AIMS WORKSHOP
CRITICAL THINKING REINFORCEMENT
Winter/Spring 2016

Resources for Instructors

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- Critical Thinking Reinforcement: Course Goals and Objectives
- Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines
- CT Reinforcement Assignment Worksheet
- Key Terminology Handout
- Sample Assignments from CT Foundational Skill Classes
- CT Reinforcement Rubric and Sample Assignment Prompts
- Themes: Interdisciplinary Integration
- Please contact me if you’d like to be added to the Blackboard Page for CT “A3 Critical Thinking” to access sample assignments, and copies of documents included in this packet
A3. Critical Thinking
Foundational Skill Courses
Goals, Outcomes, and Course Requirements

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze reasoning.
   **Outcome 1A.** Students will recognize the difference between argumentative discourse and other kinds of discourse (e.g., explanations, descriptions, and assertions).
   **Outcome 1B.** Students will be able to analyze the structure of reasoning, identifying conclusions and their supporting premises.
   **Outcome 1C.** Students will distinguish inductive from deductive reasoning.

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate argumentative discourse.
   **Outcome 2A.** Students will evaluate deductive arguments.
   **Outcome 2B.** Students will evaluate inductive arguments.
   **Outcome 2C.** Students will detect fallacies and articulate how these mistakes in reasoning are in error.

Goal 3: Students will demonstrate critical thinking in order to reach well-founded conclusions.
   **Outcome 3A.** Students will utilize sufficient relevant information, avoid fallacies, and articulate their reasoning to arrive at well-founded conclusions.

Course Requirements
1. The course must be lower division, open to all students, and its only prerequisite shall be satisfaction of Area A2 (Written Communication).
2. The course is graded on an A/B/C/NC basis (contingent on Senate approval).
3. At least 80% of the course grade must be based on assignments related to critical thinking.
4. The course will introduce students to the themes: (a) Quality of Life, (b) Revolutionary Ideas and Innovations, and (c) Sustainability and Justice, by linking assignments, in-class activities, or other student projects to one or more of theme related events.
5. The course syllabus must include the university-approved student learning outcomes for critical thinking and link them to activities and/or assignments that students complete to demonstrate they have met the outcomes.
6. Instructors must give timely feedback to students on their critical thinking skills.
7. Rubrics used to evaluate critical thinking will be made available to students and incorporate the essential dimensions identified by GECCo.

A3 Courses Approved for Fall 2016
1. PHIL 1019 Critical Thinking
2. PHIL 2019 Ethical Reasoning
3. SCI 1409 Introduction to Scientific Thinking
4. SOC 1018 Critical Thinking and Contemporary Social Problems
**Critical Thinking Reinforcement**  
Goals, Outcomes, and Course Requirements

**Goal 1:** Students will demonstrate critical reasoning and problem solving.

**Outcome 1A.** Students will demonstrate critical reasoning and problem solving by building on the following skills: argument analysis, argument evaluation, and/or argument construction.

**Course Requirements**
1. The course must have satisfaction of A3 as a pre-requisite.
2. Assignments intended to reinforce the foundational skills (collectively, if more than one) must account for at least 30% of the course grade.
3. The course syllabus must include the university-approved student learning outcomes for reinforcing critical thinking and link them to activities and/or assignments that students complete to demonstrate they have met the outcomes.
4. Rubrics used to evaluate critical thinking will be made available to students and incorporate the essential dimensions identified by GECCo.

**Types of Courses Approved for Fall 2016**
1. Some lower-division Area C2 (CTR self-selected)
2. All American Institutions – Government (CTR required)
3. All upper-division Area C (CTR required)
4. All upper-division Area D (CTR required)

**Courses Reinforcing CT**

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<th>ANTH 3308</th>
<th>Anthropology Through Film</th>
<th>PHIL 2119</th>
<th>Great Philosophical Ideas</th>
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<td>ANTH 3318</td>
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<td>PHIL 3318</td>
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<td>ART 3648</td>
<td>History of Photography</td>
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<td>Philosophy in Literature &amp; Film</td>
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<td>BA 3108</td>
<td>Business, Government &amp; Society</td>
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<td>COMM 3068</td>
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<td>Food Policy &amp; Politics</td>
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<td>COMM 3088</td>
<td>Gender &amp; Communication</td>
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<td>CRJU 3318</td>
<td>Women &amp; the Criminal Justice System</td>
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<td>CRJU 3448</td>
<td>Drugs &amp; Crime</td>
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<td>CRJU 4638</td>
<td>Victims &amp; the Criminal Justice System</td>
<td>PSYC 3658</td>
<td>Psychology of Good &amp; Evil</td>
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<td>Miracle Economics of the Pacific Rim</td>
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<td>Latino Experiences in the US</td>
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<td>Sociolinguistics</td>
<td>SOC 4028</td>
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<td>HIST 3258</td>
<td>The American History</td>
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<td>KINE 3118</td>
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<td>MUS 3019</td>
<td>Musical Drama</td>
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<td>MUS 3039</td>
<td>America’s Musical Life</td>
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CT Reinforcement Worksheet

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate critical reasoning and problem solving.
   Outcome 1A. Students will demonstrate critical reasoning and problem solving by building on the following skills: argument analysis, argument evaluation, and/or argument construction.

Course Number and Title

Which general education requirement does this course fulfill?
   □ Lower-division Area C
   □ American Institutions – Government
   □ Upper-division Area C
   □ Upper-division Area D
   □ Other: ________________________________________________________________

Which critical thinking skill(s) will you reinforce in this course?
   □ argument analysis
   □ argument evaluation
   □ argument construction

Using your GE course proposal (if available), list the assignment(s) you will use to assess students’ critical thinking abilities. Remember that assignments intended to reinforce the foundational skills (collectively, if more than one) must account for at least 30% of the course grade.
Choose one of the assignments listed above. Design a question that prompts students to demonstrate their ability to analyze/evaluate/construct an argument.

What are your expectations for student work in response to the prompt above? What features or characteristics warrant a grade of A, B, C, D, F?

What strategies will you use to prepare students to meet your highest expectations for critical thinking? How will you provide opportunities for them to improve when they do not meet your expectations?
Critical Thinking Key Terminology

Basic Terms:

Claim: a statement that has truth-value.

Explanation: a set of claims offering an account of how or why some given claim is true.

Argument: a set of claims one of which is supported by the others.

Issue: a matter that is up for debate.

Conclusion: the claim being supported in an argument.

Premise: a claim presented as supporting an argument’s conclusion.

Analyze: to break down to elementary parts; in the case of an argument, to identify conclusion and premises.

Inference Indicator: word or phrase that signals the structure of an argument.

Argument Diagram: a visual representation of the argument’s structure.

Chain Argument: two or more arguments constituting a chain of reasoning, in which the conclusion of one argument is the premise of another.

Fallacies:

Fallacy: a common mistake in reasoning that is often rhetorically persuasive.

Ad Hominem: a fallacious argument in which an opposing argument is rejected based on the characteristics of its arguer.

Appeal to Ignorance: a fallacious argument in which the arguer illegitimately shifts the burden of proof to the opponent.

Appeal to illeitimate authority: a fallacious argument in which a source who is not an expert is presented as a reliable source.

Begging the Question: a fallacious argument in which the conclusion is assumed by the premise(s).

Red Herring: a fallacious argument in which the arguer distracts the reader from the main issue by using irrelevant premises.

Strawman: a fallacious argument that mischaracterizes the opponent’s position so that it is weakened and easy to refute.

Argument Types:

**Deductive argument:** an argument in which the arguer attempts to demonstrate that the conclusion *necessarily* follows from the premises.

**Inductive argument:** an argument in which the arguer attempts to demonstrate that the conclusion *probably* follows from the premises.

**Conditional:** an *if... then...* claim.

**Antecedent:** the part of a conditional claim that is a sufficient condition for the consequent to be true; normally, this is the part that follows the word *if*.

**Consequent:** the part of a conditional claim that is a necessary condition for the antecedent to be true; normally, this is the part that follows the word *then*.

Evaluating Arguments:

**Evaluate:** to judge the quality of something; in the case of an argument, a judgment that an argument’s conclusion does or does not follow from its premises(s).

**Valid argument:** a properly formed deductive argument, i.e., conclusion necessarily follows the premises.

**Sound argument:** a valid argument with true premises.

**Strong argument:** a properly formed inductive argument, i.e., the conclusion is highly likely given the premises.

**Cogent argument:** a strong argument with true premises.

**Biased generalization:** an inductive generalization in which the sample misrepresents the target.

**Hasty generalization:** an inductive generalization in which the sample is too small to offer even minimal support for the conclusion.

**Faulty analogy:** an analogical argument in which the similarities between the sample and the target are irrelevant to the feature.

**Post hoc ergo propter hoc:** a causal argument in which the arguer concludes that one event was caused by another simply because one preceded the other.