

Las Positas College  
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## Course Outline for ENG 7

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Effective: Fall 2008

#### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ENG 7 — CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING ACROSS DISCIPLINES — 3.00 units

Develops critical thinking, reading and writing skills as they apply to the textual analysis of primary and secondary book-length works from a range of academic and cultural contexts. Emphasis on the techniques and principles of effective written argument in research-based writing across disciplines. Prerequisite: English 1A (completed with a grade of "C" or higher). 3 hours.

3.00 Units Lecture

#### Prerequisite

ENG 1A - Critical Reading and Composition

#### Grading Methods:

Letter Grade

#### Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	54.00

#### II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

#### III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

**Before entering the course a student should be able to:**

A. ENG1A

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. demonstrate critical thinking skills in class discussion and written essays:
  1. Read and interpret book-length works from a range of academic, cultural and disciplinary contexts
  2. Understand the relationship between meaning and language manipulation and between language and logic
  3. Identify unstated premises and hidden assumptions which arise from the social, historical, moral, cultural, psychological, or aesthetic contexts in which the primary texts and the critical writings which apply them exist
  4. Evaluate the pattern of reasoning present in an argument and related critical evaluation, including induction and deduction
  5. Identify logical fallacies, including false cause, personal attack, and appeal to pity, in the arguments of works in different disciplines
  6. Recognize the similarities and differences between the intentions, biases, assumptions, and arguments of an author and his/her critics
  7. Distinguish between fact, inference, and judgment, recognizing that many reasonable inferences can be derived from the same facts
  8. Draw and justify inferences about a work, the intention of the author, or the effect of the text based on purpose, context, audience, etc.
  9. Evaluate cross-disciplinary arguments in terms of fairness, accuracy and completeness
- B. demonstrate composition skills
  1. Explore a line of inquiry and limit the topic appropriately
  2. Establish and state clearly a unifying thesis or proposition
  3. Select examples, details, and other evidence to support or validate the thesis and other generalizations
  4. Use detail, example, and evidence to develop and elaborate upon subtopics
  5. Use principles of inductive and deductive logic to support and develop ideas
  6. Avoid logical fallacies in the presentation of an argument
  7. Organize main parts of the essay and create a clear sequence
  8. Demonstrate coherence in his or her writing
  9. Use precise diction that communicates unambiguously
  10. Write with a sense of audience in mind
- C. use appropriate research techniques to produce an acceptable research paper
  1. Demonstrate familiarity with appropriate library resources for research
  2. Show an understanding of the purpose of research
  3. Demonstrate familiarity with the legitimate and honest use of research

4. Identify and evaluate sources
5. Evaluate researched data for accuracy, sampling, validity, and reliability
6. Identify diverse discipline-specific research methods, including kinds of questions posed in different academic fields
7. Formulate a productive research question
8. Demonstrate understanding of the role of summary, paraphrase and direct quotation
9. Efficiently gather and record information
10. Organize information
11. Integrate source material into a paper through the conventions of direct and indirect quoting
12. Correctly utilize MLA documentation for in-text citations and works cited page

#### V. CONTENT:

- A. Instruction focused on critical thinking and evaluating the arguments made in texts, both written and cultural. Lessons on critical thinking, reading, and interpretation will include the following:
  1. reading two full book-length works and at least five minor pieces of writing;
  2. reading texts reflecting diversity of subject matter, cultural perspective and gender perspective, national or geographic background, time period, structure and theme;
  3. distinguishing between fact and inference;
  4. identifying logical inferences;
  5. identifying logical fallacies;
  6. recognizing denotative and connotative language;
  7. evaluating diction;
  8. exploring rhetorical uses of writing;
  9. identifying stylistic choices in a text;
- B. Instruction focused on writing strong argumentative and evaluative essays, including:
  1. constructing sound arguments;
  2. avoiding logical fallacies;
  3. supplying sufficient support for claims;
  4. refuting objections;
  5. writing with grace and style;
  6. understanding the connection between thinking, reading and writing, and using each as a reinforcement for the other;
  7. completing writing assignments totaling 6,000 words;
- C. Instruction focused on incorporating researched materials into writing, including:
  1. research strategies;
  2. evaluation of outside sources;
  3. proper integration and documentation of researched materials into student papers.

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Instructor conferences
- B. Reading two full-length works in addition to five shorter works
- C. **Written exercises and case studies** - Writing assignments, totaling 8,000 words, including a research paper
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Multi-media materials, oral presentations
- E. Peer responses to multiple drafts
- F. Group work and collaborative learning
- G. **Discussion** -
- H. **Lecture** -

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading response assignments:
  1. Read Browne's Chapter 8, "How Good is the Evidence?" Use Browne's guidelines to analyze Cromer's review of Galileo;
  2. Read Chapters 1-6 in Dreams of Trespass. Write a short response describing how Mernissi uses the concept of "hadud," or "boundaries," in these chapters;
  3. For homework, read Camille Paglia's "On Date Rape." In class, work in a group of three to four students to identify three logical fallacies in her essay. Do these fallacies hurt her argument, in your opinion? Explain your response using specific examples from the text;
- B. Essays embodying analytical arguments:
  1. In The Eagle's Shadow, Mark Hertsgaard argues that the rest of the world both admires and resents America. In each chapter, he discusses an aspect of this argument; aspects include American religion, journalism, wealth, and religion, among others. Choose one chapter and evaluate Hertsgaard's argument in that chapter. Do you find his argument persuasive? Why or why not? You should demonstrate your point through discussions of the text and of any outside examples that you would like to include.
  2. In "White Privilege and Male Privilege," Peggy McIntosh argues that being white or male affords an American a number of unearned privileges. Write an essay examining one type of privilege that you might enjoy; male privilege, white privilege, heterosexual privilege, native-English speaker privilege, or able-bodied privilege are some obvious examples. You may choose one of these or any other form of privilege that benefits you. Write an essay explaining what impact that privilege has had on your life, and how your life might differ from the life of someone who does not have that privilege.
- C. At least one researched paper that posits a logically supported argument and is based on a synthesis and analysis:
  1. Choose one issue discussed in Michael Moore's Dude, Where's My Country. Research this issue to determine whether you agree or disagree with Moore concerning this topic. Possible topics include the PATRIOT Act, American oil usage, the Iraq war, or the war on terror. Demonstrate your argument using discussions of Moore's text and of the researched materials.

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

##### A. **Methods**

1. Other:
 

Informal writing assignments might include summaries, prewriting, book reviews, in-class essays, or informal annotated bibliographies. Informal writing exercises like these may not count towards the 6,000 required words of final draft writing. Reading responses, class discussion, and quizzes or exams to demonstrate comprehension and analysis of reading materials. Essays and research paper graded A-F, according to performance. Evaluation of students' achievement of the course objectives will be based on both critical thinking and writing skills, specifically the following:

  - a. clarity and effectiveness of writing and the degree to which it successfully incorporates principles of composition and of logical reasoning taught in the course;
  - b. clarity of understanding of assigned literature and other readings and the degree to which students are successful in using logical reasoning principles and sound exemplification to support an argument about the works considered;
  - c. the degree to which students go beyond critical reasoning or straightforward literary criticism to assess the arguments of authors and literary critics

##### B. **Frequency**

1. Informal writing assignments will be assigned and evaluated throughout the course of the term
2. Reading responses, class discussion, and quizzes or exams will be assigned and evaluated throughout the course of the term

3. Essays will be assigned and graded throughout the course of the term

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Browne, McNeill and Stuart M. Keeley *Asking The Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. 9th ed., Prentice Hall, 2009.
2. Cromer, Alan *Uncommon Sense: The Heretical Nature of Science*, Oxford University Press, 1993.
3. Freud, Sigmund *Civilization and Its Discontents*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1989.
4. Hacker, Diana *A Writer's Reference with 2009 MLA and 2010 APA Updates*. 6th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.
5. Mernissi, Fatima *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*, Perseus Books, 1994.
6. Nietzsche, Friedrich *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Dover Publications, 1999.
7. Paul, Richard and Linda Elder *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools*, Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2003.
8. Rottenberg, Annette T. et al *Elements of Argument*. 9th ed., Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2008.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: