

DePaul University  
**SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING**  
1 East Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60604-9983

**Winter Quarter, 2004**

Title:           **Critical Thinking**

Competence: **L-5:**           Can analyze issues and solve problems through  
critical and appreciative thinking

**Biographical Sketch**

John Anderson has taught in secondary schools and universities in Ohio and Michigan before settling in Chicago where during the day he directs the internship program for the students in the College of Business Administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago. This is his seventh year teaching in the SNL program. He holds graduate degrees from Loyola and Harvard.

**Course Description**

Critical Thinking is based on the premise that thinking is a skill that can be learned, developed, and demonstrated. Students who can listen, speak and reason appropriately also can create persuasive arguments, identify assumptions, assertions and evidence in speech and writing, create appropriate generalizations from what is heard and seen while avoiding stereotypes and other inaccuracies, and find creative solutions to difficult problems.

**Methods and Requirements**

Students will be asked to 1) read the assigned readings for each class, 2) participate in large and small-group discussions and exercises, 3) choose topics for two major assignments and complete those assignments: two persuasive essays of 4-7 pages, 4) complete quizzes, exercises and short-answer assignments. Students will pay attention to their own thought processes, and how thinking is influenced by emotions and habits of mind. They will identify different types of thinking, and how they can broaden or narrow their thoughts about a subject. As students think about thinking (meta-cognition), they will develop an ability to assess their own performance in listening, speaking and reasoning. Students will study thinking skills while analyzing reading assignments, solving problems, writing position papers, working in small groups and discussing current events and historical issues.

**Required Texts:**

(TFY) *Thinking for Yourself*, Marlys Mayfield, 2001 (5<sup>th</sup> Edition)  
(NR) *The Norton Reader*, Peterson, Brereton, Hartman (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)

SNL Resources

**Writing Centers**

Loop Campus (312) 362-6726

Lincoln Park Campus (312) 362-8435

**Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated on their ability to consistently analyze and produce college level critical thinking and reasoning in their discussions and writing. In order to pass the course, students must participate in the in-class activities and produce acceptable writing assignments. This means a "C" or above work. "D" work is not acceptable. The University's guidelines on academic integrity found in the Student Handbook will be observed. Any assessments and feedback to students enrolled in the course will embody the qualities of clarity, integrity, flexibility and empathy. Final evaluations will be based on a compilation of the following requirements:

Two major assignments (written essays)

Drafts of the above

In-class writing

Participation in class discussions

Collaborative group work

Attendance

**Expected Outcomes**

Students will learn to cultivate good habits of critical thinking. These include:

1. Can interpret experiences using one's own ideas.
2. Can explain how one's thinking process exhibits elements of both critical and appreciative thinking.
3. Can identify the emotions, values, and assumptions behind one's own and others' views.
4. Can identify biases and errors of fact and/or reasoning.
5. Can identify inferences and assess their fit with evidence.
6. Can examine one's beliefs from different perspectives.
7. Can support generalizations with evidence or illustrations of specifics.
8. Can demonstrate active listening skills.
9. Can use one or more problem solving strategies.
10. Can be sensitive to work connotation, slant, definition, ambiguity, and disguise.
11. Can recognize logical fallacies, unfair persuasion and propaganda.
12. Seek truth before rightness; being willing to admit mistakes and concede to better arguments.