique of a text.				
3	Write a postmodern critique of a text.				
4	Write a psychoanalytic critique of a text.				
5	Write a feminist critique of a text.				
6	Write a lesbian/gay critique of a text.				
7	Write a new Marxist critique of a text.				
8	Write new Historicist Critique of a text.				
9	Write a cultural materialist critique of a text.				
10	Write a postcolonial critique of a text.				

Critical thinking
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Assessment survey (Quantitative)

Name: Last _____ First _____ Middle Initial _____

Student's Status: Day _____ Evening _____ Social Security No: _____

Age _____ Sex _____ Ethnicity _____

Hometown _____ Class Standing: F _____ S _____ J _____ S _____

Major _____ Minor _____

When did you start at Chaminade? _____ When do you expect to graduate? _____

This text is to see how much of technical philosophical terms you may already know. Write a short answer in a sentence or two for the following. If you don't know these terms just write DO NOT KNOW.

NO	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1	What do Russian formalist mean by <i>defamiliarization</i> ?	
2	What does Saussure mean by a <i>signifier</i> ?	
3	What does Derrida mean by a <i>deconstructive</i> reading of a text?	

4	What is a <i>metanarrative</i> for Lyotard?	
5	What does Baudrillard mean by a <i>simulacrum</i> ?	
6	How will you distinguish <i>displacement</i> from <i>condensation</i> in Freud's theory?	
7	What does Helene Cixous mean by <i>écriture feminine</i> ?	
8	What does the term <i>queer theory</i> mean in critical theory?	
9	What does Althusser mean by <i>interpellation</i> ?	
10	What does Foucault mean by <i>discursive practices</i> ?	