

## CRITICAL READING, THINKING AND WRITING SPRING 2009

Dr. Casey Cothran

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

Office Hours: 11:00-12:30 MW, 2:30-3:15 MW, and by appointment

Classes: 028 MW 9:30-10:45, Owens 110

024 MW 3:30-4:45, Owens 207

### 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*. 6<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.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

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

## 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; I will provide more information on that closer to the dates of those assignments. Papers not submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) will not be graded.

## 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.

## STORAGE OF GRADED PAPERS

At the end of the semester, students' original graded papers must be filed in the department's storage room. The department keeps all students' papers from the course. If you want copies of your essays, make them before the end of the semester.

## 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.

DATE	IN-CLASS DISCUSSION	HOMEWORK
Monday January 12	Introduction	
Wednesday January 14	Nosich, Chapter 1	LTTT: "To the Student" and 1-33; answer questions in two of the grey boxes
Monday January 19	<b>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY</b> Offices closed; no classes.	
Wednesday January 21	Nosich SEEI	LTTT: 33-41, 1.5, 1.6 begin thinking about 1.24*
Monday January 26	Nosich, Chapter 2 Last day for undergraduate students to select the <u>S/U</u> (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) option for a course or to change a course from S/U to a letter grade.	LTTT: 49-80; exercise 2.1
Wednesday January 28	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: 2.7, 2.9, 2.10 (feel free to use any University textbook while answering questions)
Monday February 2	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: answer question in grey box on p.74
Wednesday February 4	<b>Paper 1 Due</b>	
Monday	Nosich, Chapter 4	LTTT: 139-169; answer

February 9		questions in two of the grey boxes
Wednesday February 11	Nosich, Chapter 4 (cont'd)	LTTT: 4.4, begin 4.18* (your life), 4.19* (your classes)
Monday February 16	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 February 18	<b>Paper 2 Due</b>	
Monday February 23	Nosich, Chapter 5	LTTT: 175-201; begin 5.24*
Wednesday February 25	More practice with multi-system questions	
Monday March 2	Discuss Nosich Homework	<b>Nosich Starred Items Due</b>
Wednesday March 4	Relevance	Postman: Introduction, In 1985, Foreward
Monday March 9	“dangerous nonsense”	Postman: 1-29
Wednesday March 11	Print and Picture  Last day to withdraw from a spring semester course. (Automatic N grade is issued.) <u>Students may not withdraw from a course after this date without documented extenuating circumstances.</u> Last day to rescind elected S/U option. A rescinded S/U will still count toward the maximum of four allowed.	Postman: 30-79
Monday March 16	SPRING BREAK	
Wednesday March 18	SPRING BREAK	
Monday March 23	Show Business	Postman:83-113
Wednesday March 25	“Reach Out and Elect Someone”	Postman:114-141
Monday	“Teaching as an Amusing Activity”	Postman: 142-163 (Finish Book)

March 30		
Wednesday April 1	Nosich, Chapter 5: Writing a Critical Thinking Essay	LTTT: 201-207
Monday April 6	Conferences, no class	Make and keep an appointment to discuss your essay with Dr. Cothran
Wednesday April 8	Conferences, no class	Make and keep an appointment to discuss your essay with Dr. Cothran
Monday April 13	MLA Format Review	Bring Prentice Hall Guide to Class
Wednesday April 15	<b>Researched Argumentative Essay Due</b>	
Monday April 20	Nosich, Chapter 3, fundamental and powerful concepts	LTTT: 89-130
Wednesday April 22	Thinking about your chosen field	LTTT: 3.5, bring a textbook from a course in your major to class
Monday April 27	<b>In-Class Essay</b>	
	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> <b>9:30 CRTW: 8:00 AM Friday, May 1</b> <b>3:30 CRTW: 3:00 PM Friday, May 1</b> Winthrop university policy does not accept travel plans or work schedules as reasons to reschedule a final examination.	