

CAS 111.05P: Critical Thinking
Fall 2009
MW 2:30 – 3:20 (HL 305)

Dr. Bill Bolin
HL 324
903.886.5272
Bill_Bolin@tamu-commerce.edu
Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:30 and by appointment

Required Text:

Dave Ellis, *Becoming a Master Student*, 12th edition (Texas A&M-Commerce edition)

Description and Goals

(Theory and Application of Learning and Critical Thinking)

This course, occasionally referred to as the First-Year Seminar (FSS), introduces students to theories of learning and critical thinking, and provides a learning framework for students to apply to their college and life experiences. Concepts studied include research and theory on how people learn, critical thinking, problem solving, perception, learning styles, memory, creativity, and how attitudes and values affect the learning and thinking processes. The course also shows students how to apply these theories and research findings to help develop practical skills in time management, reading, note taking, test taking, and other areas that will the students become more successful university students and lifelong learners.

By helping to “de-mystify” the university experience for students while also encouraging engagement in campus life and activities, this section of CAS 111 is intended to help students gain the most—academically and socially—from their university experience.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Students must satisfactorily complete all assignments for this course in order to receive a passing grade. In addition to selected reading and writing exercises, students are required to attend at least *four* university/campus activities/events and to write a 1-2 page critical-thinking paper on each that explains how attending that event contributes to the student’s college success.

- At least one event should be a “cultural event.” Examples include art exhibitions, concerts, or theatrical performances.
- One event should be a “university-wide event.” Such events can include attending a presentation by a guest speaker on campus, a breakout entertainment event, colloquium, convocation, and the like.
- One event should be an athletic event (varsity sport or intramural sport).

- One event can be of the student's own selection of any university- or campus-sponsored event or activity.

Please see your instructor if you have questions about appropriate events.

Students are also required to maintain a journal that describes their experiences at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Journal entries can be reasonably informal and on any subjects that the student chooses; however, I will also announce in class specific topics that the student should address for that week's entry. Worth 30 points.

Course Policies:

Attendance is vital for success in this course. If you exceed four absences I will lower your final course grade by a letter grade for *each* subsequent absence or to drop you entirely from the course after three weeks' worth of absences. This policy applies to "excused" and "unexcused" absences. Attendance also implies active participation in the course.

No late work will be accepted. If you can't be here on the day an assignment is due, you must email it to me as a Word document or in rich text by the deadline. You'll have a short paper due every Wednesday; there will be a total of seven of these, and they will be worth 10 points each.

Assigned readings must be completed before the start of class, typically on Mondays.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty Statement

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3])

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

CAS 111: Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1	Course introduction "First Steps" (Ch.1)
Week 2	Time Management (Ch.2) University Policies and Procedures (see Student Handbook) A.) Understanding the drop procedure B.) 45-hour rule (30-hour rule for freshmen)

- C.) 3-peat rule
 - D.) 6-drop rule
 - E.) reimbursement for completion of degree within
3 semester hours pf degree requirements
- Paper on Handbook due on Wednesday**

Week 3	Memory (Ch.3) Presentation by Career Services (9/16) Paper on event due on Wednesday
Week 4	Reading (Ch.4) Paper on library tutorials due on Wednesday [http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/library/howto/tutorials/]
Week 5	Notes (Ch.5) Paper on event due on Wednesday
Week 6	Tests (Ch.6) Paper on skills centers due on Wednesday
Week 7	Thinking (Ch.7) Paper on event due on Wednesday
Week 8	“What’s Next?” (Ch.8) Paper on event due on Wednesday; journals due

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Halladay Student Services Building

Room 303 A/D

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu