**Psychology 3**  
**Critical Thinking & Psychology**

*3 units; 3 hours lecture*

*Prerequisite: English 1A with a minimum grade of C Credit, degree applicable Transfer CSU, UC*

Tuesday & Thursday: 11:15am - 12:40pm  
Office: TBA  
Section: 2710  
Location: ARTB 322

**Instructor’s Name:** Roberto Montes, M.A.  
Email: rmontes@elcamino.edu  
Phone: 310.660.3593 or 323.528.6407  
Office Hours: By appointment or immediately after class

**Required Textbook:** Critical Thinking 10th Ed. By Brooke Noel Moore & Richard Parker  
**Note:** Bring your book to all class meetings

**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 Outcomes:**
1. Students who successfully complete this course and its requirements will be able to apply the principals of critical thinking to evaluate the quality of information intended to persuade. Students will be assessed by essay exams, oral presentations.  
2. Students will be assessed by written exams, research-based argumentative papers, or oral presentations of arguments.
Course Syllabus
Spring 2012

Course Design:
Aside from lectures, you can expect to participate in class through discussions, activities, watching films related to the subject matter, and group work. I encourage everyone to share their thoughts, ideas and insights throughout the course.

This course is intended to be enjoyable and interesting for all. Much of our time will be dedicated to group discussions and activities where we will share opinions and experiences. Therefore, it is important to respect everyone’s opinions at all times and keep discussions within the classroom setting. Upon completion of this course you will be able to think with purpose, to organize thoughts to understand the world and make informed decisions.

Course Breakdown:

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<th>Wk 1</th>
<th>Wk 2</th>
<th>Wk 3</th>
<th>Wk 4</th>
<th>Wk 5</th>
<th>Wk 6</th>
<th>Wk 7</th>
<th>Wk 8</th>
<th>Wk 9</th>
<th>Wk 10</th>
<th>Wk 11</th>
<th>Wk 12</th>
<th>Wk 13</th>
<th>Wk 14</th>
<th>Wk 15</th>
<th>Wk 16</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intros &amp; Benefits to Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Ch 1 - Truth, Knowledge &amp; Value Judgments</td>
<td>Ch 2 - Deductive &amp; Inductive Reasoning</td>
<td>Ch 3 - Vagueness &amp; Ambiguity</td>
<td>Ch 4 - Credibility &amp; Knowing When to Believe</td>
<td>Ch 5 - Persuasion Through Rhetoric</td>
<td>Critical Thinking &amp; Perception</td>
<td>Ch 6 -7 - Fallacies &amp; Deceptive Influences</td>
<td>Observation &amp; Logic</td>
<td>Ch 9 - Truth, Relevance &amp; Fact Finding</td>
<td>Critical Thinking &amp; Solving Problems</td>
<td>Ch 10 - Storytelling &amp; Analogies</td>
<td>Ch 11 - Causal Explanations</td>
<td>Ch 12 - Ethics &amp; Moral Judgments</td>
<td>Examining Personal Biases &amp; Debate</td>
<td>Course Reflections</td>
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Notes: No class on April 10th & 12th

Course Grade Determination:

- Quizzes: 80 pts
- Term Paper I: 60 pts
- Term Paper II: 60 pts
- Homework: 40 pts
- Group Work & in Class Activities: 60 pts
- Total: 300 pts

Grade Scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>270-300</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>240-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>210-239</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>180-209</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59% &amp; Below</td>
<td>179 &amp; Below</td>
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Quizzes:
Quizzes will be multiple choice and short answers. Questions from the quizzes will come directly from notes, power-point presentations, discussions and assigned readings. Upon completion of each quiz, we will go over the quiz as a class to receive immediate feedback on how you’ve done and to answer any questions you may have. It is the student’s responsibility to contact their instructor to make future arrangements for make-up quizzes.

Term Papers:
The purpose of a term paper is to allow students to demonstrate their critical thinking skills through reason, logic, and truth. At a larger scope, students will be able to evaluate evidence and come with sound conclusions. A detailed guideline will be given to students two weeks before the paper is due. Topics will be developed and discussed in class.
**Late Work:**
ALL homework assignments are to be typed and turned in on the due date. Late assignments will be allowed to be turned in ONE week past the due date (some points will be deducted). After one week of the original due date, assignments will not be allowed to be turned in and students will receive no credit for the assignment.

**Academic Integrity:**
Cheating is taken very serious! It is unfair to students who have prepared for assignments and quizzes. If you are found cheating, you will automatically receive no credit for that quiz or assignment. *Plagiarism will be considered cheating.* Further disciplinary actions may be taken by your department.

**Group Work:**
Each week we will work in groups to put in practice the lecture and discussions covered in class and to give students the opportunity to, hear from their peers and develop socialization skills that you will use in the career world that you will encounter. *Please take advantage of these points as they have proven to be very valuable.*

**Attendance/ Tardiness Policy**
The College emphasizes the need for students to attend classes on a regular and consistent basis in order to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to compete in the highly competitive labor market. Since much of the program is conducted in a hands-on environment, attendance is critical to proper skill building. Each class meeting builds upon one another and allows the student to build significant connections needed to successfully complete the course. *It is highly encouraged not to miss class.*

**ADA Statement:** El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to the instructor and to the Special Resources Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resources Center.