

Psychology 3 – Fall 2017 -- Section 2801

Critical Thinking and Psychology

Kevin Dooley, Ph.D.

<http://dooleykevin.com/psyc3.html>

Note: ECC requires that the following general course information appear first on every course syllabus. Specific course information vital to student success this semester is found page 2 ("Instructor Contact").

Course Information (from ECC Catalogue):

3 units; 3 hours lecture; Prerequisite: English 1A With a Minimum Grade of C; Credit; degree applicable Transfer CSU, UC

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:

SLO#1 Logic of the Scientific Method- On examination (e.g., m/c, T/F, fill-in, matching, essay), written essay, research paper, and/or oral presentation, students will be able to describe the hallmark characteristics of the scientific method and contrast it with other forms of inquiry.

SLO#2 Fundamental Principles- On examination (e.g., m/c, T/F, fill-in, matching, essay), written essay, research paper, and/or oral presentation, students will be able to differentiate and compare fundamental critical thinking concepts (e.g., premises, conclusions, and qualifiers; inductive versus deductive, valid versus sound arguments).

SLO#3 Everyday Application- On examination (e.g., m/c, T/F, fill-in, matching, essay), written essay, research paper, and/or oral presentation, students will be able to apply principles of critical thinking (e.g., logical fallacies, rhetorical devices) in their daily decision-making (product purchase, school selection, medical treatment).

Student Code of Conduct

<http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/board/boarddocs/5500%20%20Academic%20Honesty.pdf>

Student Rights and Grievances Procedure 5530

<http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/board/policies.asp>

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 & to the Special Resource Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resource Center (SRC).

The mission of the SRC is to facilitate academic success for verified students with disabilities by providing equal access to educational opportunities in an integrated campus setting. The SRC provides support services, adaptive equipment, computer technology, & specialized instruction designed to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities.

In order to be eligible for support services or accommodations, a student must provide documentation of his/her disability or be assessed by SRC professional staff. Eligibility is determined by specially trained & highly skilled professional staff members. Specific educational needs are identified on an individual basis, & a plan is developed with each student. Examples of services or accommodations include but are not limited to: American Sign Language interpreters, testing accommodations, access technologies, or printed materials made available in alternate formats. Students with verifiable disabilities who do not wish to avail

themselves of the services of the SRC may still be eligible for reasonable accommodation(s) & service(s) by contacting the Dean of Enrollment Services at 310-660-3482 located in the Student Services Center, Room 200.

El Camino College recognizes its responsibility to provide an equal opportunity for education for all students. It is the policy (Board Policy 1600) of the El Camino Community College District to encourage full inclusion in all programs & services. Accommodations & alternate formats are available upon request. Please visit us in person -- east side of the Student Services Center, on the web -- www.elcamino.edu/academics/src , or on the phone -- 310-660-3295 or 424-236-6264 (VP).

Instructor Contact:

Kevin Dooley, Ph.D.

Email: kdooley@elcamino.edu

Class Locations: Tues & Thurs 2 - 3:25 PM, ARTB 350

Office Hours: After class by appointment

Grading Basis: Standard letter grades (Total score: 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; ≤ 59% = F)

- 4 tests x 15% each (60% of total grade). No makeups; optional cumulative final to replace lowest test score
- 1 group project (10%); 1 term paper (20%); 1 individual presentation (10%) (see website for details)

Required Texts & Materials:

- Moore, B. & Parker, R. (2017) *Critical Thinking*. 10th, 11th, or 12th ed., NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Schick, T. & Vaughn, L. (2014) *How to Think about Weird Things*. 7th ed., NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Pencils, paper, scantron forms (Form #882-E)

Lecture Schedule:

Date	Lecture Topic	Readings
8/29, 8/31	Introduction; Claims, Beliefs, & Biases	M.P Ch. 1
9/5, 9/7	Arguments & Reasoning	Ch. 2
9/12, 9/14	Clear Thinking & Writing, Test 1 (ch. 1-3)	Ch. 3
9/19, 9/21	Credibility	Ch. 4
9/26, 9/28	Rhetoric & Persuasion	Ch. 5
10/3, 10/5	Relevance Fallacies, Test 2 (ch. 4-6)	Ch. 6
10/10, 10/12	Induction Fallacies, Formal Fallacies	Ch. 7 & 8
10/17, 10/19	Deduction 1: Categorical Logic, (groups meet)	Ch. 9
10/24, 10/26	Deduction 2: Truth-Functional Logic, Test 3 (ch. 7-9)	Ch. 10
10/31, 11/2	Deduction 2 Cont'd, Inductive Reasoning	Ch. 11
11/7, 11/9	Inductive Reasoning Cont'd, Moral Reasoning	Ch. 12
11/14, 11/16	Test 4 (ch. 10-12) , Discuss individual presentations & paper	S.V Ch.1-2
11/21, 11/23	Discuss group projects, <i>Thanksgiving- no class Thursday</i>	Ch. 3-4
11/28, 11/30	Individual Presentations	Ch. 5-6
12/5, 12/7	Group Project Presentations	Ch. 7-8
12/12, 12/14	Paper due & Review; Final (Cumulative)	

Course Policies:

- I want the classroom atmosphere to be friendly and relaxed, so that everyone can participate and enjoy.
- This course will cover a variety of topics, some of which may be controversial. By registering for & remaining in this course, students are agreeing to treat these issues in a manner that respects viewpoints differing from their own. In general, please be respectful & considerate towards others.

- Exam dates are listed above--assume all announced exam dates are valid unless notified otherwise by the professor. Students are expected to demonstrate their commitment to this class & their college education by scheduling work & vacation around the times that this course meets.
- Students are responsible for keeping abreast of announcements, including any changes in exam schedule or material.
- Study guides are not provided in this class; instead, students are expected to attend lectures in an active, purposeful way – i.e., taking extensive notes that will comprise their own study guide; See website for additional resources.
- Course grades are determined solely by the requirements detailed in *Grading Basis* above. Extra credit is offered on exams but is not invented at the end of the semester to make up for failing scores throughout the semester.
- Each student should have access to the textbook and complete the required reading before each class meeting.

ECC Policies

- Students who enroll in class but do not attend the first scheduled class meeting may be dropped from the roster & their places given to waiting students who were unable to enroll at the time of registration. If illness or emergency prevents a student from attending the first class session, the student must contact the instructor. A student who registers for a class & never attends is still responsible for dropping the class. Failure to properly drop a class may result in a “W” & may subject the student for any & all fees associated with the class.
- Students will not be permitted to attend classes in which they are not enrolled. Exceptions may be allowed by the instructor for bonafide visitors. Students who attend a class without proper enrollment (the student did not properly register or add the class) by the published deadline will not be permitted to “late add” the class except for documented extenuating & mitigating circumstances.
- Students are expected to attend their classes regularly. Students who miss the first class meeting or who are not in regular attendance during the add period for the class may be dropped by the instructor. Students whose absences from a class exceed 10% of the scheduled class meeting time may be dropped by the instructor. However, students are responsible for dropping a class within the deadlines published in the class schedule. Students who stop attending but do not drop may still be retained on the course roster & receive a failing grade. Students may view their registration status on *MyECC*.
- If space is available, students who have completed registration may add a class by going to the first meeting of the class & securing permission of the instructor. It is the responsibility of the student to fulfill all requirements to add a course, & to add the course by the add deadline in accordance with college procedures. Adds will not be processed beyond the add deadline.
- Official withdrawal from class must be processed through the online system in the Admissions Office. Failure to complete this process may result in the assignment of a letter grade of A through F.
- It is the responsibility of the student to officially drop a class by the deadline date.
- September 9 is the last day to: 1) Add classes, 2) Drop for an Enrollment Fee Refund, & 3) Drop without Notation on Permanent Record.
- November 18 is the last day to drop with a “W”. Students should independently confirm these important dates themselves.