

DePaul University
School for New Learning

Syllabus:
LL 155 Critical Thinking

Faculty: Kenya Grooms, Psy.D.
Office phone: (773) 960-4201
E-mail: kenya4574@gmail.com
Day/Time: Tuesdays - 6:30pm-9:30pm
Location: Oak Forest
Credit hours: 4

Competencies offered:

L-5—Can analyze issues and reconcile problems through critical and appreciative thinking.

Course description:

This course aims to a) make students aware of their own thinking processes; b) help them develop those processes; and c) help them bring those processes to bear on college-level intellectual activity. This involves an emphasis on the skills and strategies of critical thinking and reading as well as practice in the recognition, construction and evaluation of arguments. In pursuing these goals, we touch on principles of logic, strategies of persuasion and techniques of propaganda. The course presents a variety of readings, exercises and projects designed to help students develop competence in the following areas: identifying assumptions, connecting assertions to evidence, stating generalizations, analyzing arguments and bringing multiple perspectives to bear on complex issues.

Faculty biography:

Dr. Grooms received a B.S. in Child Development from Northern Illinois University and an M.A. in Psychology from National-Louis University. She received a doctorate degree in Clinical Psychology from the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She completed her clinical internship at Will County Health Department Child and Adolescent Behavioral Services and has worked in community mental health and faith based settings.

Criteria for demonstration of competence:

In addition to homework, in-class exercises (10 Points) and discussion (10 Points), there are three major pieces of work in the course:
a Personal Narrative essay (20 Points);
a Argument Analysis paper (25 Points);
a Final Oral Presentation (25 Points)

Policy on Academic Integrity:

All work done for this course must observe the Guidelines for Academic Integrity as outlined in the *Code of Student Responsibility* (in the *DePaul Student Handbook*). For the code's Plagiarism Policy, see attachment at end of syllabus.

Expected outcomes:

By the end of the course, students should

- be able to identify claims and assess their fit with reasons;
- be able to distinguish among different kinds of reasons adduced to support claims;
- be able to distinguish between reports, inferences and judgements;
- be able to identify common rhetorical strategies, propaganda devices and logical fallacies;
- be able to recognize, construct and make evaluative distinctions among different kinds of arguments;
- be able to examine experiences with critical scrutiny;
- be able to discuss the roles played by perception, emotion and belief in shaping views;
- be able to recognize problems and limitations inherent in linguistics discourse;
- be able to appreciate, engage with, and make use of viewpoints other than one's own.

Learning tools:

Required texts:

Chaffee, John. *Thinking Critically*. 9th edition. Houghton Mifflin, 2007

Learning strategies:

A variety of learning strategies will be employed, including textbook readings, class discussions, informal lectures, individual and group exercises, dialogues and papers.

Attendance (10 Points) and Participation:

Attendance is mandatory. Missing class makes assessment difficult. Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let me know ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to be your "tutor" for the missed session. Absences must be the result of unavoidable circumstances. One absence may be excused; two absences will result in a grade reduction, if you miss more than two classes you will fail the course.

Make-Up Work:

One absence may be excused; however, make up work in the form of a written assignment covering the content of the missed class, will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor

Grading Scale:

A	100 to 92
B	91 to 83
C	82 to 74
D	73 to 65
F	64 and below
INC	Incomplete grades must be negotiated with Faculty

Schedule of topics, readings and assignments:

Week One

Introduction to course.
Cultural myths and critical thinking
The power of stereotypes
Personal Narrative essay assigned

Week Two

Perceiving, Believing, Knowing and Inferring
Perception exercise
Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 4 (Chaffee) Perceiving and Believing
Lecture/Presentation - Chapters 5 (Chaffee) Constructing Knowledge
Listening exercise

Week Three

Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 6 (Chaffee) Language and Thought
Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 11 (Chaffee) Reasoning Critically
Personal narrative essay due.

Week Four

Rhetoric and Argumentation: Constructing and Analyzing Arguments
In-class exercises
Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 10 (Chaffee) Constructing Arguments

Week Five

Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 9 (Chaffee) Thinking Critically About Moral Issues
Reasoning about a problem and opposing perspectives on it: Illegal Drugs
Framing the Drugs Debate
Argument Analysis paper assigned

Week Six

Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 10 (Chaffee) Constructing Arguments
More on the Drugs Debate: Two opposing perspectives--Vidal and Rosenthal
Close reading for content: the "What"; Close reading for rhetorical strategy: the "How"

Week Seven

Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 11 (Chaffee) Reasoning Critically

In-class work by teams: Debate exercise, based on Argument Analysis papers

Argument analysis paper due

Week Eight

Lecture/Presentation - Chapter 7 (Chaffee) Forming and Applying Concepts

Defining and exploring concepts

Week Nine

Language, perspective and framing: Four accounts of the assassination of Malcolm X

Discussion on conceptual framing

Discussion political language: Relevant Today?

Readings: Chaffee, from chapter 4, "Four Accounts of the Assassination of Malcolm X"

Week Ten

Moving forward: Critical Thinking, Empathy and Empowerment

Milgram's study of "destructive obedience"

Lecture/Readings: Sabini & Silver, "Critical Thinking and Obedience to Authority"

(in Chaffee, chapter 11)

*** Tentative to Change at the Instructors Discretion***

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has

applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

Protection of Human Research Participants

[For courses with a student research component only.] This course may involve research activities intended solely for classroom learning outcomes. Collecting data from human beings for such activities do not require institutional review if there is no intent to generalize, publish, or otherwise disseminate the findings. However, students must still abide by federally-mandated guidelines for the protection of human beings who may be the sources of such data. These include, but are not limited to, keeping persons' identifiable characteristics confidential and taking care to minimize or entirely remove the possibility of mental, social, financial, or physical harm. If findings from your research activities may be disseminated beyond classroom discussion, your activities carry risk of harm to the participants, or the identities of the participants are ascertainable, students must obtain approval from the SNL Local Review Board and DePaul Institutional Review Board. Please consult with the course instructor and visit the website of the Office of Research Protections at DePaul University (<http://research.depaul.edu>) for additional information and guidance.

For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

Chronic Illness Initiative

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by chronic illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations. At SNL, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. Contact CII at CII@depaul.edu.

Writing Help

For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>.

[In addition, consider adding the Writing Centers' syllabus supplement available here <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/fac/supplements.html>]