

CCT 601
Critical Thinking
Fall 2018

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Class meeting time: Th 4-6:45
W/4/170
Office hours: W 5-7, Th 7-8,
and by arrangement at other times

(face-to-face or online)

This course explores the diverse nature and techniques of critical thinking. Views about observation and interpretation, reasoning and inference, and valuing and judging will all be considered, giving special attention to how we can help others to develop the skills and dispositions needed to do these things well. We will consider central concepts of critical thinking, their applications in a variety of domains, and ways to assess the effectiveness of their applications. Working with diverse material, from political and scientific events occurring in the world to issues and dilemmas that characterize everyday life, we will examine and practice kinds of thinking that promote reasonable, reflective action and belief. We will also consider several current issues in the field of critical thinking such as the role of gender in critical thinking, relationships between critical and creative thinking, domain-specific critical thinking, and best practices for applying thinking skills and dispositions.

We understand our thoughts better when we express them. Your contributions to learning experiences in class will be sought and you will be encouraged to gain useful insights from others as well. All of us, the instructor included, can learn from each other and grow in our abilities to challenge and modify ideas in constructive ways. Through extensive interactions with each other, in a climate of enjoyment, this class is designed for us all to continue to develop our abilities to use careful thinking and sound judgment.

Course Goals:

- (1) To develop further the critical thinking skills and dispositions of the course participants.
- (2) To help participants understand what critical thinking is and how to apply the skills and strategies of critical thinking in a wide variety of settings.
- (3) To help participants develop the capability of helping others become better critical thinkers in a wide variety of settings.

Texts: Shari Tishman, David N. Perkins, and Eileen Jay, The Thinking Classroom: Learning and Teaching in a Culture of Thinking (Boston: Allyn and Bacon)

Arthur L. Costa (ed.), Developing Minds: A Resource Book for Teaching Thinking, 3rd

edition (Alexandria, VA: ASCD) [Abbreviated as DM]

Additional readings will be distributed through email..

Requirements:

- (1) Doing the reading carefully in preparation for class.
- (2) Taking part in class discussion and activities and making a class presentation. The presentation may take any of several forms, including leading the class discussion of an assigned reading or guiding an activity on a related topic. A proposal for the presentation is due by October 25. [20%]
- (3) Doing the weekly writing [40 %]. Some weeks there will be a specific assigned topic for a short paper (2-3 double-spaced, typewritten pages). Other weeks you may write informally on any topic of your choice related to the course. This may include reflections on the readings, reactions to the class discussions, thoughts about how you might go about relating the issues we are considering to your own teaching, careers, and lives, difficulties you are having, and so on. Each week I will collect the written work and respond to it. (On-line students should e-mail the written work by the day of the class.) The writing assignment for December 6 will be the course metacognitive assignment (a Critical Thinking Manifesto of about 3-4 typewritten pages), suitable for inclusion in your Reflective Practice and Metacognitive Portfolio.
- (4) Writing an 8-10 page (double-spaced, typewritten) final paper, due December 20 [40%]. A 2-page proposal for this is due by November 29. The topic of your paper may also be the basis for your presentation, but it need not be. The paper will allow students to pursue their individual interests connected to the themes of the course. Teachers, for example, may wish to consider applications to their own teaching. Other students may similarly write on topics connected to their personal or professional interests.

Class Schedule and List of Readings

- 1) Sept. 13 Introductions. Thinking about critical thinking: What is critical thinking? Our initial conceptions of critical thinking.
- 2) Sept. 20 Educational reform and the CCT Program. Critical thinking and intelligence.

Readings: Lauren B. Resnick, "Making America Smarter";
Lauren B. Resnick and Megan Williams Hall, "Learning Organizations
for Sustainable Education Reform"

3) Sept. 27 Who is a critical thinker? What do critical thinkers do?

Readings: Richard Paul, "Teaching Critical thinking in the Strong Sense: A focus on Self-Deception, World Views, and a Dialectical Mode of Analysis";
Robert H. Ennis, "Goals for a Critical Thinking Curriculum and Its Assessment" [DM, pp. 44-46];
Dee Dickinson, "Thoughtful Parenting" [DM, pp. 101-105];
David S. Martin, "For Administrators: Keeping the Focus" [DM, pp. 123-125]

4) Oct. 4 A culture of thinking and the language of thinking. Six dimensions of a culture of thinking. Cultural forces: models, explanation, interaction, and feedback. Why teach thinking? Why be a critical thinker? Critical thinking skills (abilities), dispositions, and techniques.

Readings: Shari Tishman et al., pp. 1-36 ("The Idea of a Culture of Thinking," "The Language of Thinking," and "The Language of Thinking: Pictures of Practice");
Arthur L. Costa and Robert J. Marzano, "Teaching the Language of Thinking" [DM, pp. 379-383];
LeRoy Hay, "Thinking Skills for the Information Age" [DM, pp. 7-10];
Sheldon Berman, "Thinking in Context: Teaching for Open-mindedness and Critical Understanding" [DM, pp. 11-17];
John Edwards, "Learning and Thinking in the Workplace" [DM, pp. 23-28];

5) Oct. 11 Developing as a critical thinker. Dispositions. Open-mindedness as a critical thinking disposition. Problem solving and decision making as contexts for application of critical thinking. Changing conceptions of intelligence.

Readings: Shari Tishman et al., pp. 37-64 ("Thinking Dispositions" and "Thinking Dispositions: Pictures of Practice");
Shari Tishman, "Added Value: A Dispositional Perspective on Thinking" [DM, pp. 72-75];
Jonathan Baron, "Actively Open-minded Thinking" [DM, pp. 76-79];
Arthur L. Costa, "Habits of Mind" [DM, pp. 80-86];
Jack Lochhead and Aletta Zietsman, "What Is Problem Solving?" [DM, pp. 54-57];
Robert J. Swartz, "Thinking about Decisions" [DM, pp. 58-66];
Robin Fogarty, "Our Changing Perspective of Intelligence: Master Architects of the Intellect" [DM, pp. 144-149]

6) Oct. 18 Examples of critical thinking skills: assessing source credibility and observation.

Perceptual filters; point of view; frame of reference; world view. Thinking and writing.
Metacognition as mental management (awareness, evaluation, and planning). Self-assessment.

Readings: Shari Tishman et al., pp. 65-95 ("Mental Management" and "Mental Management: Pictures of Practice");
Arthur Costa, "Mediating the Metacognitive" [DM, pp. 408-412];
Barry K. Beyer, "Teaching Thinking Skills—Defining the Problem" [DM, pp. 35-40];
Peter Elbow, "Teaching Two Kinds of Critical Thinking by Teaching Writing";
Jay McTighe and Frank T. Lyman Jr., "Cueing Thinking in the Classroom: The Promise of Theory-embedded Tools" [DM, pp. 384-392];
Barry K. Beyer, "What Research Says about Teaching Thinking Skills" [DM, pp. 275-282]

7) Oct. 25 The strategic spirit. Multiple perspectives and strong-sense critical thinking.
Infusion of critical thinking in regular instruction in a wide range of domains. Lesson plan and action plan remodeling. Critical thinking outside schools.

Proposal for Presentation Due

Readings: Shari Tishman et al., pp. 97-124 ("The Strategic Spirit" and "The Strategic Spirit: Pictures of Practice");
Richard Paul, "Dialogical and Dialectical Thinking" [DM, pp. 427-436];
Robert J. Swartz, "Infusing Critical and Creative Thinking into Content Instruction" [DM, pp. 266-274];
Select one of the essays in Section VII ("Teaching in School Subjects") in Developing Minds;
Geoffrey Caine and Renate Nummela Caine, "Capitalizing on the Invisible Dimension of Organizational Learning" [DM, pp. 96-100]

8) Nov. 1 Methodological believing as part of critical thinking. Listening. Teacher behaviors. The teacher as designer.

Readings: Peter Elbow, "Methodological Believing and Doubting";
Arthur Costa, "Teacher Behaviors That Enable Student Thinking" [DM, 359-369];
Barry K. Beyer, "Developing a Scope and Sequence for Thinking Skills Instruction" [DM, pp. 248-252];
Bena Kallick and Marian Leibowitz, "Teacher as 'Thought-full' Designer" [DM, pp. 253-255];

9) Nov. 8 Critical thinking skills: causal reasoning. Pedagogical constructivism.

Readings: Owen Gingerich, "The Galileo Affair";
Jacqueline Grennon Brooks and Martin G. Brooks, "Becoming a
Constructivist Teacher" [DM, pp. 150-157];
David Perkins, "The Social Side of Thinking" [DM, pp. 158-163];
David Perkins, "Thinking for Understanding" [DM, pp. 446-450];
Barbara Z. Presseisen, "Thinking Skills: Meanings and Models Revisited"
[DM, pp. 47-53]

10) Nov. 15 Problem-based learning (PBL). Higher order knowledge: critical thinking and
content knowledge. Domain-specific critical thinking. Environments for thinking.

Readings: Shari Tishman et al., pp. 125-154 ("Higher Order Knowledge" and
"Higher Order Knowledge: Pictures of Practice");
John Barrell, Cheryl Hopper, and Ann White, "Big Rocks and Powerful
Kingdoms: Problem-based Learning in Science and Social Studies"
[DM, pp. 256-261];
Robert J. Sternberg, "Teaching Problem Solving as a Way of Life" [DM,
pp. 451-454];
John Barrell, "Designing the Invitational Environment" [DM, pp. 106-
110];
Arthur L. Costa, "Mediative Environments" [DM, pp. 135-140]

Nov. 22 Thanksgiving

11) Nov. 29 Emotion and critical thinking. More on dialogical and strong-sense critical
thinking. Rational passions. Philosophy and critical thinking.

Proposal for Final Paper Due

Readings: Robert J. Swartz, "In the Grips of Emotion" [DM, pp. 164-169];
Richard Paul, "Dialogical thinking: Critical Thought Essential to the
Acquisition of Rational Knowledge and Passions";
Barry K. Beyer, "What Philosophy Offers to the Teaching of Thinking"
[DM, pp. 87-91];
Thomas E. Jackson, "The Art and Craft of 'Gently Socratic' Inquiry"
[DM, pp. 459-465]

12) Dec. 6 Empathy. Critical thinking and gender. Cultural contexts. Transfer.
Strategies and tactics for facilitating thinking.

Manifesto Due

Readings: Delores Gallo, "Educating for Empathy, Reason, and Imagination"; Douglas F. Brenner and Sandra Parks, "Cultural Influences on Critical Thinking and Problem Solving" [DM, pp. 216-221]; Ruby K. Payne, "Thinking in a Culture of Poverty" [DM, pp. 229-233]; Shari Tishman et al., pp. 155-184 ("Teaching for Transfer" and "Teaching for Transfer: Pictures of Practice"); Arthur Costa, "Teaching For, Of, and About Thinking" [DM, pp. 354-358]; David Perkins and Gavriel Salomon, "Teaching for Transfer" [DM, pp. 370-378]; Barry K. Beyer, "Practical Strategies for Direct Instruction in Thinking Skills" [DM, pp. 393-400]

13) Dec. 13 Relationships between critical and creative thinking. Multiple intelligences. Thinking styles. Assessing the development of critical thinking. Criteria development and authentic assessment.

Readings: Gerard J. Puccio and Mary C. Murdock, "Creative Thinking: An Essential Life Skill" [DM, pp. 67-71]; Donald J. Treffinger and Scott G. Isaksen, "Teaching for Creative Learning and Problem Solving" [DM, pp. 442-445]; Armando Lozano, "A Survey of Thinking and Learning Styles" [DM, pp. 192-196]; Robert J. Sternberg, "Thinking Styles" [DM, pp. 197-201]; David G. Lazear, "Teaching For, With, and About Multiple Intelligences" [DM, pp. 202-210]; Elliott Asp, "To Think or Not to Think: Thinking as Measured on State and National Assessments" [DM, pp. 497-510]; Monty Neill, "State Exams Flunk Test of Quality Thinking" [DM, pp. 511-516]; Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick, "Building a System for Assessing Thinking" [DM, pp. 517-524]; Robert Stone, "How Teachers Can Assess the Thinking Skills They Are Teaching" [DM, pp. 525-527]; Kay Burke, "Performances to Assess Standards and Intellectual Growth" [DM, pp. 528-532]; Barry K. Beyer, "A Format for Assessing Thinking Skills [DM, pp. 533-540] ; Alec Fisher, "Assessing Thinking Skills" [DM, pp. 541-545]; Shari Tishman et al., pp. 185-199 ("Pulling It All Together"); Barry K. Beyer, "Putting It All Together to Improve Student Thinking" [DM, pp. 417-424]

December 20

Final Paper Due

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It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of academic life--not only formal coursework situations, but all relationships and interactions connected to the educational process--shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. The University presupposes that any submission of work for academic credit is the student's own and is in compliance with University policies, including its policies on appropriate citation and plagiarism. These policies are spelled out in the Code of Student Conduct. Students are required to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct, including requirements for academic honesty, as delineated in the University of Massachusetts Boston Graduate Catalogue and relevant program student handbook(s)

http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/code.

