

## **LL 155 Critical Thinking - Winter 2010**

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Loop Campus, 1/07-1/18:Thursday, 6-9 PM

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.

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

In addition to homework, in-class exercises and discussion, there are two major pieces of work in the course: a persuasive essay; and final Oral Presentation

### **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*. 9th edition. Houghton Mifflin, 2007

### **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** 1/07

Introduction to course.  
Cultural myths and critical thinking  
The power of stereotypes

**Week Two** 1/14

Perceiving  
Presentation of Chaffee, Chapter 4

Listening exercise  
Readings: Chaffee, Chapter 5 : Constructing Knowledge

**Week Three** 1/21

Believing  
Chaffee, Chapter 4  
Readings: Chapter 6

**Week Four** 1/28

Lecture: Emotions and Critical Thinking  
Readings: Chapter 7

**Week Five** 2/04

Group Discussions: This is Water  
Readings: Chapter 9

**Week Six** 2/11

Persuasive Essay Due  
DVD: The Thin Blue Line  
Readings : Chapter 10

**Week Seven** 2/18

Review and Discussion  
Readings: Chapter 12

**Week Eight** 2/25

Individual Meetings

**Week Nine 3/04**

Oral Presentations

Week Ten 3/11

Oral Presentations  
Final Papers Due