

**COLLEGE REASONING  
(L-5 and LL-5)**

**FACULTY:**

**GERI LYNN YANOW**

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BA in Liberal Arts from UIC - MA in English Literature from  
New York University -

Traveled extensively throughout US, Europe - spent 1 year  
traveling through Africa, spent summer during college  
working for YMCA in Quito, Ecuador

Taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, reading and library science in  
the Chicago Public Schools for over 20 years

Graduated from IIT/Chicago Kent Law School in 1988 while  
working as a teacher

Since 1990 working as a trial attorney for the City of  
Chicago, specializing in civil rights defense

Visiting Faculty at SNL since 1994

**LOCATION:**

O'Hare Campus

**DATES AND TIME:**

Tuesdays, September 15, 2009 through  
November 17, 2009 (10 Sessions)  
6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**CREDIT HOURS:**

4

**GOALS:**

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LL-5 competence to be developed and assessed. Can  
listen, speak and reason in a manner appropriate to  
intellectual discourse.

L-5 competence to be developed and assessed. Can  
analyze issues and reconcile problems through critical and  
appreciative thinking.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

Chafee, John. *Thinking Critically*. 9<sup>th</sup> Edition(or latest edition). Houghton Mifflin, 2009.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Critical Thinking is the foundation of all meaningful discussion and intellectual discourse. The process of critical thinking and reasoning is ongoing. It is a lifetime commitment to curiosity and knowledge. This course will further develop our skills of analysis, persuasion and argument.

Each class will be conducted as part lecture and part dialogue. There will also be regular class discussions and dialogue dealing with current events and important issues of the day. Along with the regular reading assignments, students are expected to read newspapers, magazines and watch other media news programs in order to fully participate in all class discussions.

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 involved 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. This course presents a variety of readings, exercises and one major persuasive paper designed to help students develop competence in the following areas: identifying assumptions, connecting assertions to evidence, stating generalizations, analyzing arguments and multiple perspectives to bear on complex issues.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this course are the following:

- (1) Can identify claims and assess their fit with reasons;
- (2) Can distinguish among different kinds of reasons adduced to support claims;
- (3) Can distinguish between reports, inferences and judgments;
- (4) Can identify common rhetorical strategies, propaganda devices and logical fallacies;

- (5) Can recognize, construct and make evaluative distinctions among different kinds of arguments;
- (6) Can examine experiences with critical scrutiny;
- (7) Can discuss the roles played by perception, emotion and belief in shaping views;
- (8) Can recognize problems and limitations inherent in linguistics discourse; and
- (9) Can appreciate, engage with, and make use of viewpoints other than one's own.

Class participation is key. In order to achieve these goals we all must be prepared for each class and we all must actively participate in each class.

This course will not be a lecture series; it will be a dialogue. A variety of learning strategies will be employed, including textbook readings, class discussions, informal lectures, individual and group exercises, dialogues and a final paper. The final outcome of this course will be a research/opinion paper which will be persuasive. The topic is selected by the instructor but the opinions and positions taken are to be determined by each student individually. All opinions are accepted and no subjective criteria are used to scrutinize any opinion. These persuasive papers are graded on how well they incorporate all of the competencies required in College Reasoning.

**All University guidelines on academic integrity are upheld.** (See Student Handbook). 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*. Please carefully read, and adhere to, the code's Plagiarism Policy.

## **Course Learning Goals**

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Identify claims and assess their fit with reasons
- Distinguish among different kinds of reasons presented to support claims
- Distinguish between reports, inferences and judgments
- Identify common rhetorical strategies, logical fallacies and propaganda techniques
- Recognize, construct and make evaluative distinctions among different kinds of arguments

- Examine experiences with critical scrutiny
- Discuss the roles played by perception, emotion and belief in shaping views
- Recognize problems and limitations inherent in linguistic discourse
- Appreciate, engage with, and make use of viewpoints other than one's own

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Readings from the Chaffee text are assigned for each class session. Additional materials will be made available through the E-Reserve services of DePaul Library. Note: **(E)** = item is available on E-reserve at DePaul Library website, [www.lib.depaul.edu](http://www.lib.depaul.edu)

These readings may change as the needs of the class may dictate. In addition, from time to time, other materials may be assigned.

There will be 2 or 3 short written assignments and one extended research paper of 7-10 pages. The assigned research/opinion paper must be typewritten and double spaced. If this creates a problem, please see me immediately.

As you will see in the assignments, the 1st draft of your research/opinion paper will be handed in on October 20<sup>th</sup>. This will allow time to edit, correct and perfect your work in order to turn in your very best effort. Papers handed in late will not be discussed at the individual conferences on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Final papers not turned in on November 17<sup>th</sup> will receive a failing grade.

Again, class participation and attendance are extremely important. This course will build on those skills and ideas developed and discussed at each class session. Each session will be a progression forward.

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Assessments will be based on the L-5 or LL-5 statements. Your competence and improvement in all areas of the L-5 or LL-5 statements will be evaluated during the course and will be discussed periodically with each individual student. Passing will be based on competency and improvement in all areas of the L-5 or LL-5 statements, class participation and the research paper. Class discussion and participation will count for 25%; the Personal Narrative essay will count for 15%; the class exercises will count for 20%; and the research/opinion paper will count for 40% of your final grade. The research/opinion paper will be graded.

**Students are expected to attend all classes. Missing more than 20% of this class may result in a failing grade.**

**ASSIGNMENTS** All assignments are expected to be completed by the date assigned. The June 17<sup>th</sup> assignments, therefore, will be discussed and evaluated on June 17th.

**Week One – September 15**

Introduction to course

Cultural myths and critical thinking

The power of stereotypes

**Personal Narrative essay (“The Conventional Wisdom”) assigned  
Topic for Persuasive Paper given and discussed**

Discussion: Relationship between language and culture

Readings: Gregory, Dick. 1990. Shame. **(E)**

Cisneros, Sandro. 1990. Only Daughter. **(E)**

**Week Two – September 22**

Perceiving, Language and Thought

Discussion of Chaffee, chapters 4 and 6

Readings: Chaffee, chapter 4, “Perceiving,” pp. 130-167,

chapter 6, “Language and Thought,” pp. 223-270.

Library Session to discuss research techniques for “persuasive paper”

**Assigned: Thinking activity 4.3 in Chaffee, pp 142-146: Write about the account from the *Amsterdam News* and one other – Due on July 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Week Three – September 29**

Believing and Knowing; Solving Problems

Readings: Chaffee, chapter 5, p. 170-221.

Discussion of “Analyzing Different Accounts of Dropping the Atom Bombs on Japan”, pp. 211-221.

O’Harrow, Robert. 1991. Conspiracy Theory Winds Converts. **(E)**

Jesdanum, Anick. 2004. When Information Access is So Easy. **(E)**

Review assignment re: Malcolm X

**Assigned: Exercises on Induction, Deduction and Propaganda  
Devices (emailed on July 1<sup>st</sup> after class)**

Feakes, "Needham Market UFO Sighting" (E) Assignment emailed on July 1<sup>st</sup> after class

## **Personal narrative essay due**

### **Week Four – October 6**

Rhetoric and Argumentation: Constructing and Analyzing Arguments  
Inductive and deductive reasoning

Readings: Chaffee, chapter 3, "Solving Problems," pp. 91-128.  
Discussion of "Construction of an Enemy" by Eleanor Stein, pp. 122-126  
Chaffee, chapter 11, "Reasoning Critically," pp. 426-485.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. 1963. Eulogy for the Young Victims of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Bombing. (E)

**Assignments emailed on July 1<sup>st</sup>: Induction, Deduction and Propaganda Devices and Feakes article due and discussed in class.**

### **Week Five – October 13**

Readings: Chaffee, Chapter 10, "Constructing Arguments," pp. 389-425.  
Review Personal Narrative Essays

Library session for work on persuasive paper

### **Week Six – October 20**

Discussion of "The Liberal Media" handed out in class  
Declaration of Independence

Two opposing perspectives – Vidal and Rosenthal  
Close reading for content: the "What"; Close reading for rhetorical strategy: the "How" In-class discussion of  
Vidal, Gore. 1970 "Drugs: Case for Legalizing Marijuana: (E)  
Rosenthal, A. M. 1989 "The Case for Slavery" (E)

1st draft of research\opinion due --  
discussion of progress and problems

### **Week Seven – October 27**

In-class work by teams:  
Debate exercise, based on Reasoning about a problem and opposing perspectives on it: Illegal Drugs - Framing the Drugs Debate: Questions concerning definition, information, values and policies

Individual conferences to discuss research\opinion project and assessments

### **Week Eight – November 3**

Defining and exploring concepts

Readings: Chaffee, chapter 7, “Forming and Applying Concepts”, pp. 271-309.

Discussion:

Erickson, Kai. 1985 “Of Accidental Judgments and Casual Slaughters” **(E)**

Pratkanis, Anthony R., and Elliot Aronson. 2002. “Our Age of Propaganda” **(E)**

Teams debate –

### **Week Nine – November 10**

Readings: Chaffee, chapter 9, “Reporting, Inferring, and Judging”, pp. 347-388.

Discussion: Tidwell, John. 2001. “The Intoxicating Birds of New Guinea” **(E)**

Debeneditis, Peter. 197. “Parents: It’s OK to Limit TV Viewing” **(E)**

“Letter from Birmingham Jail” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. found in  
Norton Reader many editions

Students exchange papers for peer review

### **Week Ten – November 17**

Final Draft of Research\Opinion Project Due