

Course Outline of Record

Los Medanos College

2700 East Leland Road

Pittsburg CA 94565

Course Title: Critical Thinking and Composition

Subject Area/Course Number: PHIL-110

New Course OR Existing Course

Author(s): Edward Fielder Haven

Subject Area/Course No.: Philosophy 110 (formerly PHIL-041)

Units: 3

Course Title: Critical Thinking and Composition

Discipline(s): Philosophy

Pre-Requisite(s): ENGL-100

Co-Requisite(s): None

Advisories: None

Catalog Description:

This course provides instruction in critical thinking, including traditional logic and argumentative composition. A series of substantial writing assignments (a minimum of 6,000 words total) focus on increasing the sophistication of students' argumentative writing skills. Theoretical models of critical thinking and composition will be applied to academic fields and textbooks, electronic and print media, advertisements, ethics, politics, and multi-cultural issues. Writing assignments will be evaluated for their quality in both critical thinking and composition.

Schedule Description:

Some people believe that former president George Bush masterminded the 9-11 bombing, that global warming is a hoax and that plastic water bottles cause cancer. Perhaps you are one of these people. Would you be willing to test your beliefs? Introduction to Critical Thinking and Composition will challenge students to analyze arguments to determine what makes for a good argument, learning the skills necessary to sort out the truth and present well structured written arguments.

Hrs/Mode of Instruction: Lecture: 54 Scheduled Lab: HBA Lab: Composition: Activity: Total Hours 54

Credit Credit Degree Applicable (DA)
 Credit Non-Degree (NDA)

Grading Pass/No Pass (P/NP)
 Letter (LR)
 Student Choice (SC)

Repeatability 0
 1
 2
 3

Last date of Assessment: _____

Cohort #: 3

Please apply for:

LMC General Education Requirement(s): _____

Transfer to: CSU UC IGETC Area 1B CSU GE Area A3 C-ID Number _____

Course is Baccalaureate Level: Yes No

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Signatures:

Department Chair _____ Date _____
Librarian _____ Date _____
Dean (Technical Review) _____ Date _____
Curriculum Committee Chair _____ Date _____
President/Designee _____ Date _____
CCCCD Approval Date (Board or Chancellor's Office) _____ Date _____

STAND ALONE COURSE: YES NO

Course approved by Curriculum Committee as Baccalaureate Level: YES NO

LMC GE Requirement Approved by the Curriculum Committee: _____

FOR OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION ONLY. DO NOT WRITE IN THE SECTION BELOW.

Begin in Semester _____ Catalog year 20____/20____ Class Max: _____
Dept. Code/Name: _____ T.O.P.s Code: _____ Crossover course 1/ 2: _____
ESL Class: _____ Yes / No _____ DSPS Class: _____ Yes / No _____ Coop Work Exp: _____ Yes / No _____

- Class Code A Liberal Arts & Sciences SAM Code A Apprenticeship Remediation Level B Basic Skills
 B Developmental Preparatory B Advanced Occupational NBS Not Basic Skills
 C Adult/Secondary Basic Education C Clearly Occupational
 D Personal Development/Survival D Possibly Occupational
 E For Substantially Handicapped E* Non-Occupational
 F Parenting/Family Support
 G Community/Civic Development
 H General and Cultural
 I Career/Technical Education
 J Workforce Preparation Enhanced
 K Other non-credit enhanced
 Not eligible for enhanced
- *Additional criteria needed
 1 One level below transfer
 2 Two levels below transfer
 3 Three levels below transfer

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Institutional Student Learning Outcomes:

General Education SLOs:

At the completion of the LMC general education program, a student will:

1. read critically and communicate effectively as a writer and speaker.
2. understand connections among disciplines and apply interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving.
3. think critically and creatively
4. consider the ethical implications inherent in knowledge, decision-making and action.
5. possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural and global perspectives.

None

Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs):

Proposed:

1. Citizenship – Developing and applying ethical responsibility and care in academics, the workplace, and global and local communities, while respecting and engaging with a diversity of beliefs, cultures, values, abilities, genders, races, ages, and sexual orientations.
2. Critical Engagement – Becoming critical co-investigators of a pluralistic world towards the agency to apply critical thinking to themselves, their communities and their societies, imparting an ethical imperative.
3. Philosophical Enquiry – Applying the methodologies of philosophy and critical thinking to describe and analyze philosophical and interdisciplinary problems and issues, including in historical context.
4. Philosophical Expression – Express complex philosophical ideas and arguments in clear, coherent and cogent written and oral communication.

Course-Level Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs):

1. Critically analyze and evaluate inductive and deductive arguments in readings on ethical, political and multi-cultural themes and issues. (PSLO 1, 2, 3)
2. Compose argumentative essays which demonstrate critical thinking skills. (PSLO 2, 3, 4)
3. Integrate advanced lower-division composition skills into essays: effective essay structure, continuity, emphasis and subtlety, elements of style, grammatical accuracy, audience awareness, and the components of persuasion. (PSLO 2, 4)
4. Recognize and differentiate common logical errors and fallacies. (PSLO 1, 2, 3)

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Assessment Instruments:

	<u>Major Essay Assignments</u>	<u>Analytical and Evaluative Exposition Essays</u>	<u>Various other assignments such as problem sets, quizzes, discussion posts or in class assignments</u>
CSLO 1	X	X	X
CSLO 2	X	X	
CSLO 3	X	X	X
CSLO 4		X	X

Assignments are aimed at developing students' understanding of the components of argument and the elements of advanced composition while strengthening their critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Through the course of the semester students will receive both formative and summative assessments, to evaluate their progress towards mastery of the student learning outcomes. Assessments may take on many forms, but will focus on critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues in formal argumentative essays. Course Level Student Learning Outcomes will be assessed by the following methods:

1. Critically analyze and evaluate inductive and deductive arguments in readings on ethical, political and multi-cultural themes and issues. (GESLO 3, 4, 5 PSLO 1, 2, 3)

Major Essay Assignments

Major essays provide the student the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to synthesize their critical thinking and composition skills developed in the course, applied to their own argumentative essay. This will include the critical analysis and evaluation of arguments found in readings and additional research, with an ethical, political and multi-cultural imperative.

Analytical and Evaluative Exposition Essays

Expositions will assess the students' ability to analyze arguments presented in other material, academic fields and textbooks, electronic and print media, advertisements, ethics, politics, and multi-cultural issues. From their analysis students may be asked to make an evaluation of the argument.

Various other assignments such as problem sets, quizzes, discussion posts or in class assignments

These assignments will provide an opportunity for a formative assessment of student mastery of critical analysis and evaluation, on a day to day basis, allowing the instructor to assess student comprehension of the critical thinking and composition skills needed to make a strong analysis or evaluation of arguments.

Sample Assignment

Analytical Exposition

Provide an analysis of the argument presented in the excerpt "Arguments Against Dualism" by Paul Churchland, making sure to identify the main claim and supporting arguments. For each supporting argument analyze the structure of the supporting argument and outline where the argument lacks support, if at all. The Analytical Exposition must be two pages minimum, MLA format.

2. Compose argumentative essays which demonstrate critical thinking skills. (GESLO 2, 3 PSLO 2, 3, 4)

Major Essay Assignments

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All major essay assignments will be argumentative essays which employ critical thinking skills and the essential elements of an argumentative essay.

Analytical and Evaluative Exposition Essays

The expositions will provide an argument for an analysis or evaluation of a given text in an argumentative essay format. The expositions will not merely summarize the material but provide a claim for how the text ought to be read, understood and/or critiqued.

Sample Assignment

Definitions Essay

Pick one of the following terms, Justice, Religion or Property, provide a definition and justify your definition using reasons and evidence. You should not use the dictionary as your evidence (as this leads to an appeal to authority fallacy) though you may consult with dictionaries along with the article provided on Canvas. You should provide your own examples which help to justify your definition. Finally justify why your definition is better than other definitions or better deals with problematic cases. The essay should be three pages minimum, MLA format.

3. Integrate advanced lower-division composition skills into essays: effective essay structure, continuity, emphasis and subtlety, elements of style, grammatical accuracy, audience awareness, and the components of persuasion. (GESLO 1, 3 PSLO 2, 4)

Major Essay Assignments

All Major essays will include drafts, which will focus on both critical thinking skills and advanced composition skills. The Major essay will be graded as a synthesis of these skills and the feedback given will serve as an opportunity for students to develop their composition skills.

Analytical and Evaluative Exposition Essays

All analytical and evaluative exposition essays will focus on both critical thinking skills and advanced composition skills. The analytical and evaluative exposition essays will be graded as focused development of these composition skills and the feedback given will serve as an opportunity for students to develop their skills.

Various other assignments such as problem sets, quizzes, discussion posts or in class assignments
Students will be assessed through other smaller assignments that will grade their development of advanced composition skills.

Sample Assignment

Paragraph Structure Assignment

For each of the following simple arguments, rewrite the argument into a paragraph, using the claim, reason, evidence structure, creating a natural order to the paragraph. You may need to create your own evidence or reasons, if they are not supplied.

1. Smoking smells bad
Smoking makes other peoples asthma worst
∴ You should not smoke anywhere
2. Xaviera has a proven IQ of 153
She is an expert test taker
∴ She will do very well on the law school admissions exams
3. There are clouds
It is very cold
∴ There are clouds and it is very cold
4. If my grass won't grow, either the soil contains too much acid or I am using the wrong fertilizer.
The soil tests out OK, but the grass doesn't grow

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∴ I am using the wrong fertilizer.

5. No one under 21 is allowed in the bar.

Some people under 21 are allowed in the restaurant

∴ Thus, some people who are allowed in the restaurant are not allowed in the bar.

4. Recognize and differentiate common logical errors and fallacies (GESLO 3 PSLO 1, 2, 3)

Analytical and Evaluative Exposition Essays

At least one analytical exposition essay will focus on finding and analyzing a fallacious argument, for more than just the fallacy provided, but the overall impact this has on the structure and content of the argument.

Various other assignments such as problem sets, quizzes, discussion posts or in class assignments

Other assignments may ask the student to identify fallacies in short arguments through a quiz or problem set.

Sample Assignment

Found Fallacy Handout:

Fallacy can be found all around us: online, in newspapers, on tv, just about everywhere you look. All you have to do is start looking. The goal of this handout is to encourage you to start. For homework, I would like you to find a fallacy in the world, which corresponds to the fallacy homework set you are working on. Once you have found that fallacy, fill out the three sections below. You do not need to include a copy of the source. The information provided on the handout should be enough.

Source of the Fallacy (List the place you found the fallacy. For example the address of a website, the name and author of a book, or it could be as simple as a person and the date they said it) :

Fallacious Argument (write out/or explain the fallacious argument made, direct quotes are the best):

Fallacy committed with explanation (give the name of the type of fallacy, and explain how it is an example of that fallacy).

Method of Evaluation/Grading:

The course will focus on teaching the core skills for critical thinking and composition. Students will be graded on their ability to demonstrate these skills through a number of writing assignments in the form of at least one major essay, a number of analytical and evaluative exposition essays, and smaller assignments such as problem sets, quizzes or others as the instructor sees fit. All students by the end of the course will have written a total of at least 6,000 words across assigned essays.

A sample break down of grade weight by approximate percentage value could be:

2 Major Essays	30%
Analytical and Evaluative Expositions	60%
Problem Sets	10%

Upon completion of the course, a percentage of completed course work will be calculated using the assessments from the course. A letter grade will be assigned as follows:

A	90 - 100%
B	80 - 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 - 69%
F	0 – 59%

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A student who earns an 'A' grade will have achieved mastery in the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating exceptional ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking/composition and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues.

A student who earns a 'B' grade will have achieved near mastery or mastery in some but not all of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating a strong ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking/composition and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues.

A Student who earns a 'C' grade will have achieved a satisfactory completion of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating satisfactory ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking/composition and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues.

A student who earns a 'D' grade will have achieved near satisfactory completion or satisfactory completion in some but not all of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating below standard ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking/composition and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues.

A student who earns a 'F' grade will lack satisfactory completion of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating a deficiency in ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying philosophical skills, abilities and tools at the foundation of critical thinking/composition and their ability to articulate a well founded argument on an interdisciplinary and multicultural body of issues.

Course Content:

The course outline will be lead by the critical thinking and composition skills being taught. Students will practice and build those skills throughout the course when writing argumentative essays. Through the feedback, editing and drafts from these assignments the instructor will provide personalized instruction on compositional skills such as grammar, continuity, emphasis and subtlety.

Sample outline:

- I. Introduction to Arguments
 - A. Recognizing Arguments
- II. Analyzing Arguments
 - 1. Standard Form
 - 2. Mapping Arguments
 - A. Analyzing complex arguments
 - 1. Complex argumentative structure
 - 2. Complex rhetoric and composition
 - B. Writing Analytical Critiques
- III. Sources
 - A. Evaluating sources
 - B. Cross checking sources
 - C. Citing sources
- V. Evaluating Argument
 - A. Inductive vs. Deductive Arguments
 - B. Evaluating Inductive Arguments

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- 1. Generalizations
- 2. Plausibility
- 3. Analogies
- C. Critiquing Inductive Arguments
- D. Evaluating Deductive Arguments
 - 1. Reductio Ad Absurdum
 - 2. Conditional Arguments
- E. Causal Arguments
 - 1. Correlation and causation
 - 1. Necessary and Sufficient Conditions
 - 3. Writing good causal arguments
- VI. Major Essay, focusing on the analysis and evaluation of disciplinary discourse
- VII. Fallacies and Other Erroneous Logic
 - A. Fallacies
 - 1. Formal
 - 2. Informal
 - B. Vagueness
 - C. Ambiguity
- VIII. Definitions
 - A. Definitional structures
 - B. Disciplinary definition
 - C. Writing clear and concise definition
- IX. Major Essay, focusing on audience awareness, persuasion

Lab By Arrangement Activities (If Applicable):n/a

Instructional Methods:

- Lecture
- Lab
- Activity
- Problem-based Learning/Case Studies
- Collaborative Learning/Peer Review
- Demonstration/Modeling
- Role-Playing
- Discussion
- Computer Assisted Instruction
- Other (explain) _____

Textbooks:

Sample Textbooks include:

- 1. Open Educational Resources
- 2. Morrow, David (2016) A Workbook for Arguments: A Complete Course in Critical Thinking (2nd ed.) Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company.
- 3. Hurley, Patrick j. (2015) A Concise Introduction to Logic (12th ed.), Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
- 4. Booth, Colomb, Williams (2008) The Craft of Research (3rd ed.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 5. Rottenbery, Winchell (2015) The Elements of Arguments (11th ed) Boston: Bedford/St. Marin's