

## LL 155 Critical Thinking - Winter 2010

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**Loop**, Mondays, 6pm – 9pm

January	1/11, 1/18, 1/25	PLEASE NOTE LATE START/ END DATES
February	2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22	
March	3/1, 3/8, 3/15	

Credit hours: 4

### **Competencies offered:**

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

### **Course description:**

**This is a hybrid course. The format of the course will consist of class meetings every other week and attentive participation in the online discussion board in between class sessions as well as virtual classes using Wimba. There will be a total of 6 on-campus meetings (Sessions 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 & 10) and 4 Blackboard sessions (2, 4, 6 & 8). In addition, there will be ample opportunity to meet with the instructor on an as-needed basis. PLEASE NOTE THAT CLASS WILL START ON 1/11 AND FINISH ON 3/15.**

This is a Pass/Fail class. However, you have the option of taking the course for a letter grade. If you wish to take the course for a letter grade, you must inform your instructor in writing by the end of the second week of class. Once you commit to taking the course for a letter grade, you cannot switch back to Pass/Fail. Prerequisite: Successful completion of LL 102 Learning Assessment Seminar prior to registration.

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.

### **Criteria for demonstration of competence:**

In addition to homework, in-class and on-line exercises and discussion, there are two major pieces of work in the course:

a persuasive essay;

and a quarter-long project called the RPBL (to be explained in class).

### **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.

**Policy on Incompletes:**

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 linguistic 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*. ninth edition, Houghton Mifflin, 2009.

**Learning strategies:**

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

**Week One** 1/11 Loop Campus

Introduction to course.

Cultural myths and critical thinking

The power of stereotypes

RPBL Project Explained

Reading Assignment for this week: Chaffee, chapter 4, "Perceiving and Believing"

**Week Two** 1/18 Blackboard

Perceiving, Believing, Knowing and Inferring

Perception exercise

Readings for next week: Chaffee, chapter 5, "Constructing Knowledge"  
chapter 9, "Thinking Critically About Moral Issues"

**Week Three** 1/25 Loop Campus

Rhetoric and Argumentation

Logic, Rationalism and Its Discontents: A Brief Historical Overview

Plato's Psychology as (Problematic) Map of the World

Discussion of Chaffee, chapters 5 & 9

Persuasion and Manipulation: Common Propaganda Devices and Logical Fallacies

Reading Assignment for next week: Chaffee, chapter 11, "Reasoning Critically"

**Week Four** 2/1 Blackboard

Rhetoric and Argumentation: Constructing and Analyzing Arguments

Inductive and deductive reasoning

*Blackboard exercises on Induction, Deduction and Propaganda Devices.*

Blackboard discussion of Chaffee, chapter 11, "Reasoning Critically"

Reading Assignment for next week: Chaffee, chapter 10, "Constructing Arguments"

**Week Five** 2/8 Loop Campus

Persuasive Essay Rough Draft Due

In-Class Peer Editing Session

Discussion of Chaffee, chapter 10, "Constructing Arguments"

Readings for next week: Chaffee, chapter 7, "Forming and Applying Concepts"

**Week Six** 2/15 BlackBoard

Blackboard Discussion of Chaffee, chapter 7, "Forming and Applying Concepts"

**Week Seven 2/22** Loop Campus

Persuasive Essay Final Due

**Week Eight** 3/1 BlackBoard

Defining and exploring concepts

Feedback on persuasive essays

Readings for next week: Chaffee, chapter 6, "Language and Thought"

Chaffee, from chapter 4, "Five Accounts of the Assassination of Malcolm X"

Orwell, "Politics and the English Language"

**Week Nine** 3/8 Loop Campus

RPBL Presentations Begun

In-Class Debate OR Appellate Argument

The Nets of Language

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

Discussion of Orwell on political language: Relevant Today?

**Week Ten** 3/15 Loop Campus

RPBL Presentations continued.