PSYCHOLOGY 3: CRITICAL THINKING AND PSYCHOLOGY
Section 2706: TTh 11:15 – 12:40 pm ARTB 348

PROFESSOR: Amy Himsel, Ph.D.

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OFFICE: ARTB 302F  OFFICE HOURS: M & W 11-12 pm, T 10-11 am
ONLINE OFFICE HOURS: M 8-10 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on the development of critical thinking skills related to psychology. In addition to learning basic skills of logic, students will also learn about the logic of the scientific method and the common errors of human cognition that impede critical thinking. Emphasis is placed on the application of critical thinking skills to writing effective arguments, analyzing the writings of others, and understanding contemporary controversies in psychology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. Differentiate between the characteristics of critical and usual thinking.
2. Identify and analyze the structure and components of arguments.
3. Compose and evaluate arguments, applying critical thinking skills.
4. Differentiate between deductive and inductive arguments, and evaluate various forms of each.
5. Describe the components of credibility and assess the credibility of sources and claims.
6. Recognize logical fallacies and other rhetorical devices, and distinguish between fallacious, non-argumentative, and argumentative reasoning in persuasion.
7. Describe the hallmark characteristics of the scientific method and contrast it with other forms of inquiry.
8. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs in psychology.
9. Evaluate issues of causal inference by differentiating between correlation and causation.
10. Analyze the influence of language ambiguity, vagueness, and other linguistic factors on reasoning.
11. Identify characteristics of human cognition that interfere with critical thinking.
12. Use critical thinking skills to assess controversial issues in psychology.

Student Learning Outcome:
As part of the accreditation process, community colleges in California are developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) to assess the quality of learning. Professors are asked to include SLOs in their syllabi as a matter of record only. This is not an assignment.

- Students who successfully complete the course and its requirements will be able to apply the principals of critical thinking to evaluate the quality of information intended to persuade.

REQUIREMENTS
Required Readings: There are two required texts and some additional readings for this class. Please bring the texts with you to class.

- Additional readings available on the ETUDES course website.

Helpful study resources for the Moore/Parker text can be found here:
http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073386677/student_view0/

Lectures and Participation: You are expected to engage actively in discussions, group work, and other in-class activities. Participation will be considered at the end of the semester for students whose course grades are on the borderline (within 3 points of the next grade).
You are responsible for all information presented in class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate and find out what you missed.

In the Classroom: The classroom must be free of disruptions for you and everyone else to have the best opportunity to learn, so join the rest of us in following these commonsense rules:

• Be early or on time. If you come late, the door may be locked. Do not disturb the class by knocking.
• Stay in the room for the entire class period. Attend to personal needs before class starts.
• Turn all electronic devices (include cell phones) off and put them away.
• Listen carefully. Don’t disrupt others by talking during lecture.

In cases of repeated disruption, I follow the El Camino policy described on p. 25 of the College Catalog (access here: http://www.elcamino.edu/admissions/catalog.asp)

Exams: Two non-cumulative exams are given on material presented in lecture and in the text. Exams may contain multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. Bring a Scantron form 882-E for each exam. The exam schedule appears at the end of the syllabus.

Writing Assignments: Several essays of varying lengths and topics are assigned throughout the term. Each will have a specific set of instructions. Assignments must be electronically submitted to www.turnitin.com and ETUDES.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

E-mail: Email sent to instructors or other college staff should be written in a professional style, using Standard English. Include your section number (2706) in the subject line.

If you have not received a reply from me within 48 hours, it is likely that I did not receive your message. Please resend.

Course Website: Handouts and course grades are posted on the ETUDES course website. Handouts include materials passed out during class, such as study questions. Lecture notes and presentation slides are not available online. Follow the instructions below to gain access to the website:

ETUDES Log-in Instructions
(Detailed instructions: http://www.elcamino.edu/library/distance-ed/docs/etudesInfoCombined-revised012810b.pdf)

You will be required to enter two pieces of information in order to login into Etudes and access your course (1) your User ID and (2) your Password (see Steps 1 and 2 below).

STEP 1: Locate your User ID. Your Etudes User ID is the same as your userid used to login to MyECC. EXAMPLE: Albert Einstein is enrolled in an online ETUDES classes and has the following User ID: albert_einstein [all lower case].

*Some ECC student id numbers have been adjusted to accommodate multiple persons with the same name. If step 2 does not work please visit this site to verify your id: https://secure.elcamino.edu/portal/logininfo/main.aspx?item=forgot

STEP 2: Locate your Password. Your default Password is the month and date of birth included in your ECC record. EXAMPLE: Albert Einstein’s birth date is March 25 so his Password is: 0325.

STEP 4: Now you are ready to login! Starting on the first day of the semester (wait at least 24 hours after registering) log in to your class by going to the Etudes portal https://myetudes.org/
STUDENT EVALUATION

Grading: Your course grade will be determined by the percentage of points you have earned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 89%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 – 79%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>59% and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Note: Keep all of your returned work! If there is ever a mistake in the grade file, you must have documentation to support it.

Extra Credit: Extra credit questions may appear on exams or in pop quizzes, but there will be no separate or last-minute extra credit assignment.

Discussing Your Grades: I am happy to speak with you about your exam or assignment scores throughout the semester. In fact, reviewing your work is a great way to learn how to improve your grade. Exams are kept in my office and can be reviewed during my office hours. If you wish to have a grade on written work reconsidered, you must first submit to me a written description your reasons, along with the assignment or essay question response. This gives you the chance to collect your thoughts and make your best case. In order to make sure the material is still fresh in our minds, you must submit your request within one week of receiving the grade.

Writing Help: If college-level writing is a challenge, please visit the Writing Center on campus. You can even schedule a pre-writing conference to make sure you are on the right track with an assignment. It is located in Humanities 122 (ph 310-660-3593 ext. 3873, http://www.elcamino.edu/academics/humanities/writingcenter/).

I am available to assist you with your papers, but only if you are prepared enough in advance to attend my office hours or schedule an appointment. I do not read drafts over email.

Success in This Course: Learning occurs both within and outside of the classroom. I provide a number of tools to help you learn about psychology, including lectures, in-class activities, and discussions. I am also available outside of class during office hours if you need assistance or if you want to discuss the course, college in general, or future education or career plans.

The rest of the learning process is your responsibility. To do your best in this course, read the assigned material before class meets, attend every class and take careful notes, and review your lecture notes between class meetings. You should expect to spend three hours working outside of class for every hour of lecture. With three hours of lecture per week, this means you should spend nine hours studying the material on your own.

MAKE-UP and LATE WORK POLICY

Written assignments will be penalized 10% per each day late (including weekend days) and must be handed in within a week of the due date. Assignments handed in after class on the due date are counted as one day late.

If you miss Exam 1, you may make it up only by taking a make-up test during the two last weeks of the semester. The score you earn on the make-up will be reduced by up to 10 points. You must submit a written request (email is fine) by Friday 5/28, requesting the make-up. Exam 2 cannot be made up.

In the event of emergency circumstances (medical emergencies, car accidents, death of a close family member), the above policy may be modified if you discuss your situation with me in advance of the exam or the due date. In fairness to all students, I require you to verify the extreme circumstance with adequate documentation.
DROP POLICY
You may be dropped with a W on 5/14 if it appears as though you have stopped participating in the class (e.g., you have not attended class for several days in a row). After Friday 5/14, all students enrolled in the class will be given a letter grade, regardless of participation.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
Academic dishonesty is not tolerated. I follow the El Camino Policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, and all other forms of academic dishonesty (see the College Catalog, p. 27, access here: http://www.elcamino.edu/admissions/catalog.asp). At minimum, offenders will earn a 0 on the assignment or exam.

Starting with the Brief Argumentative Essay, all essays for this class must be submitted to www.turnitin.com for a plagiarism check. Instructions will be provided on ETUDES.
# CRITICAL THINKING AND PSYCHOLOGY - SECTION 2706, TTH 11:15-12:40

## COURSE SCHEDULE

MP = Moore & Parker, Critical Thinking  
S = Stanovich, How to Think Straight about Psychology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 2/16, Th 2/18</td>
<td>Module 1: Introduction</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 1 (pp. 1-5)</td>
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<td>T 2/23, Th 2/25</td>
<td>Module 2: The Science of Psychology</td>
<td>S: Ch. 1</td>
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<td>Writing Sample due Th 2/25</td>
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<td>T 3/2, Th 3/4</td>
<td>Module 3: Claims, Issues, and Arguments</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 1 (pp. 5-22)</td>
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<td>T 3/9, Th 3/11</td>
<td>Module 4: Language and Thinking</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 3</td>
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<td>T 3/16, Th 3/18</td>
<td>Module 5: Two Kinds of Reasoning</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 2</td>
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<td>Brief Arg. Essay due T 3/16</td>
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<td>T 3/23</td>
<td>Module 6: Slanters</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 5</td>
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<td>Th 3/25, T 3/30</td>
<td>Module 7: Fallacies</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 6, 7</td>
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<td>Th 4/1, T 4/6</td>
<td>Module 8: Credibility</td>
<td>MP: Ch. 4</td>
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<td>Rhetorical Analysis due Th 4/1</td>
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<td>Th 4/8</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
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<td>4/10-4/16</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/20, Th 4/22</td>
<td>Module 9: Falsifiability and Operationism</td>
<td>S: Ch. 2, 3 Loftus</td>
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<td>T 4/27, Th 4/29</td>
<td>Module 10: Science vs. Pseudoscience</td>
<td>S: Ch. 4</td>
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<td>Article Review due Th 4/29</td>
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<td>T 5/4, Th 5/6, T 5/11, T 5/13</td>
<td>Module 11: Correlation and Experimentation</td>
<td>S: Ch. 5, 6, 7</td>
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<td>T 5/18, Th 5/20</td>
<td>Module 12: Gradual Synthesis</td>
<td>S: Ch. 8, 9</td>
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<td>Annotated Bibliography due T 5/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 5/25, Th 5/27, T 6/1, Th 6/3</td>
<td>Module 13: Probability and Chance</td>
<td>S: Ch. 10, 11 MP: Ch. 10</td>
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<td>Final Argumentative Essay due Th 6/3</td>
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<td>T 6/8</td>
<td>Module 14: Wrap-Up</td>
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<td>Th 6/10</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
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## OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:

- Last Day to Add: Friday, 2/26
- Last Day to Drop and be Eligible for a Refund: Friday, 2/26
- Last Day to Drop without Notation on Permanent Record: Friday, 3/5
- Last Day to Drop with a “W”: Friday, 5/14

**NOTE:** This syllabus may be revised as the semester progresses. Revisions will be announced in class.