

## CRITICAL READING, THINKING AND WRITING FALL 2009

Instructor: Dr. Casey A. Cothran

Class: CRTW 201-09 (11979), 9:30-10:45 TR (Owens 208)

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Office Hours: 9:30-12:00 MW; 2:00-3:15 TR (and by appointment)

Turnitin.com Information: Class ID (2814632) Password (ilovepapers)

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### **Texts:**

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. New York, NY: Penguin, 2005.

Harris, Muriel, ed. *Prentice Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Prentice Hall  
Nosich, Gerald. *Learning to Think Things Through* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2009.

### **Course Description:**

CRTW 201 is a course that focuses on critical reading, critical thinking, and deliberative/argumentative writing. It builds upon skills acquired in WRIT 101 and GNED 102. Students will read, write, and discuss, in an effort to further develop their skill as college writers and as critical thinkers. Course goals include:

1. To learn that the complex process of critical thinking is a part of all we do and that the process relies on such skills as observing, listening, reading, and writing.
2. To use writing, reading, speaking, and critical thinking to foster intellectual growth in an academic environment.
3. To recognize critical thinking and problem solving strategies in different academic disciplines and for different audiences.
4. To evaluate arguments, evidence, and the contexts in which they appear.
5. To prepare for writing by carefully analyzing evidence.
6. To plan, organize, and develop essays based on introspection, general observation, deliberation, research, and the critical reading of mature prose texts drawn from varied disciplines.
7. To learn to revise effectively by completely rethinking, restructuring, and rewriting essays.
8. To recognize individual writing voices and learn how those voices can be adapted to fit different audiences and rhetorical situations.
9. To improve oral communications skills through class discussions and small group activities.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Knowledge: By the end of the semester, students will be able to  
identify and define filters, barriers, and impediments to critical thinking  
identify and define the elements of reasoning  
identify and define the standards of reasoning  
identify and define the character traits of a critical thinker

Skills: By the end of the semester, students will be able to  
apply the elements of reasoning to analyze their own thinking and the thinking of others  
apply the standards of reasoning to analyze their own thinking and the thinking of others  
use critical reading strategies to analyze a variety of texts  
plan, draft, and revise critical writing in a variety of rhetorical contexts and disciplines  
discuss their thinking and the thinking of others in a variety of oral forms  
(e.g. discussions, group presentations, etc.)

Attitudes: By the end of the semester, students will be able to  
integrate critical thinking character traits into their academic and personal lives  
recognize and appreciate the differences between critical and noncritical thinking in both  
themselves and others

### **Course Requirements:**

Paper 1, "A Critical Thinking Process Essay"	15%
In-class Essay "The Logic of Your Chosen Field"	10%
Paper 2, "News Media Evaluation Essay"	15%
Researched Argumentative Essay	25%
Final Exam	15%
Thinking Journal and Class Participation	20%

### **Grading Standards**

A description of letter grades for writing assignments can be found at  
<http://www.winthrop.edu/english/rubric.htm>. Numerically, grades are as follows:

93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-
77-79	C+	59 and below	F

Student code of conduct: As noted in the Student Conduct Code: "Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals." The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the "Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy" in the online *Student Handbook* (<http://www2.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/handbook/StudentHandbook.pdf>).

### **Plagiarism Policy**

All work in this class that uses outside sources must be documented correctly in the MLA documentation style. Please review the English Department's policy on Using Borrowed

Information at <http://www.winthrop.edu/english/plagiarism.htm>. You are responsible for reviewing the Code of Student Conduct in your *Student Handbook* and the description of plagiarism in *The Prentice-Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage* and handling source materials correctly. If you turn in plagiarized work, I reserve the right to assign you a failing grade for the course. The University Policy on Plagiarism is explained at <http://www.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/Judicial/judcode.htm> under section V, “Academic Misconduct.”

We will be using [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) this semester; papers not submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) will not be graded. Be sure to sign up soon! Class ID (2814632) Password (ilovepapers)

### **Attendance Policy**

Winthrop policy is that students who miss more than 25% of the classes in a semester cannot receive credit for the course.

### **Late Paper/ Assignment Policies**

Every day an assignment is late (including weekend days) is five points off the final grade. Daily writing assignments may be turned in early, but not late, unless you have an amazing excuse.

### **Accommodations**

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact Ms. Gena Smith, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities, at 323-3290, as soon as possible. Once you have your professor notification letter, please notify me so that I am aware of your accommodations well before the first accommodated assignment is due.

### **Technology Requirements**

I conduct most of my business with students using e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail account, go to 15 Tillman immediately to set it up. All class e-mail will be sent to your campus e-mail address, so make sure you set it to forward to any off-campus account you use (e.g. Comporium, AOL, Yahoo!, etc.) You must have a working Winthrop POBox e-mail address by the third day of class. All students must subscribe to the class listserve.

**You can find the syllabus and additional course materials on my website:**

**<http://faculty.winthrop.edu/cothranc>**

### **Class Schedule:**

Note: assignments are due on the days next to which they appear.

<b>Date</b>	<b>In-Class Discussion</b>	<b>Homework</b>
Tuesday August 25	Introduction	
Thursday August 27	Nosich, Chapter 1	LTTT: “To the Student” and 1-33; answer questions in two of the grey boxes

Tuesday September 1	Nosich SEEI	LTTT: 33-41, 1.5, 1.6 begin thinking about 1.24*
Thursday September 3	Nosich, Chapter 2	LTTT: 49-80; exercise 2.1
Tuesday September 8	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: 2.7, 2.9 (feel free to use any University textbook while answering questions)
Thursday September 10	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: answer question in grey box on p.74
Tuesday September 15	<b>Paper 1 Due</b>	
Thursday September 17	Nosich, Chapter 3, fundamental and powerful concepts	LTTT: 89-130
Tuesday September 22	Thinking about your chosen field	LTTT: 3.5, bring a textbook from a course in your major to class
Thursday September 24	<b>In-Class Essay</b>	
Tuesday September 29	Nosich, Chapter 4	LTTT: 139-169; answer questions in two of the grey boxes
Thursday October 1	Nosich, Chapter 4 (cont'd)	LTTT: 4.4, begin 4.18* (your life), 4.19* (your classes)
Tuesday October 6	Come to class prepared to discuss your viewing experience with your peers	Watch a news show and take notes, keeping the standards in mind
Thursday October 8	<b>Paper 2 Due</b>	
Tuesday October 13	Nosich, Chapter 5	LTTT: 175-201; begin 5.24*
Thursday October 15	<b>Fall Break</b>	
Tuesday October 20	More practice with multi-system questions	
Thursday	Discuss Nosich Homework	<b>Nosich Starred Items Due</b>

October 22		
Tuesday October 27	Relevance	Postman: Introduction, In 1985, Foreward
Thursday October 29	“dangerous nonsense”	Postman: 1-29
Tuesday November 3	Print and Picture	Postman: 30-79
Thursday November 5	Show Business	Postman:83-113
Tuesday November 10	“Reach Out and Elect Someone”	Postman:114-141
Thursday November 12	“Teaching as an Amusing Activity”	Postman: 142-163 (Finish Book)
Tuesday November 17	Nosich, Chapter 5: Writing a Critical Thinking Essay	LTTT: 201-207
Thursday November 19	Conferences, no class	Make and keep an appointment to discuss your essay with Dr. Cothran
Tuesday November 24	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	
Thursday November 26	Conferences, no class	Make and keep an appointment to discuss your essay with Dr. Cothran
Tuesday December 1	MLA Format Review	Bring Prentice Hall Guide to Class
Thursday December 3	<b>Researched Argumentative Essay Due</b> (In class – Exam Review)	
	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> 11:30-2:00 Thursday, December 10	