

**CT-101 Critical Thinking**

Course Syllabus and Calendar

**Section Information**

Section:

Course Delivery Mode: In-Person

Course Schedule Days/Times:

Location/Room: HSS 304

**Instructor Information**

Lei Bao

Email: baol@triton.uog.edu

Office Location: English & Communication Building 118E

Office Hours:

MONDAY 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

TUESDAY 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

WEDNESDAY 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

THURSDAY 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Office Phone Number: (671) 735-2812

Time Zone: Guam is at GMT/UTC +10

I have a physical office on campus where we can set an appointment to meet if that is convenient for you. I do prefer that students contact me via the email address above. I check my email daily, including on weekends and holidays, and I usually reply within the same day that I receive a message. At any point during this course, you are welcome to contact me via email with questions regarding grades, instructions, advisement, or even

personal issues. I check my email frequently and will typically respond to messages within 24 hours.

I have included an “Ask the Instructor” forum in the class where you can post any questions you might have regarding the class. I will post answers to your questions in this forum so that you, and anyone else with the same questions, can always refer back to the forum for answers. Students are also welcome to provide their answers and feedback based on their own experiences. Such sharing of information allows us all to help each other.

### Course Catalog Description

This is an interdisciplinary foundation course in critical thinking. Students learn how to analyze, critically evaluate, and construct arguments, detect common fallacies in reasoning, and propose logical and creative solutions to complex problems. Critical thinking skills are valuable in all disciplines and will benefit students in academic contexts and life.

### Course Content

This course aims at developing basic analytic skills and an understanding of the principles and concepts involved in clear thinking. It teaches students the skills they need to think for themselves – skills they will call upon in this course, in other college courses, and in the world that awaits. Topics covered knowledge; evaluating evidence; identifying errors and biases; fallacies; recognizing, analyzing, and constructing arguments; inductive reasoning, and deductive reasoning. These topics will be taught using multicultural perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches.

### Required Textbook

Lei Bao, *Don't Just Think; Be Logical*, 2nd edition.

### Prerequisites

N/A

### Credits

3 credit hours. This course must be completed with a grade of “C” or better.

### Required Skills, Materials, and Other Resources

There are certain skills and equipment needed as well as other resources such as Internet access. Here are some things you will need to take this class:

- Reliable access to a computer with broadband Internet access. Broadband Internet access is commonly available for residential customers. The UOG campus also has a few computer labs for student use. Many coffee shops and other public spaces also

have WiFi hotspots. We strongly recommend that you use malware protection and a VPN app to protect yourself from infection or hacking on public WiFi networks. A desktop or laptop computer is highly recommended. Mobile devices such as iPads, Android tablets, and smart phones are not recommended as they may have compatibility issues. You may use them for convenience to view most content for this class, but you should use a full computer for the more important class activities.

- This computer should also have the following:
  - Mozilla Firefox browser with Cookies enabled and the Pop-up Blocker disabled so that you can access and work in this class. Firefox is the most compatible browser for use with UOG Moodle.
  - MS Word and PowerPoint so that you can read, edit, or create documents and presentations for this class. Contact the UOG Computer Center to ask about Office365 which includes these Microsoft products. It may be included with your official GoTriton email account.
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader so that you can open PDF documents provided in this class.
  - A media player such as Windows Media Player or VLC Player Free so that you can play audio and video files provided in this class.
  - Virus and spyware protection so that you can protect yourself and your classmates while you are working on the Internet.
- You need to be comfortable enough with computers to perform the following tasks without help from anyone:
  - Send and receive email messages as well as send a message with an attachment.
  - Be able to find files on your computer that you have saved or downloaded.
  - Be able to navigate through web pages.
  - Be able to search for items on the Internet by using a search engine.
- You need to be able to communicate clearly and effectively in writing to help avoid miscommunications.
- You need to be self-motivated, disciplined, and you should have good time-management skills. You need to be able to manage your time and meet deadlines set for the class. For a typical class in a regular 16-week semester, you should be able to commit 6-10 hours per week to your course work. There are chances that your computer can crash; your Internet connection can drop; or the UOG Moodle system may become unavailable.
- You will need an account with the UOG Moodle system. For assistance with the UOG Moodle system, please contact the UOG Moodle Help team by email at [moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu](mailto:moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu) or call (671) 735-2620.
- You will be expected to carefully read and follow instructions.
- You will be expected to keep track of deadlines and due dates.
- You will be expected to have all the skills and resources listed above.
- You will be expected to ask for help if and when you need it.

## Learning Objectives for Students

On completion of the course, students will:

- Identify credible and reliable information from various sources;
- Recognize common errors in reasoning; and
- Construct sound arguments for a variety of real-world experiences.

## Grades

- 10% - Attendance/Participation (synchronous or in-person delivery)
- 10% - Assessment Tests (Pre-Test & Post-Test)
- 30% - Assignments
- 20% - Discussions
- 10% - Project 1
- 10% - Project 2
- 10% - Project 3

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

- 97 to 100 - A+
- 93 to 96 - A
- 90 to 92 - A-
- 87 to 89 - B+
- 83 to 86 - B
- 80 to 82 - B-
- 75 to 79 - C+
- 70 to 74 - C (no C-)
- 60 to 69 - D (must retake class with a grade of D or lower)
- 59 or lower - F

## Assignments (30% of overall grade for the course)

Assignments allow you to demonstrate your writing skills and your ability to understand and use the information you are learning in class. This addresses Learning Objective 1 for this course. Late assignments will not be accepted. Always keep a copy of your assignments on your computer as a backup. Each assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale:

	Poor (10 pts)	Fair (15 pts)	Good (20 pts)	Excellent (25 pts)
<b>Content</b>	Content is incomplete. Major points	Content is not comprehensive. Major points	Content is comprehensive. Major points	Treatment of content goes beyond the call

	are not clearly developed and/or persuasive. Question or issue is not addressed at all	are addressed but are not fully developed or persuasive. Question or issue is not fully addressed	are clearly developed and persuasive. Question or issue is fully addressed	of duty. Organization of material is crystal clear and persuasive. Assignment instructions are not only followed but given added value with additional insights and applications.
<b>Documentation</b>	No sources are cited in addition to the textbook. Sources are of poor or no inherent value (lack credibility).	Some sources are cited in addition to the textbook. Sources are not of the best inherent value or credibility. Sources are all of the same kind.	Three sources are cited in addition to the textbook. Sources are of a high inherent value and highly credible. There are a variety of kinds of sources (books, web sites, journals, etc.)	More than three sources are cited. All sources enjoy a high level of credibility and inherent value. At least four different kinds of sources are cited.
<b>Format</b>	Little or no attention was given to following proper APA format. citations and references are not cited	Some attention paid to APA formatting, but still some important errors. Paper has cited sources but not according to proper APA formatting.	Compliant with APA format. Sources are correctly formatted.	Flawless usage of the APA Guidelines.

<b>Grammar / Spelling</b>	Paper has all of the following problems: spelling errors, punctuation errors, sentence structure errors	Paper has at least one of the following problems: spelling errors, punctuation errors, sentence structure errors	Paper has none of the following: spelling errors, punctuation errors, sentence structure errors	Paper is not only free from grammatical errors, but exhibits superior writing quality.
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### Discussions (20% of overall grade for the course)

Postings in discussion forums are demonstrations of your ability to communicate effectively and professionally as well as of your ability to understand and use the information you are learning in the class. Discussion posts are very important in evaluating your performance. This addresses Learning Objective 1 for this course.

Discussions will be held each week throughout this course. Each week your discussion board postings will be graded on a 100-point scale:

#### Weekly Discussion Points: 100%

##### Original Posting(s) - 80%

Your original posting(s) each week should...

- mention at least 2 points from the week's readings (10%)
- relate new content to what you have already learned in the course to date (10%)
- relate content to your own personal experiences (10%)
- critically analyze the content - your posting should not be just a summary of the reading (40%)
- be grammatically correct and proofread for spelling errors. (10%)

##### Two Responses to Other Student Postings - 10% each

Your responses to other students and the instructor should...

- incorporate content from the week's reading (5%)
- incorporate personal experience or ideas from other sources (5%)
- be logically reasoned and supported (5%)
- be grammatically correct and proofread for spelling errors. (5%)

## Projects (30% of the overall grade for the course)

Course projects allow you to demonstrate your ability to not only process the concepts being presented in this course but also to explain those concepts to others. This addresses Learning Objectives 1 and 2 for this course. Always keep a copy of your presentations as a backup. Presentations will be graded on a 100-point scale and will be evaluated using the following rubric:

	Poor (5 pts)	Fair (10 pts)	Good (15 pts)	Excellent (20 pts)
<b>Organization</b>	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.	Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around.	Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.
<b>Subject Knowledge</b>	Student does not have grasp of information; student cannot answer questions about subject.	Student is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions.	Student is at ease with expected answers to all questions, but fails to elaborate.	Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration.
<b>Graphics</b>	Student uses superfluous graphics or no graphics	Student occasionally uses graphics that rarely support text and presentation.	Student's graphics relate to text and presentation.	Student's graphics explain and reinforce screen text and presentation.
<b>Mechanics</b>	Student's presentation	Presentation has three	Presentation has no more	Presentation has no



	has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	misspellings or grammatical errors.
<b>Elocution</b>	Student mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, and speaks too quietly for students in the back of class to hear.	Student's voice is low. Student incorrectly pronounces terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation.	Student's voice is clear. Student pronounces most words correctly. Most audience members can hear presentation.	Student uses a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members can hear presentation.

### Attendance and Time Considerations (10% of overall grade for the course)

You will be counted as “present” for a class if you participate in the class meetings twice a week. Students should be prepared to spend a minimum of 6 hours a week on reading and on course assignments. In our online course environment, my expectation is that you will be spending 3 “class hours” on your own working on the concepts that you would usually get in a live lecture. Please be sure to budget your time accordingly!

### Course Policies

#### ADA Accommodation Services

For individuals covered under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a student with a disability requiring academic accommodation(s), please contact the Student Counseling and Advising Service Disability Support Services Office to discuss your confidential request. A Faculty Notification letter from the Disability Support Services/Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodation counselor will be provided to me. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit Sallie S. Sablan, DSS counselor in the School of Education, office 110, [disabilitysupport@triton.uog.edu](mailto:disabilitysupport@triton.uog.edu) or telephone/TDD 671-735-2460.

#### Plagiarism Policy



Plagiarism is a serious breach of the student code of conduct at UOG. It includes copying exam answers, copying writing without proper citation, paraphrasing another author without proper citation or representing another person's work as if it was your own (see the UOG Student Handbook p. 49). If you plagiarize you will receive a zero on the assignment in question and will be immediately referred to UOG's Student Disciplinary Committee. The decision of this committee could involve consequences such as failing the course outright or being expelled from the University of Guam. Please do not plagiarize; it is not worth it.

### **TOBACCO-FREE/SMOKE-FREE Campus**

UOG is a tobacco-free campus. Thank you for not using tobacco products on campus, and for helping make UOG a healthy learning and living environment.

### **Student Support:**

The following is a list of resources that students can turn to when they need support:

- Problems with the course instructions or other content?  
Contact your Instructor for clarification and assistance.
- Technical problems with UOG Moodle system?  
Contact the UOG Moodle Help team by email at [moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu](mailto:moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu) or by phone at (671) 735-2620.
- Problems with WebAdvisor or GoTritons student email service?  
Contact the UOG Office of Information Technology (aka: the Computer Center) by email at [helpdesk@uog.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uog.edu) or by phone at (671) 735-2640.
- UOG Library Resources and Services  
Go online to <https://www.uog.edu/student-services/rfk-library/>
- UOG Student Services  
Go online to <https://www.uog.edu/student-services/enrollment-management-student-success/> to contact the Admissions and Records office, Financial Aid office, Student Life office, Housing and Residence, Counseling, Student Health, and other services.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Identify credible and reliable information from various sources	GL01: Applying the concepts essential to examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse; GL02: Using investigative	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO5: Responsible use of knowledge, natural

	and analytical skills to explore complex questions and solve challenging problems; GLO6: Differentiating and prioritizing elements of complex real-world experiences	resources and technology; ILO7: An interest in personal development and lifelong learning
Recognize common errors in reasoning	GLO5: Identifying and avoiding common logical errors (fallacies)	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO5: Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources and technology
Construct sound arguments for a variety of real-world experiences	GLO3: Synthesizing information in order to examine alternatives and arrive at reasoned conclusions; GLO4: Comprehending and explaining the logic and validity of arguments and the relevance of data and information	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving; ILO3: Effective oral and written communication.

## Course Calendar

### Week 1: Introduction and Pre-test

- **Description of Week 1:** This week will serve as an introduction to the course. On Tuesday, we'll review the syllabus and introduce ourselves to the rest of the class. I'll also explain the rationale for this class, why I've adopted certain learning strategies to teach critical thinking skills, and how you can succeed in this class. On Thursday, I'll administer the ungraded pre-test. There will be no graded quizzes for the first week.
- **Tuesday:**
  - Review the syllabus in class.
  - Team building.
- **Thursday:**
  - Critical Thinking Pre-test.

### Week 2: Chapter 1 - An Overview of Critical Thinking

- **Description of Week 2:** This week focuses on understanding what critical thinking is and why it is important. We will explore the fundamental concepts and discuss higher-order thinking skills.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 1.1 What is critical thinking?

- 1.2 Why do you need critical thinking skills?
- **Thursday:**
  - 1.3 Higher order thinking skills.

### **Week 3: Chapter 2 - Elements of Clear Thinking**

- **Description of Week 3:** This week will cover the elements of clear thinking. We will discuss inquiry-based learning, how to evaluate information credibility, and the importance of dissent and openness in critical thinking.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 2.1 Inquiry-based learning.
  - 2.2 Information credibility.
- **Thursday:**
  - 2.3 Dissent and openness.

### **Week 4: Assessment - Authentication Preparation**

- **Description of Week 4:** This week focuses on the Authentication assessment, aligned with CF-SLO2 and CF-SLO6. We will review Chapters 1 and 2, emphasizing investigative and analytical skills, and differentiating elements of complex real-world experiences.
- **Tuesday:**
  - Aligning with CF-SLO2 and CF-SLO6.
  - Review Chapters 1 and 2.
- **Thursday:**
  - Introduction to the assessment.
  - Initial research and analysis.

### **Week 5: Assessment - Authentication Execution**

- **Description of Week 5:** This week will be dedicated to executing the Authentication assessment. Students will apply their investigative and analytical skills to explore complex questions and solve challenging problems.
- **Tuesday:**
  - In-class work on Authentication assessment.
- **Thursday:**
  - In-class work on Authentication assessment.
  - Reflection and feedback.

### **Week 6: Chapter 3 - Anatomy of Arguments**

- **Description of Week 6:** This week will focus on understanding the structure of arguments. We will learn how to distinguish between objective and subjective claims, identify issues, and construct arguments with clear premises and conclusions.
- **Tuesday:**

- 3.1 Objective and subjective claims.
  - 3.2 Identifying issues.
- **Thursday:**
  - 3.3 Arguments.
  - 3.3.1 Premises.
  - 3.3.2 Conclusion.
  - 3.3.3 Collaboration.

### **Week 7: Chapter 4 - Non-Arguments**

- **Description of Week 7:** This week, we will explore different types of non-arguments, including explanations, hypotheticals, and rhetoric. Understanding these will help in distinguishing between valid arguments and other forms of discourse.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 4.1 Explanations.
  - 4.2 Hypotheticals.
- **Thursday:**
  - 4.3 Rhetoric.

### **Week 8: Chapter 5 - Analyzing Arguments**

- **Description of Week 8:** This week will be dedicated to analyzing arguments. We will discuss the criteria for evaluating arguments, including the level of reason, relevance, and identifying unstated assumptions.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 5.1 Level of reason.
- **Thursday:**
  - 5.2 Relevance.
  - 5.3 Unstated assumptions.

### **Week 9: Assessment - Formal Debate Preparation**

- **Description of Week 9:** This week is focused on preparing for the Formal Debate assessment. We will align the assessment with CF-SLO1 and CF-SLO5 and review Chapters 3, 4, and 5 to ensure understanding of argumentative discourse and common logical errors.
- **Tuesday:**
  - Aligning with CF-SLO1 and CF-SLO5.
  - Review Chapters 3, 4, and 5.
- **Thursday:**
  - Debate guidelines and topic selection.
  - Group formation and initial research.

### **Week 10: Assessment - Formal Debate Execution**

- **Description of Week 10:** This week will be dedicated to executing the Formal Debates. Students will engage in debates, applying their understanding of argumentative discourse and logical analysis.
- **Tuesday:**
  - In-class debates.
- **Thursday:**
  - In-class debates.
  - Reflection and feedback.

### Week 11: Chapter 6 - Two Types of Arguments

- **Description of Week 11:** This week focuses on understanding the two main types of arguments: deductive and inductive. We will discuss their characteristics, validity, soundness, strength, and cogency.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 6.1 Deduction.
  - 6.1.1 Validity.
  - 6.1.2 Soundness.
- **Thursday:**
  - 6.2 Induction.
  - 6.2.1 Strength.
  - 6.2.2 Cogency.

### Week 12: Chapter 7 - Bridging the Gap Between STEM and the Humanities

- **Description of Week 12:** This week will explore the connection between STEM and the humanities through critical thinking. We will cover topics such as mathematical induction and statistics, emphasizing their importance in various fields.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 7.1 Mathematical induction.
- **Thursday:**
  - 7.2 Statistics.

### Week 13: Chapter 8 - Informal Fallacies

- **Description of Week 13:** This week will cover informal fallacies. We will discuss various types of fallacies and learn how to identify and avoid them in arguments.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 8.1 Abusing the man.
  - 8.2 Appeal to authority.
  - 8.3 Circular reasoning.
  - 8.4 Appeal to emotion.
- **Thursday:**
  - 8.5 Appeal to force.
  - 8.6 Appeal to ignorance.

- 8.7 Straw man.
- 8.8 Red herring.

**Week 14: Chapter 8 - Informal Fallacies (Continued)**

- **Description of Week 14:** Continuing from last week, we will further explore informal fallacies and their impact on reasoning and arguments.
- **Tuesday:**
  - 8.9 False cause.
  - 8.10 False dilemma.
  - 8.11 Hasty generalization.
  - 8.12 Slippery slope.
- **Thursday:**
  - 8.13 False analogy.
  - 8.14 Complex question.

**Week 15: Assessment - Ethics Bowl Preparation**

- **Description of Week 15:** This week focuses on preparing for the Ethics Bowl assessment. We will align the assessment with CF-SLO3 and CF-SLO4 and review Chapters 6, 7, and 8. We will also discuss case studies in groups.
- **Tuesday:**
  - Aligning with CF-SLO3 and CF-SLO4.
  - Review Chapters 6, 7, and 8.
- **Thursday:**
  - Case study analysis.
  - Group discussions and preparation.

**Week 16: Assessment - Ethics Bowl Execution**

- **Description of Week 16:** This week will be dedicated to the Ethics Bowl. Students will participate in the Ethics Bowl, applying their critical thinking skills to real-world ethical dilemmas. We will also review for the final exam.
- **Tuesday:**
  - In-class Ethics Bowl.
- **Thursday:**
  - In-class Ethics Bowl.
  - Reflection and feedback.
  - Final Exam Review.