Critical Reading, Thinking, Logic, & Composition

Syllabus - English 3 - Record

Instructor Contact Information

- **Linda Record**
- **423-310-5192** (voice and text)
- **record.teach@gmail.com**
- **IM through Wimba Pronto**
- **http://lindarecord.com/crithink/home/index.htm**
  - You should save this site to your favorites list because if BlackBoard is unavailable for any reason, you can find assignment and due date information directly on this site.

> There are lots of ways to reach me even though I live in Tennessee. Please feel free to call at any time, even on weekends, but don't expect me to answer every call immediately. After all, we're in different time zones, but that shouldn't be too much of a problem. If you call when I'm not available, please leave a **clear** message with your name and callback number *at the beginning*, and I will return your call as soon as possible. It would help if you tell me the best time to reach you, too.
>
> Email is an excellent means of reaching me quickly because I spend a lot of time at the computer. Be sure to the assignment ID and your initials in the subject box and include your name in the message. I'll try to answer direct email within 24 hours, but if you haven't heard from me by then, send another message.
>
> Another way to contact me quickly is to post a message in the **Help!** discussion forum in BlackBoard as I check it every day.
>
> **Special note:** If you share an email address and do not want someone else to have access to your grades or other class information, you should get a free web-based email account to use for this class. Regardless of what email you use, you should always keep the current address in your BlackBoard profile.

Course Description

English 3 is designed to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills beyond the level achieved in English 1A/1AH. The course will focus on the development of logical reasoning and analytical and argumentative writing skills based primarily on works of non-fiction. Assignments will encompass a progression of critical thinking and writing skills.

Course Texts
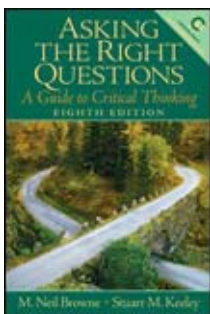
Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking, 8/E, by Neil Browne and Stuart Keeley. Publisher: Prentice Hall, 2007. ISBN-100132203049

- The Critical Thinking Community http://www.criticalthinking.org/
- Selected internet readings
- Hacker, Diana. *Research and Documentation Online*. http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities/overview.html

General Expectations

Being an online student

Taking an online class is both similar to and vastly different from taking one face-to-face. Similarities include instructor-prepared activities, announcements, lecture materials, assignments, etc. The main difference is that we won't be in the classroom with one another, which means you will need to be more individually responsible than you might in a regular class -- and you might feel a bit lonely from time to time. Still, many students say they are surprised at how much better they get to know their online classmates and teacher than their on-site counterparts. I hope that will be your experience, too.

The greatest benefit of being in an online course is that you can have direct, one-to-one communication with me and fellow students at times more convenient to your schedule, rather than only during scheduled class or office hours.

Critical note

Technical problems such as computer crashes, computer viruses, forgotten passwords, or inability to access the internet are **NOT** acceptable reasons for missing course tasks. Please back up your work in several places: your system, a floppy, a flash drive, or email the file to yourself at another e-mail account, etc. Play it safe! If you have any critical technical issue, such as not being able to access BlackBoard or the Wiki, you **MUST** contact me immediately via telephone or some other means.

Participation

1. There are certain arbitrary deadlines in the class. Our weeks will begin on **Monday** and end on **Sunday**. This doesn't mean that all the work is done on those days; it merely provides an organizational structure for the schedule. Activities will be due no later than **11:59 p.m.** (Pacific) on their specified dates. The due dates are posted in multiple locations in the course site, including on the class calendar and the discussion forums; there is no reason for you to miss an assignment due date. You are always free to complete a task **before** its due date.
2. **If you miss three consecutive assigned tasks** (not simply assignments)**, you may be dropped from this class.** So please, make arrangements **in advance** if you believe there will be a problem with completing **any** activity.
3. The assignments in this class are the same as if the class were being taught face to face, which means that you will do a substantial amount of reading, writing, and discussion on specific tasks. It also means that in this time frame you will need to commit more hours than usual to the accomplishment of tasks.
4. You will be asked to spend time generating and participating in discussions with the class. These discussions, in which you will generate ideas and respond to the ideas of others, play a central role in the learning experience and are considered part of the formal writing process in this class.
5. You will spend a lot of this class working as part of a team to complete a shared project. Even though a portion of your grade will depend upon the outcome of the team project, the assignments have been set up so that most points are earned **individually**, even when work is being done for the team.
6. **Rule of thumb:** Log on to BlackBoard at least three times a week to read announcements and post in discussions. Set up a regular schedule for yourself, just as if you were going to class on campus.
7. **Suggestion:** Keep a close eye on the class calendar and add the due dates to your personal organizer to avoid missing important deadlines.
8. **IMPORTANT:** Check your email every day. Read **EVERY** message that comes from me.

Did you know that approximately 150 hours of work are required to earn an average grade (C) in a regular 3 unit course? If you divide the 150 estimated hours by the 17 weeks we will actually have together, it works out to a bit under **9 hours a week**. This online course must meet the same requirements for content as an onsite class, but because it is conducted mostly through reading and writing, it will surely take you longer than a similar class taught onsite. *Do not* take this class if you anticipate the workload to be *less* than a traditional classroom.

You are responsible for knowing when activities begin and end -- and for completing them in a timely manner. Look at the **class calendar** to see when assignments are due; check announcements to see if any changes have been made. Pay close attention to patterns of activity.You can **work ahead** on some tasks, helping to assure your success in the class -- and the ability to maintain a personal life! This is especially useful if you have an important personal activity scheduled. You can do your work for this class before playing. :)

Announcements

Announcements is where I post important general messages during the course. These can include changes in due dates, assignments, and other information critical to your success in the class. **If something is posted as an announcement, it's the same as giving you a handout in a regular class.** That means you are responsible for anything that's posted as an announcement, so please, read them carefully and frequently. I generally email important announcements as well as post them, but don't take any chances on missing important information.

Assessment

Activities are graded on a point system, and there are 1000 points available to earn in this class. Your final semester grade is based on the percentage of credit you earn throughout the course.

       90-100 %   =   A

80-89 %	**=**	**B**
70-79 %	**=**	**C**
60-69 %	**=**	**D**

Life is not linear, and neither is this class. In order to accomplish all of the class activities and objectives, it will be necessary to work on more than one task at a time. If you're not accustomed to planning for overlapping activities, it helps to have a master list of due dates so that nothing slips through the cracks. This is provided in the class calendar, which is posted in lots of places throughout the course site. The schedule of activities for this class runs from **Monday** of one week to **Sunday** of the next week. I strongly encourage you to write all due dates on your personal calendar so that none are missed. Be sure that you allow yourself enough time to complete a task before its due date.

I do not accept late work; however, each person has **one late work exemption** which can be used at any time before finals without explanation. Once the late work exemption been used, no additional late work will be accepted for any reason.

If you complete every task on time or early, you will be exempt from writing the final exam essay, but you will receive full credit for it.

I do **not** offer extra credit because extra credit assignments only make extra work for me (which I've decided isn't really fair). However, there is one exception to this policy. If you find typographical errors, misspellings, contradictory or conflicting information, grammar errors, or other problems in files I've created for the class, and you are the first person to inform me about a problem, you can earn 1 to 3 extra credit points for each instance. This does not apply to messages posted in the discussion forums.

I do not allow incompletes unless the circumstance is truly extraordinary.

Class Calendar

The class calendar is intended to keep you apprised of the activities and due dates. In addition, all due dates are posted on the assignment folders set up for each week of the class, and there is a link to the class calendar in each assignment folder and other places throughout BlackBoard. **There is no reason for you to miss an assignment due date**. Activities shown on the calendar are subject to change as required by the needs of this particular class. Any changes to the class schedule will always be posted as announcements and sent out via email.

There's one special note about discussions. **Each discussion actually has two due dates.** The first post must be made no later than **Wednesday**, which is the first due date. The remaining posts must be completed by **Sunday**, which is the second due date. The reason for this is that it's very difficult to have a discussion if everyone waits until late Sunday to begin posting.

Please keep in mind, too, that I am 3 hours ahead of you. I participate in the discussions quite a lot, but if you wait until 7 p.m. on Sunday to do your posts, there won't be any way for me to respond to them as I'm likely already in bed.

Academic Integrity

I expect you to be honest with me and with your classmates, to trust me and each other, to be fair with yourself and with your classmates, to respect each other, and to be responsible for your own learning. When you include in your writing ideas or words from someone else, as I will expect you to do, you should acknowledge your source using appropriate documentation style. Failing to do so constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Any work suspected of being plagiarized may lead to disciplinary action ranging from loss of credit in the class to expulsion from the college.

All essays that you write for this class will be submitted to **turnitin.com** for evaluation of originality.

As the instructor, I can visit any forum discussion areas, groups, etc. Additionally, I can view statistical reports that show the dates and times an individual student logs in at the Bb site and which areas and assignments are accessed. I can also see each content revision made to wiki pages, along with the dates and times of those revisions, even if multiple changes have been made. Under ordinary circumstances I do not look at the statistics (except to assure you have completed team tasks on time), but it's only fair that you know I can.

Conduct

- This is a college campus, even though it's made of clicks rather than bricks. Please interact in a courteous manner in your electronic classroom.
- The course material is protected by copyright and is intended for private use by registered students. Redistribution without consent is not allowed.
- Keep your login ID and password private. This will ensure that your assignments, correspondence and homework are under your control at all times.
- Log off when you are finished working. This will also help maintain a secure and private workspace for your class activities.

One more note about this class: It is not my intent to select works which are patently offensive; however, it is not uncommon for literature to contain words, passages, and themes which people in various cultural groups will not only find disagreeable but also repugnant. Because the content of this class deals with difficult and challenging social issues, some of the texts for this class almost certainly fall into one or more of those categories. When such situations occur, I expect each student to openly express opinions, but also to act with dignity and respect toward the ideas and opinions of others.

Try very hard not to jump to conclusions about what someone else might mean. Communicating through writing is much more susceptible to misinterpretation than talking with someone face to face. It's very easy to misunderstand and be misunderstood. Part of the work of this class is to learn how to communicate effectively through writing. So please, be kind to one another.

Recommended Technology

All of these are in the **must have** category to succeed in this class.

- PC or Macintosh with consistent internet access
- Email
- File readers
    - PowerPoint viewer (free PC download) (free Mac download)
    - Adobe Reader (free download PC and Mac)
    - Flash Player (free download)
- Microsoft Word or another word-processing application
    - If you use another word processor, such as Word Perfect or Microsoft Works, you **must** learn how to save files in Rich Text format so they can be shared with everyone in the class.