

JYOTI NIVAS COLLEGE AUTONOMOUS
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM
FOURTH SEMESTER
ELECTIVE
INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THINKING

NO. OF CREDITS- 2

NO. OF HOURS- 30

Introduction to Critical Thinking is a foundational course designed to train students in the art of logical reasoning and rigorous evaluation of ideas, arguments, and media. The course builds the ability to construct coherent, evidence-based arguments while critically assessing opposing viewpoints. Students develop an awareness of metacognition, ideology, belief systems, and their influence on thought, and learn to apply critical thinking tools to contemporary issues spanning gender, identity, politics, and digital media. A key focus is equipping students to identify logical fallacies, recognise bias, and navigate digital misinformation, which are skills essential for informed and responsible participation in today's complex information landscape.

Learning Objectives

- LO1: Train students to reason logically and evaluate ideas, media, and arguments.
- LO2: Develop ability to construct coherent arguments and assess opposing viewpoints.
- LO3: Promote awareness of ideology, belief systems, and how they influence thinking.
- LO4: Motivate students to articulate positions on contemporary issues with clarity and evidence.
- LO5 Equip students to recognise fallacies and navigate digital misinformation.

Course Outcomes

- CO1: Students identify and interpret arguments in written and spoken texts.
- CO2: Students construct structured, reasoned arguments using logical frameworks.
- CO3: Students evaluate ideological claims in media and society through critical thinking tools.
- CO4: Students apply critical thinking to issues of gender, identity, politics, and digital media discourse.
- CO5: Students detect logical fallacies, bias, and manipulation in everyday communication.

Unit I: Basics of Critical Thinking

- 1.1 Thinking About Thinking: Definition, Scope, and Importance of Critical Thinking
- 1.2 Introduction to Arguments: Premises, Conclusions, and Assumptions
- 1.3 Types of Arguments: Deductive, Inductive, and Abductive
- 1.4 Cognitive Biases and Mental Shortcuts

Essential Readings

- Browne, M. Neil, and Stuart M. Keeley. Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking. 12th ed., Pearson, 2018.
- Kahneman, Daniel. Thinking, Fast and Slow. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.

Unit II: Logic, Language, and Fallacies

- 2.1 Ethos, Pathos, and Logos: The Rhetorical Foundations of Argument
- 2.2 Types of Fallacies: Formal and Informal
- 2.3 Evaluating the Strength of Evidence: Validity, Soundness, Probability, and Causality
- 2.4 The Paul–Elder Model, Multiple Viewpoints, and Ambiguity

Essential Readings

- Paul, Richard, and Linda Elder. *Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Professional and Personal Life*. 2nd ed., Pearson, 2014.
- Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. 5th ed., Hackett Publishing, 2017.

Unit III: Contemporary Issues and Concepts

- 3.1 Nation, Nationalism, Identity, Gender, and Sexuality
- 3.2 Ideological Hegemony and Media Narratives
- 3.3 Digital Information Disorder: Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation
- 3.4 Writing and Presenting a Reasoned Argument and the Importance of Media Literacy

Essential Readings

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 1983.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *The Ethics of Identity*. Princeton University Press, 2005.
- de Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, Vintage Books, 2011.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
- Bird, S. Elizabeth, and Robert W. Dardenne. *Myth, Chronicle, and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News*. Transaction Publishers, 1988.
- Brooks, Brian S., et al. *The Missouri Group: News Reporting and Writing*. 11th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.
- Erikson, Erik H. *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. W. W. Norton, 1968.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. W. W. Norton, 1963.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. 4th ed., W. W. Norton & Company, 2018.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, International Publishers, 1971.
- Hall, Stuart, and Paul du Gay, editors. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. SAGE Publications, 1996.
- Herman, Edward S., and Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Pantheon Books, 1988.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- hooks, bell. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*. Routledge, 2010.
- Itule, Bruce D., and Douglas A. Anderson. *News Writing and Reporting for Today's Media*. 7th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2006.
- Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. W. B. Saunders, 1948.
- Millet, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. Doubleday, 1970.
- Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 5, no. 4, 1980, pp. 631–660.
- Rich, Carole. *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method*. 7th ed., Cengage Learning, 2015.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Epistemology of the Closet*. University of California Press, 1990.
- Sen, Amartya. *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. W. W. Norton, 2006.

- Smith, Anthony D. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Blackwell, 1986.
- Wardle, Claire, and Hossein Derakhshan. *Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policymaking*. Council of Europe, 2017.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman." *Ideals and Ideologies*. Routledge, 2024. Pp. 411–416.