GS 1181-F51 (11959) Fall 2017
Toward More Effective Thinking

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00 - 2:00 (right after class) or by appointment

Course Description

“Thinking,” whether it is called intuition, problem solving, or just judgment, is a key for success in school, in business, and in our personal lives. Thinking more clearly, more creatively, and more effectively can help us earn better grades, be more productive, and achieve greater satisfaction. What may be surprising, however, is that many of the habits and strategies of effective thinking extend across the various areas of our lives. Moreover, these methods of effective thinking can be studied and taught – and learned.

This course will use a variety of methods and experiences to encourage students to think about how they think, and to adapt and adopt some effective habits and strategies to their own circumstances. Emphasis will be placed on advancing communication and information literacy skills, together with the habits of mind to enhance student success through more effective thinking.

Core Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Locate campus resources to solve problems and answer questions;
- gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a topic related to the text (CT1 – Critical Thinking);
- develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication (CS1 – Communication Skills); and
- develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective oral communication (CS2 – Communication Skills).

Course Requirements

- Class periods may include an activity which will result in a grade. Students who are absent will not be able to make up this daily work for a grade.
- We will have regular out-of-class assignments, with assignments and due dates posted to Blackboard. Late work is accepted only for cause, evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
We will utilize a variety of university resources. Be prepared to engage in the resources Angelo State University provides.

- You must complete the information literacy Blackboard module.
- Students will research and summarize an appropriate scholarly source, which may apply to their group presentation.
- Each student will participate in and be an audience for a group presentation.
- Attendance at and a summary of the Holland Symposium at either 2:00 PM or 7:30 PM on Monday, 16 October, in the CJ Davidson Conference Center is expected.

**Required Materials**

- *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking*, by Edward B. Burger and Michael Starbird.
- This is a Blackboard course. Students must be able to access and utilize Blackboard.

**Course Grade**

Course grades will be determined as follows:

- Daily grades and homework – 50%
- Summaries – 20%
- Group presentation – 20%
- Attendance at and submission of a summary of the Holland Symposium on American Values – 10%

From these percentages, the usual letter grades (90 and above ↔ A, 80 – 89 ↔ B, 70 – 79 ↔ C, 60 – 69 ↔ D, and less than 60 ↔ F) apply. However, I reserve the right to adjust grades upwards from the indicated ranges.

**Academic Integrity**

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at...
www.angelo.edu/ADA. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:
  Dallas Swafford
  Director of Student Disability Services
  Office of Student Affairs
  325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
  Houston Harte University Center, Room 112

See ASU Operating Policy OP 10.15.

Attendance
Students are expected to attend every class meeting. If you must miss a class, it is your obligation to contact me as soon as possible (and, if possible, prior to the class). Class periods may involve activity yielding a daily grade; these activities cannot be made up.

Religious Holy Day
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy OP 10.19.

Course Schedule
Below is a tentative outline of the schedule for this course, which will be structured around the text The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking. Actual course activities, assignments, and due dates will be posted to the course Blackboard site. Each week we will also familiarize ourselves and utilize university resources.

  Week 1 (28-30 August) Introduction; Summarizing
  Week 2 (6 September) Earth; Summaries
  Week 3 (11-13 September) Fire; Critical Thinking
  Week 4 (18-20 September) Air; Summaries; Critical Thinking
  Week 5 (25-27 September) Water; Presentations; Critical Thinking
  Week 6 (2-4 October) The Quintessential Element; Presentations
  Week 7 (9-11 October); Critical Thinking; Presentations
  Week 8 (16-18 October) Presentations; Holland Symposium