



## **Syllabus**

### **SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT BC 301: Critical Thinking**

5 Credits  
Effective: Winter 2023

*Access to the Internet is required.  
All written assignments must be in Microsoft-Word-compatible formats.  
See the library's APA Style Guide tutorial for a list of resources that can help you use APA style.*

## FACULTY

Faculty Name:

Contact Information:

Instructor's Professional and Academic Background:

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the student to critical thinking processes used to analyze today's business issues and aid identifying rational solutions. This course focuses on building and analyzing arguments; forms and standards of critical thinking; and evaluating sources of information. Students learn foundational skills that will serve them throughout the program and their business careers.

## COURSE RESOURCES

Required and recommended resources to complete coursework and assignments are found on the course [Reading List](#). Access is provided through the Reading List link in your online course as well as from the library homepage ("Find Your Reading List" button).

**Note:** Required resources that must be purchased by the student are tagged "Purchase from a vendor of your choosing." Required resources with a direct link, "Available through CityU Library", are available electronically at no cost to students.

Students in Canada may purchase course resources from the [Canada Bookstore](#), and students outside the U.S. and Canada should contact their advisor or textbook coordinator for additional information.

## CITYU LEARNING GOALS

This course supports the following City University learning goals:

- Critical thinking and information literacy

## COURSE OUTCOMES

In this course, learners:

- Trace the development of an argument from proposition to conclusion
- Construct an argument that defends a business claim with appropriate supporting data and logical consistency
- Analyze business propositions for examples of fact and inference, inductive and deductive reasoning, and emotional appeal
- Apply the principles of critical thinking to writing
- Compare attitudes or values as expressed by writers with differing perspectives
- Recognize assumptions and how assumptions may be used to benefit or hinder critical thinking
- Evaluate the reliability of source materials
- Design and produce a team-written document

## CORE CONCEPTS, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS

- Empirical reasoning, scientific method, hypothesis, probability and causal reasoning
- How to articulate the hidden and/or value assumptions underlying arguments
- How to evaluate an argument by identifying its claim, its viewpoint and biases, and its level of support, and to distinguish an argument from a report
- How to evaluate sources for relevance, reliability and currency
- How to evaluate the reliability of hypotheses based on statistical sampling
- Identification of major logical fallacies (false authority, bandwagon, circular reasoning, red herring, straw man, etc.)
- Obstacles that impede the critical thinking process
- Proper research documentation format in APA style
- The difference between facts and inferences
- The difference between the denotative and connotative meanings of words
- The differences between a report and an evaluation
- The differences between conscious, unconscious, warranted and unwarranted assumptions
- The differences between deductive and inductive reasoning, including the advantages and limitations of each
- The differences between substantiated and unsubstantiated opinions
- The differing functions of concrete and abstract language in constructing arguments
- The functions of assimilation, accommodation and disequilibrium in the thinking process
- The place of emotional appeals in an argument
- The relationship between careful observation and critical thinking
- The role of assumptions and generalizations in the thinking process
- The role of feelings in the thinking process
- The spectrum of conscious and unconscious viewpoint filters and how they affect arguments
- The standards of determining factuality: verifiability, reliability, plausibility, and probability

## OVERVIEW OF COURSE GRADING

The grades earned for the course will be derived using City University of Seattle's decimal grading system, based on the following:

<i>Overview of Required Assignments</i>	<i>% of Final Grade</i>
Team Inference Discussion and Essay	20%
Viewpoints Comparison	15%
Editorial Evaluation Essay	15%
Argumentative Essay	30%
Instructor Determined Assignments and Activities	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## SPECIFICS OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The instructor will provide grading rubrics that will provide more detail as to how this assignment will be graded.

## **Team Inference Discussion and Essay**

Students will be assigned to a team to complete this assignment. All teams will discuss the following question:

What do students perceive to be the outside world's assumptions and inferences about ethnic identity or some other characteristic by which people might classify others? For example, a student might identify with a national or ethnic group, or identify with people having certain physical traits in common, such as being thin, fat, tall, short, bald, blond, etc. Students might also identify with a group that is classified by non-physical traits such as professional, political or religious affiliation or identification with a minority gender orientation or interest group. The point here is for individuals to be able to identify themselves with a group so that students can then explore and examine the negative or positive automatic assumptions people often apply to such groups.

- Step 1: Start by individually making some notes and reflecting on what inferences are made about others. How does this affect every student? What is untrue about the inferences?
- Step 2: After reflecting on the inferences, students will post their answers to the above discussion questions on the group discussion board.
- Step 3: Respond to each team mates' posts to have a thorough discussion about inferences and how they affect students given the original post and the questions above. Students will respond to teammates about what you've learned about inferences made about them. Sometimes it is surprising an insightful to learn about other peoples' experiences with inferences.
- Step 4: After conducting a substantial discussion on this topic, collaborate on an essay with the following purpose: examine the concept of inferences and describe one or more inferences made about team members based on identification with a specific ethnic group, physical characteristics, gender, religious affiliation, etc. Describe the negative or positive assumptions that people infer about these groups.

Students will write a three to five-page essay explaining what they perceive to be the outside world's assumptions and inferences about the chosen groups.

<b><i>Components</i></b>	<b><i>% of Grade</i></b>
Content	30%
Requirements	20%
Ethical Self-Awareness	10%
Purpose/Thesis Statement	10%
Writing Mechanics	10%
Organization	10%
Team Work/Peer Evaluation	5%
Individual Contribution to Team Discussion/Collaboration	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Viewpoints Comparison**

Students will conduct research to find two different or paradoxical perspectives (e.g., systems thinking vs. reductionism and deontology vs. consequentialism). (A) Students should clearly describe each perspective and provide some background information regarding the history and development of each viewpoint. (B) Students will select a situation/case of conflict from their workplace, literature, or a company of interest and after briefly describing the dynamics of the case, they will utilize each of the two perspectives to

analyze the situation toward resolving the conflict. (C) Next, students will discuss how each perspective helped them gain an understanding of the situation and develop a solution to resolve the conflict (i.e., compare and contrast the two viewpoints). (D) Finally, students will examine whether or not they could gain a deeper understanding of the case and generate a more effective solution by combining the two viewpoints (i.e., an integrated perspective). APA writing conventions should be followed with a minimum of three (3) sources referenced and cited.

<i><b>Components</b></i>	<i><b>% of Grade</b></i>
Requirements	30%
Content	30%
Writing Mechanics	5%
Purpose/Thesis Statement	15%
References	5%
Organization	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Editorial Evaluation Essay**

Students will read an editorial in a current newspaper (hard copy or online) and write a two-page essay evaluating the argumentation types and effectiveness it demonstrates using the concepts introduced in the class. Be sure to select an editorial. Look up the definition of an editorial before searching for an appropriate article to use. A minimum of two APA references is required.

<i><b>Components</b></i>	<i><b>% of Grade</b></i>
Content	30%
Requirements	25%
Organization	15%
Issue	10%
References	10%
Writing Mechanics	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Argumentative Essay**

In this assignment, students will be required to write an argumentative essay. There will be three parts in the assignment:

1. Thesis Statement:  
Students will select a controversy surrounding businesses (i.e dress code policies or outsourcing training or the sales group) and will write a thesis statement to support their argument to be submitted to their instructor for approval.
2. Thesis Outline:  
Upon approval of their thesis topic, the students will prepare an outline of their argumentative essay. They must use at least five sources in support of their arguments with the majority selected from appropriate professional or scholarly journals or eBooks. The final reference list and outline of the paper will be submitted to the instructor for approval.
3. Completed Essay:  
The completed essay must incorporate any feedback received from the instructor and must be 10 - 12 pages long, APA formatting, and double spaced. An introductory statement, body, conclusion, and a full reference list of all works cited are required.

<i><b>Components</b></i>	<i><b>% of Grade</b></i>
Content Application	30%
Conclusions	20%
Context and Awareness	20%
Topic and Thesis Submission	10%
Writing Mechanics	10%
Reference List and APA Formatting	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Instructor Determined Assignments and Activities**

Whether in class, online, or in a mixed mode setting, students will be graded on their participation in classroom discussions; ability to present, explain, or defend alternative viewpoints; and the degree to which they have mastered the concepts and principles inherent in the study of business management. Written work will be assessed not only on relevance to the subject presented, but also on adherence to good written form, APA style, and professional presentation. The instructor may also choose to create additional activities to support learning in the classroom or online.

<i><b>Components</b></i>	<i><b>% of Grade</b></i>
Quality of Responses	50%
Quantity of Responses	30%
Timeliness	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Late Assignments**

A critical aspect of management is to meet predefined deadlines. Therefore, all assignments are expected to be submitted when due. No late assignments are accepted. Life-situations do occur. When an issue arises coordinate with the instructor prior to the assignment's due date and the due date may be adjusted. It is in the best interest of the student to ensure that all assignments are submitted on time.

### **Participation**

Class participation will be evaluated during class. Participation includes being prepared for class discussions and contributing meaningful content when appropriate. It also includes individual effort contributed to the team project.

### **Professional Writing**

Assignments require error-free writing that uses standard English conventions and logical flow of organization to address topics clearly, completely, and concisely. CityU requires the use of APA style.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to all of City University of Seattle's academic policies. The most current versions of these policies can be found in the [University Catalog](#) that is linked from the CityU Web site.

## **Antidiscrimination**

City University of Seattle and its staff and faculty are committed to supporting our students. We value equity, diversity, and inclusion as a way of life as well as the educational opportunities it provides. City U will not tolerate any form of discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, socioeconomic status, or religious values. If you have experienced any discrimination based on any of the above, we encourage you to report this to the University. Please report this to your instructor. If you do not feel safe reporting this to your instructor, please report to the Provost or to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

## **Non-Discrimination & Prohibition of Sexual Harassment**

City University of Seattle adheres to all federal, state, and local civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in employment and education. The University is committed to ensuring that the education environment is bounded by standards of mutual respect and safety and is free from discriminatory practices.

In the U.S., the University is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to ensure that all of its education programs and activities do not discriminate on the basis of sex/gender. Sex include sex, sex stereotypes, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and pregnancy or parenting status. Sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking are forms of sex discrimination, which are prohibited under Title IX and by City University of Seattle policy. City University of Seattle also prohibits retaliation against any person opposing discrimination or participating in any discrimination investigation or complaint process internal or external to the institution. Questions regarding Title IX, including its application and/or concerns about noncompliance, should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator. For a complete copy of the policy or for more information, visit <https://my.cityu.edu/titleix> or contact the Title IX Coordinator.

In Canada, in compliance with the British Columbia Human Rights Code, the Alberta Human Rights Act, WorksafeBC, and the Workers' Compensation Board of Alberta, the University believes that its environment should at all times be supportive and respectful of the dignity and self-esteem of individuals. Discrimination, harassment and bullying conduct, whether through person to person behaviour or via electronic communications such as email or social media is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. As an educational institution, it is our responsibility to cultivate an environment of excellence, equity, mutual respect and to recognize the value and potential of every individual. The University will take all necessary steps to meet or exceed the requirements of the law to prevent discrimination, harassment and bullying. The Respectful Workplace Policy for the prevention of discrimination, harassment and bullying policy and procedure can be found at <https://www.cityu.edu/discover-cityu/about-cityu/> under the Policies section or at <https://www.cityuniversity.ca/about/>.

## **Religious Accommodations**

City University of Seattle has a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The University's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available in the University Catalog and on the my.cityu.edu student portal. Accommodations must be requested by the 20% mark of this course (e.g. day 14 of a ten-week course, day 7 of a 5-week course) using the Religious Accommodations Request Form found on the student dashboard in the my.cityu.edu student portal.

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity in students requires the pursuit of scholarly activity that is free from fraud, deception and unauthorized collaboration with other individuals. Students are responsible for understanding CityU's policy on academic integrity and adhering to its standards in meeting all course requirements. A complete copy of this policy can be found in the [University Catalog](#) under *Student Rights and Responsibilities* on the page titled *Academic Integrity Policy*.

### **Attendance**

Students taking courses in any format at the University are expected to be diligent in their studies and to attend class regularly.

Regular class attendance is important in achieving learning outcomes in the course and may be a valid consideration in determining the final grade. For classes where a physical presence is required, a student has attended if they are present at any time during the class session. For online classes, a student has attended if they have posted or submitted an assignment. A complete copy of this policy can be in the [University Catalog](#) under *Student Rights and Responsibilities* on the page titled *Attendance*.

### **Final Assignment Due Date**

Final assignments for each class at CityU must be due on or before the final date of the course as indicated in the university's course information system. Due dates that extend beyond the final date of the course may negatively impact tuition funding for students.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Disability Services Accommodations Statement**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Support Services at [disability@cityu.edu](mailto:disability@cityu.edu) or 206.239.4752 or visit the [Disability Support Services](#) page in the my.cityu.edu portal. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors.

### **Library Services**

CityU librarians are available to help you find the resources and information you need to succeed in this course. Contact a CityU librarian through the [Ask a Librarian](#) service, or access [library resources and services online](#), 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### **Smarthinking Tutoring**

CityU students have access to free online tutoring offered through Smarthinking, including writing support, from certified tutors 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Contact CityU's Student Support Center at [help@cityu.ed](mailto:help@cityu.ed) to request a user name and password.