CRITICAL THINKING & METHODS OF INQUIRY
LDST 250-01: SPRING 2018
MON./WEDS. 1:30-2:45  JEPSON HALL 108
COURSE WEBSITE: HTTPS://BLOG.RICHMOND.EDU/CRITICALTHINKING/

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
The goal of this course is to help students develop critical thinking skills and provide an introduction to methods of research inquiry. In a society inundated with information from modern media – television, radio, movies, news, and the internet – it is crucial that we as responsible citizens be able to distinguish the good information from the bad, the truth from falsehood. Leaders are frequently required to make judgments about topics and in situations they know little about – critical thinking skills help them to assess what information they have in order to make good judgments about people, information, and ideas. It is also important for us – whether we are leaders, followers, or both – to be able to view the information and opinions with which we are presented from multiple standpoints, and to be able to assess and judge what we see and hear in context and with regard to our own ethics and mores. As members of a university, national, and global community, it is our responsibility to question not only what appears in the media, but the ideals and ideologies we already hold; as critical thinkers, it is important for us to bring these critical skills to bear not only in our examination of leadership and the leaders we have chosen to follow, but also in our efforts to maintain life-long learning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
In this course, students will learn the following skills:
- How to critically read, listen, and observe
- How to evaluate information and locate bias
- How to analyze arguments and systems
- How to anticipate problems and counterarguments
- How to construct an analytical and well-researched argument in writing and in speech
- How to reflect on their own views and biases

REQUIRED TEXTS
There are no books required for this course. Instead, you will be given access to a variety of articles and chapters on BlackBoard. Please purchase one or more binders (3-ring, spiral, whatever makes you happy) and create a hard-copy course packet of these readings to bring to class as we go through the semester. (There are a lot of readings when you don’t have textbooks, so you may need either one fat binder or multiple smaller ones to fit everything in.)

Students will need to download Argumentative (available on BlackBoard under “Readings & Resources”), free argument-mapping software.
**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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**Attendance/Participation (10%)**

All students are expected to attend classes regularly and to contribute to class discussions. Your grade will be based on whether you are present (and on time) and whether you contribute regularly and thoughtfully to class discussions. Students absent more than two class periods must either provide adequate documentation of participation in a University-sponsored event, or of a serious illness, injury, or other emergency, or receive a penalty to their grade.

Students unable to participate or uncomfortable participating verbally may write a 600-word discussion response to the day’s material and class discussion to be turned in electronically by midnight on the day of the class in question.

**Weekly Response Blog (10%)**

Each student is expected to write a brief, informal reaction to the readings assigned for the week and to respond to other students’ reactions. Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the readings and to engage with them thoughtfully. Responses will not be graded on style or organization, only content. The blog assignment may be found here: [http://blog.richmond.edu/criticalthinking/reading-response-blog-assignment/](http://blog.richmond.edu/criticalthinking/reading-response-blog-assignment/). This is also where entries will be posted. Students will be assigned either Monday or Wednesday to do their posts; they will comment on the opposite day. There will be twelve weeks in which students will post a blog entry in response to the readings for the day.

Three times per semester, each student is expected to post one entry (a total of three) on a lecture or seminar event held at the University. These events include, but are not limited to, Jepson Forum Events or departmental speaker series lectures. Students will be able to find events through JepsonBytes and SpiderBytes, and may ask Dr. Bezio about any events they are uncertain about.

**Discussion Starter/Assignments (5%)**

Each student will be expected to start discussion once during the course of the semester. This is not a formal presentation; students are expected to bring five questions or problems to begin the day’s discussion. At least one question must relate to each assigned work for the day and at least two questions must relate the readings to current events from outside class. Discussion questions are due on BlackBoard 24 hours before the assigned class.
There will also be periodic short assignments to accompany the daily readings which ask students to fill out “quizzes” online or to diagram arguments as preparation for class discussion.

**Research Project (40%)**
There will be a long research project in this course which will contain several short papers, and will culminate in one longer paper and a research webpage. All papers and assignments are expected to be the students’ original work and follow the guidelines of the Honor Code. Papers should contain correct, formal language and a complete works consulted bibliography. Papers should be turned in on BlackBoard (papers must be received by the due date and time and open properly to be considered acceptable). Papers will be graded using the Microsoft Word Reviewing tool and uploaded along with the grading rubrics to BlackBoard’s GradeCenter. The webpage will be hosted through UR’s blog site (and uses WordPress). To request your own page, go to [http://blog.richmond.edu](http://blog.richmond.edu).

Late papers and assignments (including the website) will be penalized one grade (A to A-) for each day they are late. Technical problems (computer or email) are not an acceptable excuse for lateness: back up files on Box and/or an external jump drive, and save often.

**Group Project (10%)**
There will be a group GivingGames project in this course which consists of a group research paper and individual blog posts. Students will be assigned to a group and tasked with researching the ethics and effectiveness of a chosen charity; over the course of the semester, students will research their charities, then write a group analysis of that charity with a recommendation for or against it. During the project, students will post updates to the course blog documenting the research process and discussing their ideas and concerns. The assignment for the blog may be found here: [http://blog.richmond.edu/criticalthinking/givinggames-project-blog/](http://blog.richmond.edu/criticalthinking/givinggames-project-blog/).

**Exams (25%)**
There will be both a midterm and a final exam. Students are expected to be present for both exams during their scheduled time. Exams will be a combination of short- and long-answer and essay questions.

**CLASSROOM POLICIES**
Students are expected to be on time to class. Lateness will impact a student’s attendance grade. Students are expected to be attentive to and respectful of the professor and the ideas of their peers.

Laptops are permitted on working days only. Please bring paper/notebook and writing implements for taking notes during regular classes. Students are expected to bring hard copies of chapters/articles to class. Too many laptops are used for non-class purposes during classtime.
and recent studies show that students learn better from taking notes by hand (http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away). Please make sure all cell phones are silenced or turned off. Students will not be allowed to answer their phones during classtime.

All written work is expected on time. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one full grade for each day they are late. Technical difficulties are not an acceptable excuse for lateness, so save work often and in different places (jump drives, email, etc.). All assignments are expected to be the student’s original work. The Jepson School follows the provisions of the Honor System as outlined by the School of Arts and Sciences.

If emergency circumstances inhibit a student from attending class or completing an assignment, the professor should be notified as soon as possible (preferably before class or the due date of the assignment). Extensions and make-ups are given only at the discretion of the professor. Exams cannot be made up except under the most extenuating of circumstances. Students needing accommodations should speak to the professor.

JEPSON POLICIES
Awarding of Credit
To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities. registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html

Disability Accommodations
Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams. disability.richmond.edu/

Honor System
The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.” studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/the-honor-code.html

Religious Observance
Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance. registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html

STUDENT RESOURCES
If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.
Academic Skills Center (http://asc.richmond.edu, 289-8626, or 289-8956): Assists students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement.

Career Services (http://careerservices.richmond.edu/ or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

Counseling and Psychological Services (http://wellness.richmond.edu/offices/caps/ or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Speech Center (http://speech.richmond.edu or 289-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations.

Writing Center (http://writing.richmond.edu or 289-8263): Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.

Boatwright Library Research Librarians (http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/ or 289-8876): Research librarians assist students with identifying and locating resources for class assignments, research papers and other course projects. Librarians also provide research support for students and can respond to questions about evaluating and citing sources. Students can email, text or IM or schedule a personal research appointment to meet with a librarian in his/her office on the first floor Research and Collaborative Study area.
UNIT I: WHAT IS RESEARCH AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Weds., Jan. 17
Welcome to Critical Thinking and Methods of Inquiry
Semester-Long Research Project

Thurs., Jan. 18 by 11.59pm
Research Project: Step 1 (Dr. Bezio will do Step 2)

Mon., Jan 22
How the Brain Works...and Doesn’t (or, Why Critical Thinking is So HARD)
Reading: *Blind* 3-31; Goethals & Allison 2-38
Research Project: Step 3 (You may bring laptops today, but you may only bring them out when we begin the mapping process—you may also map by hand, if you prefer.)

Weds., Jan. 24
Thinking about Big Ideas and Why We Do Research
Introduction to GivingGames
Reading: Badke 1-23; *Sheep* 77-87, 149-172; Ciulla 20-35
Research Project: Step 4a

Mon., Jan 29
Effective Altruism & the GivingGames Project
Reading: *DGB* 1-42, 103-127; *Craft* 49-64
GG Project: Your charity ideas (5 charities, 1-2 sentences about why you support each)
Research Project: Step 4b

Weds., Jan. 31 – Library Research Day
Beginning Research Projects (You may bring laptops to class today.)
Reading: Badke 69-91
Research Project: Step 5 (bring to class) and Step 6 (in class)

Mon., Feb. 5
Reading: Toulmin; Vaughn 46-80
Assignment: [http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/toulminexerciseprint.html](http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/toulminexerciseprint.html) -- fill it out online WITHOUT checking the “show answer” box, then print it or save it (by choosing “print to pdf”). If you saved it, upload it to BlackBoard—if you printed it, bring it to class.
Research Project: Step 7 (bring) and Step 8 (in class)
**Weds., Feb. 7**

How to deal with logic
Reading: UA 141-178
Research Project: Step 9 and Step 10
GG Project: Each group **must** have a charity to research by today. Each person should write 1-2 paragraphs about your group’s chosen charity (what it is, what it does, background) and an additional 1-2 paragraphs about how you initially feel about this charity. End your reflection with a statement of whether or not—at this point—you think this charity should receive the class donation (**4-5 paragraphs total**).

**Mon., Feb. 12**

Fallacies, Fallacies, Fallacies
Reading: LCR 48-113
Research Project: Step 11

**Weds., Feb. 14**

Sources
Reading: Turabian 89-103; *They/I* 42-51, 55-77
Assignment: BlackBoard Sources Quiz
Research Project: Step 12 and Step 13 and Step 14

**Mon., Feb. 19**

Statistics
Reading: Huff 13-28, 39-67, 89-101, 124-144
Research Project: Step 15 and Step 16*

*If your research thus far has involved any charts, graphs, or statistical data, please bring or email copies to Dr. Bezio so that the class can help you analyze them.

**Weds., Feb. 21**

Fallacies & Logic in the Wild: Advertising
Reading: Teays 475-519
Research Project: Step 17

**Mon., Feb. 26**

Politics, Leadership, and Media: Living Room Candidate
Reading: *They/I* 92-101
Research Project: Step 18

**Weds., Feb. 28**

Midterm Review for “At-Home” Midterm

**Weds., Feb. 28-Thurs., Mar. 1**
BlackBoard Midterm: Between 3pm Wednesday and 11.59pm Thursday, take the midterm on BlackBoard (open book, open note).

UNIT II: RESEARCH IN PRACTICE ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

Mon., Mar. 5
Science is Strange
Reading: Weird 158-219; Spook 57-75
Assignment: Choose one of the experiments described in Spook and diagram its main argument using Toulmin.

Weds., Mar. 7
Game Theory and Human Behavior
Reading: RPS 55-125
Writing: IF you are not in class today, you need to write at least two paragraphs responding to each chapter of reading and post them to the Reading Response blog BEFORE classtime. This is not an optional assignment if you are absent.

Fri., Mar. 9 by 5pm on BlackBoard
Research Project: Step 19—Background Paper Due

Mon., Mar. 19
Ethical Reasoning—or Poor Impulse Control
Reading: Haidt 3-60; CTAA 342-372
Research Project: Step 20 and Step 21

Weds., Mar. 21
Implicit Bias
Reading: Blind 94-122, 145-187; Hoyt & Murphy 387-399
Assignment: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/- Take any test and write up a paragraph on the blog (in addition to your usual post/comment) about whether or not your results were what you expected (and what you think about that). You do not have to state which test you took (but you can if you wish). Copy and paste your blog post to BlackBoard.
GG Project: List at least six sources per person that will be useful in researching the group’s charity. Each source must have two full paragraphs (3-5 sentences) explaining what the source is about and how it will be used.
Research Project: Step 22 and Step 23

Mon., Mar. 26
What is Right?
Reading: Flanigan 579-586; Hidalgo 1-22
Assignment: Choose the main argument from Flanigan’s article or Hidalgo’s article and diagram it using Toulmin.
Research Project: Step 24 and Step 25
Wed., Mar. 28
Studying People
Reading: Stern & Kalof 22-42; Von Rueden & Van Vugt 1-13
Assignment: Identify which of the methods (mentioned in Stern & Kalof) Von Rueden and Van Vugt use in their study.

Mon., Apr. 2
When Experiments Go Wrong
Reading: Dörner 1-35; Forsyth et al 447-459; Stanford Prison Experiment website http://www.prisonexp.org/the-story
Assignment: Address the following question in 2 paragraphs (or more) on the blog: How does failure teach us as much as success? Copy and paste your blog to BlackBoard.

Tues., Apr. 3 by 5pm on BlackBoard
GG Project: Group Paper Due

Wed., Apr. 4
GG Presentation Day
GG Project: Each group must present their argument for why the class should (or should not) choose to donate to their charity. Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes per group.
Pre-Vote Thoughts Blog Post (on group’s charity)

Mon., Apr. 9
GG Debate & Vote Today
GG Project: 30-second summary and 1-minute rebuttals

Wed., Apr. 11
Fake News!
Reading: Teays 556-595; Archer & Clinton 1-18
Assignment: https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/07/03/533676536/test-your-fake-news-judgement-play-this-game - write down which ones tripped you up and why.
GG Project: Post-Results Blog Post

Fri., Apr. 13 by 5pm on BlackBoard
Research Project: Step 26—“Ethics” Paper

Mon., Apr. 16
Putting Together History
Reading: Zinn 1-22; Hayter 534-567
Assignment: Choose an argument from Zinn’s chapter or Hayter’s article and diagram it using Toulmin.
Weds., Apr. 18  
Culture and Leadership  
Reading: Harvey 199-229; Bezio 48-63  
Assignment: Choose an argument from Harvey’s article or Bezio’s article and diagram it using Toulmin.  
Research Project: Step 27

Mon., Apr. 23  
Can Leadership Fix What We’ve Broken?  
Reading: Impossible 47-55, 63-72, 169-171  
Research Project: Step 28

Weds., Apr. 25  
Final Exam Review & Wrap-Up

Mon., Apr. 30 at 9am on BlackBoard  
Research Project: Step 29—Recommendations Paper

Mon., Apr. 30 at 5pm, submit link to BlackBoard  
Research Project: Step 30—Topic Website

Wed., May 2, 2pm-5pm: Final Exam (Room TBA)