Critical Reading, Thinking and Writing
Spring 2010

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Office Hours: 11:00-2:00 MW, 11:00-1:00 T, and by appointment
Class: TR 2:00-3:15 (Owens 208)
Turnitin.com Info:
      Class Name: CRTW TR 2:00
      Class ID: 3054935
      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* 3nd 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%
Paper 2, "News Media Evaluation Essay"	15%
Group Presentation of Assigned Reading	10%
Researched Argumentative Essay	25%
Final Exam	15%
Thinking Journal, Facebook Posts, 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 this semester; papers not submitted to www.turnitin.com will not be graded. Be sure to sign up soon! Class Name: CRTW TR 2:00, Class ID: 3054935, Class 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 PO Box e-mail address by the third day of class. All students must subscribe to the class listserve.

This class will also discuss course materials on Ning. You must join the Ning Group (Cothran CRTW TR 2:00) for this class. Students will be required to write something on our Ning group page **at least once a week**.

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
Tuesday January 12	Introduction	
Thursday January 14	Nosich, Chapter 1	LTTT: Read "To the Student" and 1-33; Do exercises 1.5, 1.6
Tuesday January 19	Critical Thinking in the Modern World	Read and reflect on Alan Lightman's essay "Prisoners of the Wired World" and David Foster Wallace's graduation speech "This Is Water" (Cothran webpage). Get into a conversation on the Ning discussion board about these essays.
Thursday January 21	Nosich SEEI	LTTT: Read 33-41, Do exercise 1.24
Tuesday January 26	Nosich, Chapter 2	LTTT: Read 49-80; Do exercise 2.1
Thursday January 28	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: Do exercises 2.6 a, b and 2.9 c
Tuesday February 2	Nosich, Chapter 2 (cont'd)	LTTT: Answer question in grey box on p.74
Thursday February 4	**Paper 1 Due**	
Tuesday February 9	Nosich, Chapter 3, fundamental and powerful concepts	LTTT: Read 89-130
Thursday February 11	Thinking about your chosen field	LTTT: Answer 3.5, bring a textbook from a course in your major to class
Tuesday February 16	Nosich, Chapter 4	LTTT: Read 139-169; Answer questions in two of the grey boxes
Thursday February 18	Nosich, Chapter 4 (cont'd)	LTTT: Answer 4.18
Tuesday February 23	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 February 25	**Paper 2 Due**	

Tuesday March 2	Relevance	Postman: Introduction, In 1985, Foreward
Thursday March 4	"dangerous nonsense"	Postman: 1-29
Tuesday March 9	Print and Picture	Postman: 30-63
Thursday March 11	The Peek-a-Boo World Group 1 Presentation	Postman: 64-82
Tuesday March 16	Spring Break	
Thursday March 18	Spring Break	
Tuesday March 23	Show Business Group 2 Presentation	Postman:83-113
Thursday March 25	"Shuffle Off to Bethlehem" Group 3 Presentation	Postman: 114-124
Tuesday March 30	"Reach Out and Elect Someone" Group 4 Presentation	Postman:125-141
Thursday April 1	"Teaching as an Amusing Activity" Group 5 Presentation	Postman: 142-163 (Finish Book)
Tuesday April 6	Nosich, Chapter 5: Writing a Critical Thinking Essay	LTTT: 201-207 Bring a typed rough draft to class for Writing Workshop
Thursday April 8	MLA Format Review	Bring Prentice Hall Guide to Class
Tuesday April 13	**Researched Argumentative Essay Due**	

Thursday April 15	Nosich, Chapter 5	LTTT: Read 175-201; begin 5.24
Tuesday April 20	More practice with multi-system questions	5.24 due
Thursday April 22	Exam Review	
Wednesday April 28	FINAL EXAM 11:30-2:00	

Group Project

Read and research the topic/chapter in Postman that your group has been assigned. Then prepare a presentation for the class. Your group will be required to teach and lead class discussion for the entire class period. Note: Your presentation should be more than just a lecture on the material. **Present the material, but in a way that a) engages the class b) makes the ideas relevant to the modern-day reader and c) encourages critical thinking on the topic**.

On the day of the presentation, the group will turn in:
1) A short "essay" describing the ideas they plan to present to the class. (This essay must include a bibliography in MLA format citing research sources.)
2) A lesson plan that details *how* they will present the material and *why* they have chosen that particular method of presentation
3) A "log" (This should record the times the group met, who attended each meeting, the time spent in the library, planning the presentation, typing up the findings, etc.)

Additionally, each individual student will turn in:
1) A self evaluation, explaining their contribution to the project
2) An evaluation of each of the other group members, detailing their contributions
3) An evaluation of the group as a whole: How well did everyone work together? Did everyone contribute equally?