

WE'00

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Chaminade University of Honolulu  
Winter Term / Jan. 10 - March 27, 2000  
Pearl Harbor Campus

Course: Philosophy 103 / Critical Thinking

Time: Monday 17:30 - 21:30

Instructor: Virginia Suddath

Communications: Telephone / 955-6606  
e-mail / suddath@hawaii.edu

Textbook: Becoming a Critical Thinker: A User Friendly Manual, 2nd ed.  
author: Sherry Diestler

Introduction and 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 for those who want to think, write and talk in a clear and straight-forward manner. The overall goal of the course is to help the student to develop the ability to think for him- or herself and to be able to develop arguments based not on belief or uninformed opinion, but on informed opinion and supported by appropriate reasons. The text will be supplemented by readings on contemporary issues and an analysis of a literary work.

Class Objectives:

As *critical readers*, students should be able to:

- summarize accurately an argument they have read
- locate the thesis of an argument
- locate the assumptions, stated and unstated
- analyze and evaluate the strength of the evidence and the soundness of the reasoning offered in support of the thesis
- analyze, evaluate, and account for discrepancies among various readings on a topic (for example, explain why certain facts are used or not used, why two sources might interpret the same facts differently)

As *thoughtful writers*, students should be able to:

- imagine an audience, and write effectively for it (by such means as using the appropriate tone and providing the appropriate amount of detail)
- present information in an orderly and coherent way
- be aware of own assumptions
- incorporate sources into their own writing, not simply by quoting extensively or by paraphrasing, but also by having digested materials so that they can present it in their own words
- properly document all borrowings — not merely quotations and paraphrases but also borrowed ideas
- do all of these things in the course of developing a thoughtful argument of their own

Requirements:

Students are required to be open-minded in class discussion and to participate regularly in class activities. Each student is expected to read carefully the assigned work and to be prepared to discuss it for the class period of the assignment.

All students will be graded on:

- coming to class on time and staying for the whole period
- being courteous and professional in class discussion, i.e., taking turns in speaking, allowing others to express their ideas without interruption, communicating with positive, constructive language
- turning in assignments on time

Grading (more detail will be determined after 1st week of class):

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|---|-----|
| • Participation (this includes group discussions)   | 10% |
| • Oral Presentation(s) and Critique<br>(this includes your speech(es) and analysis of a classmate's argument) | 15% |
| • In-Class Assignments (one per week)   | 20% |
| • Homework (one per week, due at beginning of class)  | 20% |
| • Quizzes (one per week on each chapter/ weeks 2-9)   | 35% |

Grading Criteria (as stated in the Chaminade undergraduate catalog) are as follows:

**A** / Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative

**B** / Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner

**C** / Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter

**D** / Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, is not satisfactory for fulfillment or prerequisite coursework

**F** / Failed to grasp even the minimum subject matter; no credit given

**I** / Did not complete a small portion of the work or final examination due to circumstances beyond the student's control

[The issuance of an "I" grade is not automatic. Prior to reporting of grades a contract must be made between the student and the instructor for the completion of the course. Sufficient time should be allowed to permit completion of the work, evaluation, and reporting of the final grade within 90 days after the end of the semester or term. This limit may not be extended. If a new grade for the course is not submitted by the instructor prior to the deadline, the alternate grade, indicated in the contract, will be recorded.]

Learning Outcome Assessment:

All students' work will be evaluated for:

- knowledge of the subject matter from textbook, handouts, class lectures, discussion, resources from research
- ability to provide relevant examples to support viewpoints
- ability to apply knowledge to understand current issues in society
- clarity and logical presentation
- understanding of the subject matter from opposing viewpoints

N.B. Students must turn in all class assignments in class. All works turned in must be typed double-spaced. Only hard copy will be accepted. Assignments are not accepted via e-mail or fax.

Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
1/10	What is a critical thinker & when do I need to be one?	Chap.1
1/24	Values & value assumptions/Ethical standard in argumentation	Chap. 2
1/31	Basic assumptions and distinguishing fact from opinion	Chap. 3
2/7	What are the statistics? and Who said so? (research & bias)	Chap. 4&5
2/14	Logical fallacies	Chap. 6
2/28	Denotation & connotation/Vagueness & ambiguity	Chap. 7
3/6	Suggestion & persuasion in the media	Chap. 8
3/13	Defense mechanisms, logical vulnerability and semantic devices	Chap. 9
2/20	Persuasive speaking/Organizing and presenting ideas	Chap. 10
2/27	Final presentations	

In addition to the readings from the textbook, additional readings (from handouts) will be assigned after the first week of class.