PHIL 103
Critical Thinking
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

PHIL 103 – Critical Thinking: is a course that focuses on fundamental principles of reasoning and rationality, with emphasis on logic, argumentation, and real-world applications. Students explore reasoning strategies to analyze and construct effective, evidence-based arguments in dynamic social, ethical, scientific, and technological contexts. The course is designed to encourage students to recognize the value of logical thinking in everyday life circumstances.

Co-requisites: ACLT 053 or (ESOL 052 and ESOL 054)

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. identify common cognitive biases and their effects on reasoning;
2. evaluate deductive, inductive, and abductive arguments;
3. construct deductive, inductive, and abductive arguments;
4. identify value assumptions in an argument;
5. define truth, belief, and knowledge;
6. implement basic probability and statistical reasoning;
7. defend a thesis with sustained argumentation;
8. reason with and about scientific methodology and technology;
9. formulate solutions to conceptual, ethical, and practical problems in a variety of real-world contexts;
10. apply critical reasoning to issues of justice and equity arising in multicultural environments;
11. identify common formal and informal fallacies;
12. apply technology to conduct research for course assignments, group collaborations, and final paper; and
13. find, evaluate, use, and cite academically appropriate resources for discussing critical thinking topics.

Major Topics
   I.   Arguments
         a. Deductive
         b. Inductive
         c. Abductive

          d. Evaluation and objection
  II.   Barriers to effective reasoning
          a. Heuristics and cognitive biases
          b. Formal fallacies
          c. Informal fallacies
  III.   Epistemology
  IV.   Applied reasoning in real-world contexts
  V.   Basic statistical, scientific, and technological reasoning
  VI.   Thesis formation and defense
  VII.   Research and documentation skills

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- two exams
- one cognitive biases and fallacies activity
- one argument construction activity
- one technology implementation assignment, such as Artificial Intelligence evaluation or basic coding lesson
- one argumentative written activity which addresses 5 of the 7 GenEd Outcomes and is worth at least 10% of the overall course grade.

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

Other Course Information

This course is an approved 3–credit General Education course in the Arts and Humanities.

One or more assignments will infuse CCBC General Education Program outcomes and will account for a minimum of 10% of the total course grade. The assignment(s) will allow students to demonstrate at least 5 of the 7 General Education program outcomes.