Alabama Community College System

PHL 110
Critical Thinking

I. Critical Thinking — 3 Semester Hours

II. Course Description

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts of critical thinking with a focus on effective decision making and practical reasoning skills. The central goal of this course is to empower students to think more clearly and analytically about their beliefs and to be more effective in arguing for well-reasoned conclusions and solutions. Students will critically interpret, synthesize, analyze and evaluate information and language use for formal and informal fallacies, argument forms, deductive and inductive logic, and other methods of argument evaluation. Students will be expected to recognize and avoid common barriers to critical thinking as well as apply the ideas of the course to real-world issues.

III. Prerequisite

None

IV. Textbook

Due to the varied selection of quality college-level textbooks, each college will select the textbook needed to meet the requirements of this course.

Recommended Textbook: Stuart Hanscomb – *Critical Thinking: The Basics.* 2nd Edition. Routledge

V. Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop, defend, and assess ways of thinking about thinking
2. Identify and mitigate against common psychological barriers to logical and critical thinking
3. Analyze language problems (e.g., ambiguity, vagueness, and emotionally loaded language)
4. Use critical thinking tools and skills to develop and to evaluate arguments
5. Recognize and critically assess extended arguments in every day contexts and in various fields
6. Detect and avoid informal fallacies

VI. Course Outline of Topics

1. Critical thinking approaches, processes, and obstacles
2. Arguments, logic, and fallacious reasoning
3. The role of language, perceptions, and belief in critical inquiry
4. Causal arguments, inferences, judging sources
5. Critical reasoning, problem solving, and creative thinking applications

VII. Learning Modules

A. Critical thinking approaches, processes, and obstacles
B. Arguments, logic, and fallacious reasoning
C. The role of language, perceptions, and belief in critical inquiry
D. Causal arguments, inferences, judging sources
E. Critical reasoning, problem solving, and creative thinking applications

VIII. Evaluation and Assessment

Grades will be given based upon A = 90 – 100%, B = 80 – 89%, C = 70 – 79%, D = 60 – 69%, and F = below 60%.

IX. Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes for which they are registered. Students who are unable to attend class regularly, regardless of the reason or circumstance, should withdraw from that class before poor attendance interferes with the student's ability to achieve the objectives required in the course. Withdrawal from class can affect eligibility for federal financial aid.

X. Statement on Discrimination/Harassment

It is the official policy of the Alabama Community College System and entities under its control, including all Colleges, that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of any impermissible criterion or characteristic, including, without limitation, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, sex, age, or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law. (ACCS Policies 601.02 and 800.00)

XI. Americans with Disabilities

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the *Americans with Disabilities Act* of 1990 state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the essential functions and academic requirements are entitled to reasonable accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate disability documentation to the College.