

# Introduction to Critical Thinking in the Humanities and Social Sciences

## Hum 100-1 BR, Summer 2022

### Teaching Staff

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### Our Welcome:

Welcome everyone! In a few short weeks, senior year of high school will be a memory of the past and you'll be in real, live college classrooms! You're about to enter the most exciting phase of your lives, and we're here to help you start preparing for that. The focus of our course is intellectual, and we'll be helping you develop your critical-thinking skills; but this is also a course about getting **anchored** in your new life in a new place. We want you to see from the start that a college community is first and foremost about its human relations. We are all here in the same place, sharing overlapping challenges and aspirations, while coming here from different places, different experiences, different challenges. How do we discover what we have in common while respecting and learning from what we don't? Each of your professors wants you to know that we ourselves are still on this journey of discovery, and we'll be with you every step of the way; we expect to learn from you as well as to guide you.

This is a course in critical thinking, which means the skill of rigorously *imagining how things might be otherwise*. We'll learn how to ask critical questions about art, history, politics, health, sexuality, space, language, and college and many other aspects of our lives as people and citizens. We'll treat these as academic questions, but we'll also consider them as deeply personal questions affecting our common life together on the university campus. No question or topic will be off limits, though we'll also work to treat these issues--and each other--with respect and enthusiasm for our common enterprise. It takes a village to have an idea!

Throughout the course you'll be introduced to some new concepts and get (re-)acquainted with some fundamental skills. Our goal is twofold. One is to sample the rich diversity of methods and approaches in the humanities and social science departments at the university (including many

subjects not even offered at the high school level). For instance, we'll look at how an anthropologist's approach to questions might differ from a historian's. Secondly, we'll try to identify a core set of core skills and vocabularies: to get a feel for some of the methods and approaches that distinguish the humanities and social sciences from the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). We'll talk about how critical thinking and *qualitative* reasoning differ from the kinds of quantitative reasoning that are pursued in the sciences.

## Course Learning Objectives

Set 1. Basic college reading and writing strategies.

- Create and organize notes, distinguishing different *types* of statements in a text: central argument, subordinate arguments, evidentiary claims, etc.
- Identify and explain critical *questions* about a text. Examples: What does a text leave out? What does it assume? What might be a counter-argument?
- Interpret and cite multimedia.
- Use structures you read as a model for your own critical writing.

Set 2. Introduction to disciplinary methods.

- Compare the approaches to issues and topics by public health scholars, historians, literary critics, and scholars of writing pedagogy and linguistics.

Set 3. How to navigate life at a university.

- Survey important issues in life and on campus, and how scholars approach those issues
- Recognize how to organize time, anticipating the rhythm of the quarter system.
- Find resources at Northwestern, from peer advising to counseling.
- Determine how to develop, acquire, and meet peers and mentors.
- Recognize how to overcome the fear of *asking*.
- Prepare to stay healthy. (Hint: it's the key to a successful college experience, and it should be easy—but it's not!)
- Practice navigating Canvas
- Work collaboratively in a group setting. It takes a village to have an idea!

*This Critical Thinking Course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
from Tuesday, August 9 through Thursday, September 1, 2022*

## Daily Schedule

9AM-11:40 AM: We will teach Critical Thinking classes during this time.

11:40 AM-12PM: Mini lecture by 1 of the 4 Critical Thinking Professors as an entire group in a bigger classroom.

Approximately 2 hours and 40 mins of daily class time with a mixture of discussion, group work, and directed individual work. You'll be placed in a class one of the 4 instructors in a designated classroom that your instructor will email before classes start. You'll have the same instructor and writing mentor the entire 4 weeks of this program.

At the end of each session there will be a short, entertaining lecture about the reading assignment for the **next** session. These lectures may fill in background information or give you some tips about what to look for in upcoming reading. Basically, these are to help you navigate the reading assignment.

You'll also have a writing assignment due Mondays and Wednesdays at 10pm. The questions will ask you about the readings/films.

The Writing Mentors (TAs) will meet with each student weekly for one-on-one conferences. Additionally, instructors and TAs will be available for optional open office hours each week. One-on-one conferences will be scheduled with you at the beginning of the course. Office hours for instructors and TAs are listed on Canvas.

## Evaluation (Grades)

This course is pass/fail, so you will not receive a letter or percent grades on your assignments.

- You will receive written feedback from the writing mentors.
- Most days in the course you will have a brief (1-2 page) writing assignment about the next session's materials. The assignment will be **due Mondays and Wednesdays 10 pm (the night before each class meeting)**.
  - In other words, by Monday and Wednesday you are responsible for completing the NEXT session's assigned materials, and your brief written assignment on it, BEFORE 10 pm (sleep is important). The assignment prompts and deadlines will be on Canvas.
- The final paper, 3 double-spaced pages in length, will be due on **Sunday, September 4th 10pm**, so you will have the final weekend to write it.
- Assignments are to be submitted on CANVAS (the counselors and TAs will show you how to do this).

## WEEK 1: HISTORY, LANGUAGE, IDEOLOGY

### Tuesday, August 9 | Origins: Personal, Communal, National

#### Session Materials

1. Henry Louis Gates Jr and Andrew S. Curran, "[We Need a New Language for Talking About Race](#)," *The New York Times*, March 3, 2022
2. Kim TallBear, "Racial Science, Blood, and DNA," in *Native American DNA*
3. José Vasconcelos, "La Raza Cosmica"
4. Jake Silverstein, "[The 1619 Project and the Long Battle Over U.S. History](#)," *The New York Times*, November 9, 2021
5. Michelle Wright, "1619: The Dangers of a Single Origin Story"
  - a. OPTIONAL: Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Andrew S. Curran, "The 1741 Contest on the 'Degeneration' of Black Skin and Hair," in *Who's Black and Why?*

## Thursday, August 11 | Language Ideology

Session Materials (Read in order listed)

1. Inoue, Asao (2019). Excerpt from “How Do We Language So People Stop Killing Each Other, Or What Do We Do About White Language Supremacy?” Chair’s address for the 2019 Conference on College Composition & Communication. [Video](#) link. [Slides](#) link. [Transcript](#) link. [16 minutes. Watch two excerpts: from 17:20-22:45 & 36:00-46:00]
2. Beehler, Paul (2020). “Cracking the Code (Meshing and Switching): Standard English as a Required Ticket to Influence.” *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, Vol. 10, No. 3, March 2020.
3. Inoue, Asao (2020). “A response to Paul Beehler.” *Asao B. Inoue’s Infrequent Words*. Blog post [part 1](#), [part 2](#), [part 3](#).

## WEEK 2: HEALTH AND SURVEILLANCE

### Tuesday, August 16 | Pandemics, Prisons, and the Society of Surveillance

Session Materials

1. Michel Foucault, “Panopticon,” *Discipline and Punish* ([10 Foucault – "Panopticism".pdf](#) Download 10 Foucault -- "Panopticism".pdf) (This copy has one page with some missing text. You may find a full copy at: <https://selforganizedseminar.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/foucault-panopticism.pdf>)

### Thursday, August 18 | Reproductive Justice (Beatriz)

Session Materials

1. Lipschutz, M. & Rosenblatt, R. (2013). *Young Lakota*. Film. Available through Canvas Course Reserves. [1 hour 23 mins]
2. Vox. (2018, May 29). *The culture war between doctors and midwives, explained*. YouTube. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE34K88LUek> [6 mins]  
*Further materials if you're interested in this topic:*
  - o Northwestern Center for Native American and Indigenous Research: <https://cnair.northwestern.edu>
  - o SHAPE: <https://www.northwestern.edu/care/get-involved/student-involvement/sexual-health-and-assault-peer-educators-shape.html>
  - o Black Women and Health Equity: Spotlight on Black Maternal Health and COVID-19: <https://soundcloud.com/user-211649525/s2e5-black-women-and-health-equity-spotlight-on-black-maternal-health-and-covid-19>
  - o Pember, M.A. (2018). *The Midwives’ Resistance: How Native Women Are Reclaiming Birth on Their Terms*. Rewire. Maternity and Birthing. Retrieved

February 7

at: <https://rewire.news/article/2018/01/05/midwives-resistance-native-women-reclaiming-birth-terms/>

## WEEK 3: RESIDUES OF OPPRESSION

### Tuesday, August 23 | Monuments

#### Session Materials

1. Clint Smith, “‘The whole city is a memorial to slavery’: Prologue,” and “‘There’s a difference between history and nostalgia’: Monticello Plantation,” from *How the Word is Passed* (the One Book One Northwestern selection)
2. Andrea Carlson on the erasure, drawing, and monuments  
<https://editions.lib.umn.edu/openrivers/article/on-the-uncompromising-hand-remembering-spirit-island/>
3. Santiago X on Indigenous cities and earthworks,  
<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/interview/native-american-artist-santiago-x-on-rebuilding-indigenous-cities-one-mound-at-a-time>
4. American Historical Association's statement on confederate monuments:  
(<https://www.historians.org/news-and-advocacy/aha-advocacy/aha-statement-on-confederate-monuments>)
5. Response to AHA statement:  
(<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2017/response-to-the-aha-statement-on-confederate-monuments>)

### Thursday, August 25 | Linguistic Discrimination (Lisa)

#### Session Materials

1. Baugh, John (2019). TedX Emory: The significance of linguistic profiling. [19 minutes]  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_baugh\\_the\\_significance\\_of\\_linguistic\\_profiling](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_baugh_the_significance_of_linguistic_profiling)
2. Zentella, Ana Celia (2014). TWB (Talking While Bilingual): Linguistic profiling of Latina/os, and other linguistic torquemadas. *Latino Studies*. 2014; 12: 620-635.
3. Xu, Yuhan (2019). Duke Professor Is Sorry for Urging Chinese Students Not to Speak Chinese. NPR.  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/01/29/689660523/duke-professor-is-sorry-for-urging-chinese-students-not-to-speak-chinese>

## WEEK 4: SAFETY AND POWER

### Tuesday, August 30 | Disaster Preparedness

#### Session Materials

1. Helfand, & Doremus, F. (2020). [Cooked: Survival by Zip Code](#). [Distributed by] Bullfrog Films. [82 mins]
2. Liederman, M. (2022, June 15). Cooling centers close too early amid dangerous heat, putting residents - especially those who are homeless - at risk, some say. Block Club Chicago. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://blockclubchicago.org/2022/06/15/cooling-centers-close-too-early-amid-dangerous-heat-putting-residents-especially-those-who-are-homeless-at-risk-some-say/>
3. FossilFreeNU. (n.d.). Fossil Free Northwestern. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://fossilfreenorthwes.wixsite.com/fossilfreenu/about>

### Thursday, September 1 | Campus Debates: Freedom and Safety

#### Session Materials

1. Mark Simpson and Amia Srinivasan, “No Platforming,” in Jennifer Lackey, ed., *Academic Freedom* (on Canvas)
2. 2016 University of Chicago statement on “trigger warnings” and “safe spaces” (on Canvas)
3. Northwestern President Morty Schapiro’s 2016 statement on “safe spaces”: (on Canvas)