

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE**  
**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**  
**ED5210: Critical Thinking: Issues and approaches in curriculum and assessment**  
**Fall 2014**  
**Sept. 3-Dec. 4, 2014**  
**On-line**

- *Overarching, critical inquiry question: To what extent should critical thinking be infused across the curriculum?*

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**Calendar Description**

EDUCATION 5210 Graduate Seminar in Curriculum Studies (Series) *Credit hours: 3.0 Contact hours per week: 3-0-0* In-depth study of specific topics in and approaches to curriculum, dependent on student interests and Faculty resources. Examples might include: Teachers' Life Histories and Curriculum Development; Critical Pedagogy and Curriculum; Evaluation of Curriculum; Language in Education; and Critical Thinking: Issues and Approaches.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Critically understand a variety of definitions and approaches foundational to critical thinking,
- Explore basic elements of reasoning, logic, informal logic, rationality and reasoning as they relate to critical thinking theory and practice,
- Understand standards of critical thinking and their application to specific pedagogical subject areas, fields and/or domains,
- Review scholarly literature in critical thinking theory and practice,
- Analyze theoretical foundations of critical thinking in education across the curriculum,
- Explore and assess the role of inquiry in critical thinking theory and pedagogy.

**Required Resource:**

- Bailin, S. and Battersby, M. (2010) Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking. Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Nosich, G. (2012) Learning to think things through: a guide to critical thinking across the curriculum. Boston, MA: Pearson.

**Statement of Purpose:**

Developing an appreciation of critical thinking is a daunting task. ED5210 is designed to facilitate a *deep* understanding of the role, nature, value and pedagogy of critical thinking for teaching and learning. It explores definitions, concepts, logics and pedagogies basic

to critical thinking theory and practice within an educational context. The distinctiveness of critical thinking in relation to other thinking skills and attitudes is explored as well: creative thinking, caring thinking, meta-cognition, etc.

**Evaluation:**

The course evaluation will consist of a:

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| 1. Professional response to writing          | 10% |
| 2. Critical thinking in a program of studies | 25% |
| 3. Academic response to writing              | 25% |
| • Article review                             |     |
| 4. Differentiated project                    | 40% |

**Professional response to writing**

This assignment is a written response to a professional development article focused on a discussion on Bloom’s taxonomy and critical thinking. Due: Oct. 9, 2014

**Critical thinking in a program of studies**

Students will explore a self-selected program of studies, and analyze it for critical thinking content. This project gives students an opportunity to explore a particular curriculum for the presence of critical thinking concepts, skills, attitudes and teaching strategies. Due: Oct. 12, 2014

**Academic response to writing**

This assignment is a written response to an academic article. The article is a discussion and assessment of different approaches to critical thinking and critical thinking pedagogy. Due: Nov. 16, 2014

**Differentiated project**

This project is designed to allow students to demonstrate an understanding of course material in a manner consistent with their specific interests, questions and professional contexts. Due: Dec. 4, 2014

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

***Module One: What is my current understanding of critical thinking? (Sept. 3-20)***

- *Establishing prior knowledge*
  - *Brainstorming activity*
  - *Problematizing critical thinking*
  - *Jennifer Moon: thinking critically about an incident on a walk*
  - *Learning to think things through (1-28)*
  - *SEE-I activity on critical thinking*

***Module Two: What does inquiry have to do with critical thinking? (Sept. 21-Oct. 5)***

- *On the need for critical thinking*
  - *Learning to think things through (26-34)*
- *Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking (1-15)*

- Overview of the literature

**Module Three: Why are the elements of reasoning and intellectual standards important for critical inquiry? (Oct. 6-24)**

- Learning to think things through (47-75)
- Learning to think things through (133-160)
- Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking
  - Guidelines for inquiry (20-36)

**Module Four: Why are sound arguments foundational to critical thinking? (Oct. 25-Nov. 22)**

- Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking
  - The Arguments and their structure (39-54)
  - Inductive arguments and fallacies (58-75)
- Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking
  - Evaluating the arguments (156-170)
  - Making a judgment and making a case (174-184)

**Module Five: How do we nurture a spirit of inquiry? (Nov. 23-Dec. 4)**

- Reason in the balance: an inquiry approach to critical thinking
  - Dialogue and the spirit of inquiry (192-208)

**Final Letter Grades:**

<b>Numeric Value</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point</b>
98 - 100	A+	4.00
94 - 97	A	4.00
90 - 93	A-	3.70
87 - 89	B+	3.30
83 - 86	B	3.00
80 - 82	B-	2.70

Note: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in the M.Ed. Program.

77 - 79	C+	2.30
73 - 76	C	2.00
70 - 72	C-	1.70
67 - 69	D+	1.30
63 - 66	D	1.00
<63	F	0.00

**NOTE:** Assignments are due in class on their respective due dates as indicated by the professor. Unless prior arrangements have been negotiated with the professor in advance, late assignments will not be accepted, and students will receive a score of “0” for that component of the course. Please note that circumstances conditioning the possibility of said prior arrangements must be either of a **medical** or **calamitous** nature. If circumstances are medical, a doctor’s note is required.