

CRITICAL READING, THINKING AND WRITING FALL 2011

Dr. Casey Cothran

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Office: 237 Bancroft Hall; (803) 323-4632

Office Hours: 9:00-12:00 TR, and by appointment

Class: MWF 9:00-9:50 (Owens 210)

Section: CRTW 201-004 (#11176)

Turnitin.com Info:

Class Name: CRTW Fall 2011 9:00

Class ID: 4201508

Class Password: ilovepapers

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*. 7th ed. Prentice Hall
Nosich, Gerald. *Learning to Think Things Through* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2012.

Course Description and Goals:

CRTW 201 is a 3 credit course that focuses on critical reading, critical thinking, and deliberative/argumentative writing. It builds upon skills acquired in WRIT 101 and HMXP 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. See a complete listing of course goals for the Department of English at <http://www.winthrop.edu/english/undergraduate/index.htm>.

CRTW is a Touchstone course designed to meet goals 1, 3, 4, and 7 of that program.

This course participates in Winthrop University's Global Learning Initiative by its very nature.

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:

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| Paper 1, "A Critical Thinking Process Essay" | 15% |
| Paper 2, "News Media Evaluation Essay" | 15% |
| In-Class Essay | 10% |
| 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:

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| 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 Conduct Code: 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>).

Additionally, please refrain from texting during class. Anyone caught texting, on Facebook, or generally playing with a phone or laptop may be thrown to the dragons, set upon by slaving wolves, or subject to the loss of points on his/her daily grade. Ouch!

Instructor Accessibility

You can expect me to be available as a resource from which to draw and to obtain feedback. I am very responsive to email questions as long as I know who the email is from and have all information necessary to provide a complete answer. Please be sure to “sign” your emails as oftentimes email names are confusing at best (e.g., brownb1@winthrop.edu could be Bob Brown or Beth Brown). Please make sure to speak slowly and comprehensibly if leaving a voicemail so that I can decipher the name, message, and return phone number as well.

What you cannot expect of me is to be available 24/7. While I do check my email and voicemail regularly, including weekends (if I am in town), I do not necessarily check them more than once a day or late in the evenings. Please plan your time accordingly to maximize the probability that you will receive a response in time for it to be useful.

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 this semester; papers not submitted to www.turnitin.com will not be graded. Be sure to sign up soon!

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

Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 323-3290. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from the Office of Disability Services, please inform me as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Success Center (ASC):

Winthrop's Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students become effective and efficient learners. The services available to students are as follows: peer tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located in University College on the first floor of Dinkins Hall, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success.

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.

Syllabus Change Policy

You will be notified by email if the syllabus or schedule needs to be changed. Please read all emails from me so as to be aware of any potential changes. **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.

| Date | In-Class Discussion | Homework |
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| Wednesday August 24 | Introduction | |
| Friday August 26 | Critical Thinking in the Modern World Last Day to Add/Drop Classes | Read and reflect on David Foster Wallace's graduation speech "This Is Water" (Cothran webpage/email). |
| Monday August 29 | Critical Thinking in the Modern World Discuss "Extra Credit" Assignment | Read and reflect on Alan Lightman's essay "Prisoners of the Wired World" (Cothran webpage/email) |

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| Wednesday August 31 | What is critical thinking? | LTTT: Read “To the Student” and 1-16 |
| Friday September 2 | Nosich, Chapter 1 | LTTT: 16-30; Do exercise 1.5 |
| Monday September 5 | Impediments; discuss 1.23 in class | LTTT: Do the “Cothran version” of exercise 1.23 (Spend one day looking for all 8 impediments, and give an example of each.) |
| Wednesday September 7 | Nosich SEEI | LTTT: Read 30-35 |
| Friday September 9 | Nosich, Chapter 2 | LTTT: Read 47-68 |
| Monday September 12 | Nosich, Chapter 2 | LTTT: Read pages 68-76; Do 2.1 |
| Wednesday September 14 | Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont’d) | LTTT: Do exercises 2.6 a, b and 2.9 c |
| Friday September 16 | Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont’d) | LTTT: Answer question in grey box on p.70 |
| Monday September 19 | Paper 1 Due | |
| Wednesday September 21 | Nosich, Chapter 3, fundamental and powerful concepts | LTTT: Read 86-109 |
| Friday September 23 | Nosich, Chapter 3, fundamental and powerful concepts | LTTT: Read 109-124 |
| Monday | Thinking about your chosen field | LTTT: Answer 3.12, bring a textbook from a course in your major to class |

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| September 26 | | |
| Wednesday September 28 | IN-CLASS ESSAY | |
| Friday September 30 | Nosich, Chapter 4 | LTTT: Read 133-152 |
| Monday October 3 | Nosich, Chapter 4 | LTTT: Read 152-161 |
| Wednesday October 5 | Nosich, Chapter 4 (cont'd); Review 4.19 in class | LTTT: Do the "Cothran version" of exercise 4.19 (Spend one day looking for all 8 standards, and give an example where each one either is or is not met.) |
| Friday October 7 | In-class practice doing the circle and the standards check, together | |
| Monday October 10 | Come to class prepared to discuss your viewing experience with your peers | Watch a news show and take notes, keeping the standards in mind |
| Wednesday October 12 | Writing Workshop | Bring a typed rough draft to class for Writing Workshop |
| Friday October 14 | Paper 2 Due | |
| Monday October 17 | FALL BREAK | |
| Wednesday October 19 | Relevance | Postman: Introduction, In 1985, Foreward |
| Friday | Medium and Metaphor | Postman: 1-15 |

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| October 21 | | |
| Monday October 24 | Epistemology ... what is that, exactly? | Postman: 16-29 |
| Wednesday October 26 | Print and Picture | Postman: 30-63 |
| Friday October 28 | The Peek-a-Boo World | Postman: 64-82 |
| Monday October 31 | Show Business | Postman: 83-98 |
| Wednesday November 2 | "Now...This" | Postman 99-113 |
| Friday November 4 | "Shuffle Off to Bethlehem" | Postman: 114-124 |
| Monday November 7 | "Reach Out and Elect Someone" | Postman: 125-141 |
| Wednesday November 9 | "Teaching as an Amusing Activity" | Postman: 142-154 |
| Friday November 11 | Solutions? | Postman: 155-163 (Finish Book) |
| Monday November 14 | Nosich, Chapter 5: Writing a Critical Thinking Essay | LTTT: 190-197 |
| Wednesday November 16 | Writing Workshop | Bring a typed rough draft to class for Writing Workshop |

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| Friday November 18 | MLA Format Review | Bring Prentice Hall Guide to Class |
| Monday November 21 | Researched Argumentative Essay Due | |
| Wednesday November 23 | THANKSGIVING BREAK | |
| Friday November 25 | THANKSGIVING BREAK | |
| Monday November 28 | Nosich, Chapter 5 | LTTT: Read 168-176 |
| Wednesday December 30 | Nosich, Chapter 5 | LTTT: Read 176-190, begin 5.24 |
| Friday December 2 | Review 5.24 in class: Can you change your character for the better? | 5.24 due |
| Monday December 5 | Exam Review | |
| Tuesday December 13 | FINAL EXAM 3:00-5:30 | |