

CORE 115: Critical Thinking and Identity

3 credit hours

a combination of Core 110 and 120 for Transfer Students with more than 30 hours

Required Readings and Materials

Texts

Elder, Linda and Richard Paul. *Guide to Critical Thinking*. Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2009.

Stevenson, Leslie and David L. Haberman. *Ten Theories of Human Nature*. 5th ed. NY: Oxford UP, 2008.

Mission Statements

ACU's Mission – to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

General Education Core Mission — to introduce students to and engage them in the process of thinking critically, globally, and missionally, preparing them for the rigor of academic excellence and university life at ACU.

Course Mission—to introduce students to the intellectual and spiritual life of Abilene Christian University by addressing issues of identity and the self in the context of the University's mission.

Course Prerequisite and Description

This course is intended for first or second-year college students who have transferred to ACU with more than 30 credit hours.

The purpose of this course is to engage students in thinking critically, missionally, and globally about the ideas which shape our current and future views of ourselves. Special attention is given to a Christian perspective of liberal education as a foundation for life-long integration of faith, ideas, and action. Students will be exposed to various historical ideas about the self, consider the differences between human persons and the rest of creation, examine exterior forces that constrain the self, and create a statement of personal identity. This will be done through in-class presentations, mentored class discussion, and personal and collaborative writing to reflect on how individually and as a culture we have come to understand ourselves and how we might change our understanding now and in the future.

Required Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define and give examples of critical, global, and missional thinking.
2. Demonstrate a critical awareness of social location.
3. Articulate a critical assessment of various views of the self (including at least ancient, modern, post-modern views, and physical).*
4. Explore the ethical and moral implications of living an integrated, Christ-centered life of faith through informed judgments, reasoning, and evaluations.
5. Describe various manifestations of empathy.
6. Utilize a multidisciplinary approach to analyzing the self in a variety of locations such as historical context, philosophical milieu, aesthetic situation, and theological framework.
7. Identify and describe strengths and weaknesses of different discipline's approaches to analyzing the self in a variety of locations.

Note: Objectives 1-5 comprise 60% of the class, while objectives 6 and 7 comprise 40%.

* It is expected that coverage of these four areas will be tied directly to concepts arising out of the required text, specifically chapters 1-3 (Ancient Eastern traditions), 4-5 (Ancient Greek traditions), 6 (the Bible), the Historical Interlude and Chapter 7 (early modern and Enlightenment traditions) and 10 (Darwinian theories) as well as appropriate supplementary material and that sufficient depth of coverage (at least 2 to 3 class periods per area) will be planned for in the syllabus.

Required Assignments with Suggested Grade Weights

NOTE: Assignments may be used to meet any course objectives, and additional assignments may be added at the professor's discretion.

- *Preparation and Daily Work* (5-20%)
 - Read all assignment material by the class period indicated in the course schedule. Come prepared to participate in discussions, small-group activities, to take quizzes over reading material, and to turn in assignments.
- *Class Participation* (20-30%)
 - Discussion: Be prepared and willing to participate in class discussions over the reading and course materials.
 - Course blogs: create topical entries assigned by professors
- *Social Location Essay* (5-15%)
 - a short reaction paper (3-5 pages) offering a personal perspective of one's social location
- *Analytic Paper or Project* (20-40%)
 - a medium-length analytical essay (5-7 pages) or creation of a complex artifact that critically responds to specific course issues
- *Final Exam* (10-20%)
 - Written response to a case scenario identifying specific empathetic features, and drawing conclusions for alternative or additional empathetic gestures.

Course Competencies and Measurements

	Competency	Measurement Instrument
1	Define and give examples of critical, global, and missional thinking	Class Discussion Class Participation
2	Demonstrate a critical awareness of social location	Class Discussion Social Location Essay
3	Articulate a critical assessment of various views of the self (including at least ancient, biological, modern and post-modern views).	Analytic Paper or Project
4	Explore the ethical and moral implications of living an integrated, Christ-centered life of faith through informed judgments, reasoning, and evaluations.	Class Discussion Blog Entries Social Location Essay
5	Describe various manifestations of empathy.	Blog Entries Final Exam
6	Utilize a multidisciplinary approach to analyzing the self in a variety of locations such as historical context, philosophical milieu, aesthetic situation, and theological framework.	Class Discussion Blog Entries Analytic Paper or Project
7	Identify and describe strengths and weaknesses of different discipline's approaches to analyzing the self in a variety of locations.	Blog Entries Analytic Paper or Project

Grading Procedure

To assign a course grade, the following scale is used: 100-90 = A, 89-80 = B, 79-70 = C, 69-60 = D, 0-59 = F

Course Policies

Attendance

Students are expected to attend each class period. Upon missing 20% of the course (9 absences in a MWF class or 6 absences in a TR class), the student will be dropped from the class with the grade of an F. For any absence, you will be expected to be prepared for the next class. Three tardies will constitute one absence. If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material covered and any assignments made. Ignorance of an assignment will not excuse late work.

Late Work

Work is expected on the date it is due. Should you become ill or having mitigating circumstances arise that impact your performance, please contact your professors immediately so that they can help you.

Academic Honesty

Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU's Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the university enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in our lives. Every member of the faculty, staff and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research.

The full policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site (<http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost>) and the following offices: provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life education, and academic departments.