Lincoln University
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: **Critical Thinking**

Department and number: **English 75**

Credit: 3 units

Course prerequisites: none

Semester: Spring 2009 – Tuesdays, 9-10:15, 10:30-11:45, 16 weeks (see schedule below)

Instructor: Dr. Sylvia Y. Schoemaker Rippel

Email: sysr@lincolnuca.edu

Course-related email for the semester: profs360@gmail.com

Office hours and location: T, Th 11:45-12:30 and by arrangement, room 307

Office phone: 510-628-8036

Instructional Materials and References

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Mayfield, M. (2007). Thinking for yourself. (7th Ed.). Boston: Thomson Wadsworth. ISBN: 1-4130-1772-X (TFY)

Daiek, D., & Anter, N. (2004) Critical reading for college and beyond. New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0072473762 (CRCB)

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Harris, Robert. A. Creative Problem Solving. Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 1-884585-43-4 (CPS)

COMPANION SITES

Thinking for Yourself Site

Note: Course and student blogs and wiki sites to be presented in class

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Critical thinking (E75) considers the cognitive skills and communicative strategies for defining, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information. The course includes structural and operational approaches to task/mission analysis, decision-making, change forecasting, adaptation, and evaluation. Systems approach to analysis and solution of complex problems. Conceptual issues in problem definition, goal determination and measurement of effectiveness. (3 units)

OBJECTIVES

Students will develop their cognitive skills and enhance their communicative strategies for defining, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information. The course will incorporate the following University learner and institutional goals:

University learner goals 1 -6, and specifically (3.2) To examine objectively various sides of issues; (3.3) To utilize the procedures involved in systematic problem solving; and in English:: To develop basic academic and professional skills (1); To develop the ability to communicate effective in English, oral and in writing, and to read with understanding (1.1) and institutional goals, especially 1, (1.1-1.4), 2.4

FORMAT

The course sessions will include presentation, discussion, and application modes.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to attend class, to participate in individual and group work in a productive manner, to complete assignments according to schedule and at a level appropriate to university rubrics, and to take personal responsibility for meeting the objectives of the course.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

Topics covered include observation skills, appropriate language skills and encoding strategies, differentiating among fact, inference, judgment, recognizing fallacies of reasoning and evaluation, understanding viewpoint, analyzing character, logic, and emotion in persuasion.

For each of the units on schedule below (as well as additional assignments given in class), students will do the following:

- Read assigned materials with care and understanding,
- Complete and present selected exercises relevant to the class and text materials
- Reflect on the weekly assignments in writing, addressing primary content and points of personal interest,
- Create a personalized, three-level map for each week's assignment using the open source program Freemind (available in the computer lab and downloadable from http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page
- Email your assignments to me at profs360@gmail.com,
- Blog your work for sharing and presentations.

Note: The maps for your blog need to be in graphic (.png or .jpg) format and you will need to save the native Freemind (.mm) format for submitting your work to me by email.

Assignments are due on the dates indicated in the schedule below. Additions/revisions to the schedule will be announced in class as needed. Class attendance is mandatory for content, interactions, and presentations. Researched materials must be documented using a consistent style for both in-text and end-text citations of sources using the published standards of the most recent subject-appropriate style guide, such as APA (social sciences) or MLA (humanities), for example.

SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Unit	TFY Text Reference	CRCB Text Reference
1	13-Jan	Introduction Where Do You Stand?		
2	20-Jan	Observation	TFY C1, Observation	CRCB C13, Cognitive Domain
3	27-Jan	Language and Thought	TFY C2, Word Precision	CRCB C2, Vocabulary
4	3-Feb	Facts	TFY C3, Facts	CRCB C6, Details CRCB C5, Main Ideas
5	10-Feb	Inferences	TFY C4, Inferences	CRCB C7, Inference
6	17-Feb	Assumptions	TFY C5, Assumptions	CRCB C10, Marking
7	24-Feb	Points of View	TFY C8, Viewpoints	CRCB C9, PSR Strategies
8	3-Mar	Midterm		

9	10-Mar	Opinions	TFY C6, Opinions	CRCB C4, Time
	17-Mar	Spring Recess		
10	24-Mar	Evaluations	TFY C7, Evaluations	CRCB C14, Evaluation
11	31-Mar	Argument	TFY C9, Argument	CRCB C12, Arguments
12	7-Apr	Fallacies	TFY C10, Fallacies	CRCB C8, Texts
13	14-Apr	Induction	TFY C11, Inductive Reasoning	CRCB C1, Reading
14	21-Apr	Deduction	TFY C12, Deductive Reasoning	CRCB C11, Advanced Strategies
15	28-Apr	Characteristics of a Critical Thinker	Review	Review
16	5-May	Final		

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA & METHOD OF EVALUATING STUDENTS

Students will demonstrate their level of achievement through appropriate and accurate application of critical thinking theory, including problem-solving, analysis, and decision-making criteria in approaching and solving text, classroom, and real-world exercises, individually and as group participants.

Grading Guidelines

Class Participation	15%
Quizzes	10%
Projects	15%
Term Paper	30%
Presentation	10%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

100-95	A
94-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-84	B
83-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-74	C
73-70	C-
69-67	D+
66-64	D
63-60	D-
59 or <	F