1. Program Identifier: Lifelong Learning

2. LL 270 Critical Thinking  
   Winter, 2017

3. Instructor: Leodis Scott, Ed.D. leodis.scott@depaul.edu, appts by request

4. Course Dates: 1/12/2017-3/16/2017; Thursdays 5:45PM - 9:00PM

5. Course Location: DePaul Center (Lower Level) C 104

6. Course Description
   This course introduces adult learners to critical thinking as a continual lifelong process. It is a process requiring competence in the rules of argument and awareness in the experiences of reflection and self-assessment. This course challenges learners to become critical and reflective thinkers. Through developing their knowledge, skills, and perspectives, adult learners will select meaningful choices among complex issues. Some knowledge includes principles of logic, styles of persuasion, even techniques of propaganda. Certain skills will apply analytical strategies for recognizing, constructing, and evaluating multiple arguments. Applying diverse perspectives may invite adult learners to think differently about themselves and their society through testing assumptions, finding fallacies, and sharing thoughts and ideas with others.

7. Learning Outcomes, Competences, and/or Objectives
   Lifelong Learning Area (L5): Can analyze issues and reconcile problems through critical and appreciative thinking.
   - Analyzes, critiques, and evaluates different forms of thinking and reasoned discourse;
   - Constructs well-reasoned arguments in the context of real-life experiences and issues.

   After completing this course, there are nine (9) outcomes that adult learners should be able to achieve:
   - Identify claims and assess their fit with reasons
   - Distinguish among different kinds of reasons presented to support claims
   - Distinguish between reports, inferences, and judgments
   - Identify common rhetorical strategies, logical fallacies, and propaganda techniques
   - Recognize, construct and make evaluative distinctions among different kinds of arguments
   - Examine experiences with critical scrutiny
   - Discuss the roles played by perception, emotion, and belief in shaping views
   - Recognize problems and limitations inherent in linguistic discourse
   - Appreciate, engage with, and make use of viewpoints other than one’s own
8. **Learning Strategies & Resources**

The course design brings together several different learning activities in the pursuit of evidence for the L5 competence: textual analysis (written and oral), argument-development, collaborative critical reading, journal writing, oral presentation, dialogue, and debate. These activities for learning are the foundation of all required assignments, and reflect the formal specifications of the L5 assessment criteria. A variety of learning strategies will also include textbook readings and references, class discussions, informal lectures, video screenings, individual and group exercises, dialogues and papers.

Required text:


Recommended texts:


Additional materials will be made available through the E-Reserve services of DePaul Library and/or Desire2Learn (D2L).

9. **Learning Deliverables**

There are four (4) evidence of learning that adult learners will submit:

- Analysis of materials (written, oral, visual)
- Reflective journal entries, exercises, and in-class activities
- Dialogue and debate (participation, presentations, and in-class discussions)
- Synthesizing essay (i.e., a reflective and critical argument)

10. **Assessment of Student Learning**

**Grading Basis: Pass/Fail or Letter Grade Option:** It is assumed students will take SNL’s Critical Thinking course on a Pass/Fail grading basis (i.e., PA or F). Instructors of the Critical Thinking course within the Lifelong Learning Area of the BA curriculum regularly use the Pass/Fail grading system that instead may be taken for a letter grade assessment by student preference. If you are enrolled in this course, then the grade roster has already listed you on the Pass/Fail basis.

However, if you like, you may elect to take this course for a letter grade (i.e., A, B, C, D, or F). If you are interested in taking the course for a letter grade, you should discuss the matter with your instructor. (You want to choose the best option for you.) *If you do wish to take the course for a letter grade, you must notify the instructor in writing of your wish to do so by the beginning of the third class of the quarter.* Additional Description of the Pass/Fail Grading Options is in the Addenda section of the syllabus.
11. Grading Criteria & Scale
Each of the major assignments in the course has its own mini-rubric for assigning points. Generally, the following descriptions apply to the meaning of pass/fail of letter grades:

Work assessed as A or Pass with high marks is characterized by thorough and thoughtful engagement with the material, superior comprehension of key concepts and exceptionally fluent, college-level writing. Work that is—thoughtfully engaged covers the basics but goes beyond them by a) drawing insightful connections; b) raising incisive questions; and c) making well-supported evaluations, inferences, or arguments.

Work assessed as B or Pass with good marks is characterized by thorough engagement with the material, good comprehension of key concepts and fully fluent, college-level writing. Work that is—thoroughly engaged covers the basics and applies them aptly and consistently, while providing the occasional provocative connection, relevant question or well-supported evaluation.

Work assessed as C or Pass with adequate marks is characterized by engagement with the material, comprehension of key concepts and mostly fluent, college-level writing. Work that is—engaged covers the basics and applies them aptly without going beyond them.

Work assessed as D or Fail with mostly low marks is characterized by low engagement with the material, comprehension of few key concepts and writing that is intermittently fluent. Work that is—lowly engaged occasionally covers the basics and attempts to apply them with limited success.

Work assessed as F or Fail with overall low marks is characterized by poor engagement with the material, incomprehension of key concepts and writing that lacks fluency. Work that is—poorly engaged covers few or no basics and attempts to apply them without success.

The course activities are given point-values calculating to 100 points in total:
- 20 Points: Dialogue and debate (participation, presentations, and in-class discussions)
- 20 Points: Reflective journal entries and in-class activities
- 20 Points: Analysis of materials (written, oral, visual)
- 40 Points: Synthesizing essay
  100 Points Total

Grading Scale in points
91 -100 A or Pass with high marks
81- 90 B or Pass with good marks
71- 80 C or Pass with adequate marks
61- 70 D or Fail with mostly low marks
60 or lower F or Fail with overall low marks
## 12. Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule that is *subject to change* during the course, changes will be communicated during weekly sessions and via email through D2L.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Course Session Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course &amp; Syllabus Overview: Critical Thinking and Situational Judgment</td>
<td>D2L / E-Reserves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Asking Questions &amp; Exploring Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td>Journal Entry #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rules of Arguments, Evaluation, &amp; Analysis (Part One)</td>
<td>Morrow&amp;Weston Ch. 1 D2L / E-Reserves</td>
<td>Journal Entry #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rules of Arguments, Evaluation, &amp; Analysis (Part Two)</td>
<td>Morrow&amp;Weston Ch. 1 D2L</td>
<td>Argument Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fallacies, Bias, &amp; Propaganda</td>
<td>Morrow&amp;Weston Appendix I</td>
<td>Journal Entry #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Critical Thinking &amp; Critical Reflection in Adult Life</td>
<td>Brookfield Ch. 3 D2L / E-Reserves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oral &amp; Visual Arguments</td>
<td></td>
<td>Synthesizing Essay (First Draft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Practice &amp; Presentation of Arguments from Diverse Perspectives</td>
<td>D2L / E-Reserves</td>
<td><strong>Formal Debate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Stages of Adult Learner Development &amp; Self-Assessment</td>
<td>D2L / E-Reserves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Situational Judgment Revisited: Criteria for Critical Thinking</td>
<td>D2L (Dropbox)</td>
<td>Synthesizing Essay (Final Draft)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Course Policies

a. **Adult/Professional Engagement:** All course participants (students & instructors alike) are responsible for co-creating the learning space of this course—contributing individual uniqueness while also modulating them for the sake of group learning. In this regard, professional engagement is expected from all—and particularly in areas of difference. Such engagement manifests itself through punctual attendance, thorough preparation, focused and respectful interactions (turning off electronic devices; curtailing side-conversations; active listening; informed contributions; probing questions; involved discussion; open-mindedness; etc.) as well as a high degree of both self-motivation and self-accountability. In addition, as adults, we are all responsible for requesting what we need to improve/sustain learning. The answer may be ‘yes’ or ‘no’---but, not to request is to leave the matter to chance. For additional information pertaining to DePaul’s Code of Student Responsibility, see: http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/index.html

b. **Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to adhere to the University’s policy regarding academic integrity (involving plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty). Violations of academic integrity will be adjudicated in accordance with this policy. For additional information pertaining to Academic Integrity, see following link: http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf

c. **Attendance:** In accordance with adult/professional engagement (above) and, in particular, the importance of co-creating the learning space of this course, students are expected to participate and contribute within all class sessions. Lack of attendance (absences, late arrivals, early departures, etc.) may, at the discretion of the Instructor, impact final grade assignment. Students whose lack of attendance is equal to, or in excess of, one-third of all class sessions are advised to drop the course to avoid a grade of C- or lower which would necessitate reregistering for the course.

d. **Classroom-based Research involving Human Subjects:** Students are expected, when conducting research through the auspices of this course, to exhibit concern for the confidentiality and protection of their research subjects—guaranteeing anonymity wherever possible. Should there be any possibility or intent to publish or otherwise disseminate data and findings of research associated with this course, students are required to file an application for review of their methods protocol with the IRB (Institutional Review Board) prior to beginning any data collection. For additional information pertaining to Classroom-based Research, see following link: http://research.depaul.edu/IRB/IRB_Home.html

e. **Incomplete Grade:** Students seeking an “incomplete” (due to unusual or unforeseeable circumstances not encountered by other students and as acceptable to the instructor) are to request such in accordance with the University’s policy regarding incompletes. To request an incomplete, students are to complete and submit the required form in advance of grading deadlines listed in the syllabus. Instructors are not obligated to accept all requests for incompletes. For additional
information pertaining to “incompletes” (including required form), see following link: See http://snl/StudentResources/Graduate_Resources/Grades.asp

f. **Learning Disabilities:** Students who have need of an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor as early in the course as possible for a private/confidential conversation. In addition, students should contact Plus Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 or The Office for Students with Disabilities at 773-325-7290. See http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/plus/index.asp

g. **Writing Assistance:** Students who wish assistance with their writing may seek such through the DePaul Writing Centers. These centers offer resources for student writers through both on-site and online services. Students are advised to consult the following links for information pertaining to writing assistance: http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/index.html and/or http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies specifically described in the links below:

- [Academic Integrity Policy](#) (UGRAD)
- [Incomplete Policy](#)
- [Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences](#)
- [Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability](#)
- [Protection of Human Research Participants](#)

14. **Course Resources**

- [University Center for Writing-based Learning](#)
- [SNL Writing Guide](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)

15. **Instructor Brief Bio**

Dr. Leodis Scott is an Instructional Assistant Professor at DePaul University-College of Education and serves as part-time/adjunct faculty for the School for New Learning in teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses in the topics of Critical Thinking, Research Seminar, Quantitative Reasoning, and Developing Professional Identity. Dr. Scott is cofounder and research scholar at LearnLong Institute for Education and Learning Research, a non-profit educational membership think-tank informing individuals and the public about professional, adult, higher, and continuing education.

Dr. Scott also teaches and speaks nationally in adult learning philosophy, practice, and assessment that include MacCormac College (Chicago), and Columbia University-Teachers College (New York). His latest work includes an edited book entitled, *Learning Cities for Adult Learners* (Spring 2015) for New Directions in Adult & Continuing Education. Leodis received a doctorate of education with a concentration in adult learning and leadership from Columbia University-Teachers College.