College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Philosophy Program

Finakpo 2024

CT 101: Critical Thinking
Course Syllabus and Calendar

Section Information
Section 01
Course Delivery Mode Face-to-Face

Instructor Information
Dr. Brett A. Fulkerson-Smith
HSS 120-F
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Office Phone Number: (671) 735-2816
Office Hours by Appointment: https://calendly.com/doctorbrett/15min

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This is an interdisciplinary foundation course in critical thinking. Students learn how to analyze, critically evaluate and construct arguments, detect common fallacies in reasoning, and propose logical and creative solutions to complex problems. Critical thinking skills are valuable in all disciplines and will benefit students in academic contexts and in life.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ALIGNMENT MATRIX

SLO	GERC Learning Outcomes (GLOs)	Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
Identify credible and reliable information from various sources	GLO1: Applying the concepts essential to examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse; GLO2: Using investigative and analytical skills to explore complex questions and solve challenging problems; GLO6: Differentiating and prioritizing elements of complex real-world experiences	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO5: Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources and technology; ILO7: An interest in personal development and lifelong learning
Recognize common errors in reasoning	GLO5: Identifying and avoiding common logical errors (fallacies)	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO5: Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources and technology

Construct sound arguments for a variety of real-world experiences	GLO3: Synthesizing information in order to examine alternatives and arrive at reasoned conclusions; GLO4: Comprehending and explaining the logic and validity of arguments and the relevance of data and information	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO3: Effective oral and written communication.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED TEXTS

All course readings are available by the instructor for free on Moodle.

STUDENT SUPPORT:

The following is a list of resources that students can turn to when they need support:

- Problems with the course instructions or other content?
  Contact your Instructor for clarification and assistance.
- Technical problems with UOG Moodle system?
  Contact the UOG Moodle Help team by email at moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2620.
- Problems with WebAdvisor or GoTritons student email service?
  Contact the UOG Office of Information Technology (aka: the Computer Center) by email at helpdesk@uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2640.
- UOG Library Resources and Services
  Go online to https://www.uog.edu/student-services/rfk-library/
- UOG Student Services
  Go online to https://www.uog.edu/student-services/enrollment-management-student-success/ to contact the Admissions and Records office, Financial Aid office, Student Life office, Housing and Residence, Counseling, Student Health, and other services.

In addition:

Office hours and outside appointments. There's only so much that you as a student can get out of the direct instruction and conversation that takes place during classes. At a small university like ours, office hours are a highly important extension of the classroom.

GRADING INFORMATION

COURSE FINAL GRADES

A+	97-100%
A	93-96%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	76-79%
C	70-75%
D	60-69%
F	≤59%

NC No Credit. *Note: This Course Grade must be stated in the approved Course Catalog Description.*

UW: Unofficial withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and did not submit required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

W: Withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and submitted required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

ASSIGNMENTS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND POINT VALUES

Your final course grade will be determined by the following items:

Attendance & Active Participation	10%
Pre- and Post-Course CT Assessment[1]	20%
Annotations of Required Readings[2]	20%
In-Class Assignments and Homework[3]	30%
Speech[4]	10%
Debate[5]	10%
	100%

Some Notes Regarding the Above:

1. The Pre- and Post-Course CT Assessments are weighted as follows: 5% of your final course grade consists of the pre-test and 15% of your final course grade consists of the post-test.

2. There are 7 annotation assignments. Before you begin, please read "A Note on Annotating Readings," available on Moodle.

3. There are at least 20 in-class and homework assignments in this course. Given the intensive nature of this course, **no late assignments are accepted.**

4. Speeches will be graded according to the following criteria: Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation; Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience; Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable; Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic; Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.

5. Debates will be scored according to the following criteria:

Presentation (10 points)
● Did the team clearly and systematically identify and thoroughly discuss the case's central ethical dimensions?
● Did the team consider different viewpoints, including those most likely to be cited by those who disagree with the team's position?
Open Dialogue (10 points)
● Did the team directly and critically answer questions posed by the other team, and propose original ideas?
● Did the team build on the ideas of others, or add material not in the original presentation, to meaningfully explore ethical perspectives and positions relevant to the case question?
● Did the team focus on ethical concepts during the dialogue?
● Did the team "share the air" and not dominate the conversation?
● Did the team engage in "back and forth" dialogue, as opposed to merely asking questions of the other team or answering questions?
Judges Questions (10 points)
● Were the team's responses thoughtfully composed and well developed?
● Did the team directly address the judges' questions?
● Did the responses indicate an awareness of the core ethical issues within each question?
● Did the team "share the air" and not dominate the conversation?
Final Question (5 points)
● What was the other team's strongest point and how did it help develop your team's thinking about this case?
Respectful Dialogue (5 points)

● Did the team uphold the spirit of the ethics bowl by demonstrating open-mindedness, taking turns both within and between teams, including others in conversation, listening actively, and maintaining civility especially when disagreements arose?

Course, Program, and University Policies and Other Information

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UOG community, students accept the expectations of the Student Code of Conduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Code of Conduct Policy in the Student Handbook. (http://www.uog.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook_10.7.16.pdf) For this class, any plagiarism will be evaluated by incident. All incidents, at minimum, will automatically receive a failing grade for the assignment. If an incident of plagiarism occurs more than once in the same course, the student may receive a failing grade for the class.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI): The goal of teaching is to impart a process of gathering, understanding, and synthesizing relevant information, inclusive of critical thinking and project details. Language Learning Models (LLMs) essentially eliminate the need for developing technical writing skills, as they can produce polished prose consistently. This technology is likened to word processors that have made handwriting redundant. LLMs efficiently gather and present information, making the task of accumulating and presenting routine information redundant as well. *With the advent of LLMs, then, a well-informed, competently written piece of prose is now a baseline expectation rather than a goal.* This shifts the question to what value-add teachers and students can bring beyond what an AI model can generate in seconds, potentially requiring a rethinking of teaching approaches and pedagogical institutions. Like other labor-saving devices, LLMs allow us to shift our focus to areas that cannot be mechanized, raising the bar for what constitutes acceptable performance.

There are several implications. This shift could potentially increase the focus on critical thinking, creativity, and innovation, as the basics of information gathering and writing are covered by LLMs. Pedagogical methods may need to evolve to accommodate this new reality. Teachers might need to redesign curricula and assessments to emphasize the skills that LLMs can't replicate. The definition of student success and accomplishment could be revised to reflect these changes. It might help level the playing field for students with varying writing abilities, as

everyone would have access to the same standard of written work through LLMs, allowing them to focus more on content and critical thinking. On a broader level, this development could reshape the landscape of education, leading to increased emphasis on developing soft skills like problem-solving, creativity, and emotional intelligence.

But, there are also worries. Some might suggest that the students themselves are not producing the smoothly written, well informed text. Or that there's no evidence of learning in work created through the use of LLMs. Finally, some might believe that students working at a C level will be demotivated by AI working at a B or A level.

It is true that Language Learning Models (LLMs) may generate the polished prose, but this doesn't negate the value of the learning process. The role of students in this new paradigm shifts from being just scribes to becoming editors, synthesizers, and critical thinkers. They would need to direct the AI, verify its outputs, integrate diverse pieces of information, and ensure that the final product aligns with the task at hand. These are high-level cognitive tasks that contribute significantly to their learning.

The evidence of learning might not be as direct as in traditional assignments, but it is still present. The LLM-generated output will still be guided and refined by students. They will have to engage with the topic at a deep level to guide the model effectively. Evaluating the quality, relevance, and accuracy of the information produced will require understanding the topic. It's a shift from assessing learning based on writing ability to assessing learning based on understanding, critical thinking, and the ability to synthesize and guide an AI to produce quality content.

It's understandable that students may feel demotivated when an AI tool can easily produce work that surpasses theirs. However, this is where it's crucial to redefine success and progress in the classroom. Rather than judging students solely based on the final product, educators can shift towards a model that values the learning process itself. This involves reinforcing the idea that these tools are just that – tools, meant to assist in the learning journey, not replace it. Education must pivot towards fostering skills that AI cannot replicate – empathy, creativity, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, etc. Students should understand that their unique human qualities, ideas, and perspectives hold immense value, and they are not in competition with AI, but instead, learning to leverage it as a resource.

For these reasons, AI Writing tools such as ChatGPT are welcome in this class, provided that you cite when and how you use the tool (see below) or submit a transcript of your interaction with AI.

Here is an example of **Example of attribution language:**

"The author generated this text in part with GPT-3, OpenAI's large-scale language-generation model. Upon generating draft language, the author reviewed, edited, and revised the language to their own liking and takes ultimate responsibility for the content of this publication."

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The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community free of all forms of discrimination and harassment in all programs, activities and employment practices as required by Title VII and Title IX and other applicable statutes and policies. If you experience harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to the Director of EEO/ADA & TITLE IX Office, at 671-735-2244, 671-735-2971, TOD 671-735-2243 or eeo-ada@trlton.uog.edu. For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

For individuals covered under the ADA {Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a student with a disability requiring academic accommodation{s), please contact the Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodations Office to discuss your confidential request. Please provide an accommodation letter from the Disability Support Services/Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodation counselor. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit the Student Center, Rotunda office #6, disabilitvsupport@triton.uog.edu or telephone/(TOD) 671-735-2460.

◄ April

May 2024

June ►

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Introduction to Course Bao, Ch. 1 CT Pre-Test *Unit 1: Argument Evaluation* Kinds of Arguments &Their Components Bao, Ch. 3, 4, 6	29 Argument Mapping: Sub-Premises Warren, Ch. 2	30 Argument Mapping: Dependent Premises Warren, Ch. 3	31 Argument Mapping: Independent Premises Warren, Ch. 4	

◄ May

June 2024

July ►

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3 Argument Mapping: Implicit Conclusions Warren, Ch. 5	4 Argument Mapping: Implicit Premises Warren, Ch. 7	5 Argument Evaluation: Forms and Fallacies Bao, Ch.5 and 8	6 Argument Evaluation: Content and Credible Sources In-Class Handouts	7 *Unit 2: Critical 7 Creative Thinking in Speech* Cummins, Ch. 9 Case Studies	8
9	10 Mapping Moral Arguments	11 Mapping Moral Arguments	12 Speech Writing Workshop	13 Final Preparations for and Recordings of Student Speeches Presenting & Recording Speeches from Home	14 Final Preparations for and Recordings of Student Speeches	15
16	17 Student Responses & Feedback	18 Student Responses & Feedback	19 *Unit 3: Critical & Creative Thinking in Debate* Ethics Bowl Scoring Activity I	20 Ethics Bowl Scoring Activity II Case Studies Team Formation	21 Case Analysis: Picking the Right Moral Rule(s)	22
23	24 Mapping Team Positions & Presentation Writing Workshop	25 Mapping Team Positions & Presentation Writing Workshop	26 Team Debates	27 Team Debates	28 Course Conclusion CT Post-Test	29
30						