

Instructor: K. Jeanine Congalton
Office: CP 420-6
Office Telephone: (714) 278-3575 E-mail address: kcongalton@fullerton.edu
Class Time: M & W, 4-5:15 p.m. Class Location: McCarthy Hall 502
Office Hours: M, 2:45 – 3:45 p.m.; W, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.; TH, 2:45 – 3:45 p.m. and by appointment. You will find that I am in my office most weekdays. I answer “class related” e-mail inquiries during office hours.

Course Theme: Critical Consumption

Required Textbooks:

Moore, B. N. & Parker, R. (2004). *Critical thinking*. New York: McGraw Hill
This textbook is available at the University bookstore.

Schlosser, E. (2002). *Fast food nation*. New York: Perennial.

This book is available at the University bookstore. You can find used copies at various bookstores or on line.

Do your best to read a newspaper on a daily basis.

Course Objectives: The course focuses on critical thinking and the application of critical thinking skills in everyday reasoning. You will find that the skills acquired in this course are readily transferable to your analysis of political, social, and everyday discourse. As identified in the University Catalog, courses in critical thinking meet various goals for student learning. Those goals will be met through the course objectives. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Define argumentation, understand its structure and components, and be aware of how it is used in public controversy.
2. Understand the distinctions between deductive and inductive reasoning.
3. Understand the distinction among various types of claims.
4. Understand the roles that case building and refutation play in public controversy.
5. Understand and be able to critically evaluate various elements of critical thinking, including evidence, reasoning, and fallacies.
6. Understand the role that language plays in critical thinking.
7. Effectively present both written and oral arguments.
8. Become a critical "decision maker."

Learning Objectives:

This course meets the **General Education** learning goals for category **I.C.—Core Competencies-Critical Thinking**—in the following ways:

1. By developing the ability to think, read, and write critically.
2. By developing the ability to identify what is necessary for successful decision making and problem solving.
3. By developing the ability to clarify facts, concepts, and evidence involved in problem solving.
4. By developing the ability to critically evaluate evidence used to support a position.
5. By developing the ability to revise arguments and conclusions based on critical analysis.
6. By developing the ability to recognize implicit and explicit features of communication.
7. By developing the ability to assess critically similarities and differences in points of view.
8. By developing the ability for critical self-evaluation.

Course Requirements: You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning, including completing readings by the day assigned, attending class lectures, participating in class discussions, and turning in written assignments on time. The following are the minimal course requirements.

2 written examinations
 3 written assignments (1 of these 3 written assignments is a part of your final project)
 2 oral presentations (1 of these 2 oral projects is a part of your final project)
 Final project (includes the second oral presentation)
 Various homework assignments (assignments are geared toward helping you to complete your final project)
 Plenary sessions (each student is required to attend 3 plenary sessions)

NOTE: FAILURE TO COMPLETE ANY ONE OF THESE ASSIGNMENTS WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE FOR THIS COURSE.

In order to earn GE credit for this course, you must pass the course with a “C” or better.

Grading:

Examination #1	20%
Examination #2	15%
First Oral Presentation	10%
Written Assignment #1	10%
Written Assignment #2	10%
Homework Assignments	15%
Final Project (written and oral)	20%

Written Assignments: Unless otherwise specified, all papers must be typed (double-spaced) on 8 1/2 X 11 inch paper. Papers must be turned in on time, clearly identified by your name, ID number, and course number. When turning in an assignment, put the paper/brief in a file folder (Do not use a plastic binder.). Your written work should clearly and specifically address the issues outlined for particular assignments. Excessive stylistic errors will result in the lowering of your grade. At a minimum, the grade will be lowered by one letter. Late papers are penalized one full grade per day. Finally, for your own protection, please keep a copy of each paper that you complete.

Examinations: The examinations must be taken when scheduled. Make-up exams are given only in the case of emergencies or instances where you are representing the University at an event. In such instances, you need to present a certified medical excuse, a letter from an official university person, etc.

Oral Presentations: During the course of the semester, you will be required to make two oral presentations. The first oral presentation focuses on “making an argument.” In this initial oral argument, you will establish the existence of a problem. The topic must relate to one issue that comes from Schlosser’s book. The second oral presentation is a part of your final project. For the second oral presentation, you will argue for a “solution” to remediate the problem identified in your first presentation. You must present your oral presentations when scheduled. There are no “make-up” times for oral presentations.

Homework Assignments: These written assignments are designed to develop your skills as a critical thinker.. Please make sure that you understand the assignments before you complete them. Late homework assignments are not accepted. You will always make two (2) copies of your homework assignments. Turn one copy in at the BEGINNING of class and keep one copy for class discussion.

Final Project: The final project consists of developing a written argument and making an oral presentation. Failure to complete any portion of the final project will result in a failing grade for this project.

Plenary Sessions: The Honors program makes arrangements for 3 plenary sessions. You are required to attend each of these sessions. You will be required to complete homework assignments related to two of the plenary sessions. Your second written analysis will be related to one of the final two plenary sessions.

Participation: I expect that each student will participate in class discussions. Simply attending class without taking part in discussions is not considered to be "active" participation. In order to succeed in this class (and in your collegiate career), you will need to be actively involved in the learning process. You should be prepared to participate in some class exercises.

Additional Important Information:

- Plagiarism, collusion, cheating, or academic dishonesty of any kind will result in an automatic failing grade for this course. A discussion of academic dishonesty can be found in the University Catalog.
- Please pay attention to the add/drop dates that are listed in the schedule book.
- Incompletes are assigned only in instances as authorized in the University Catalog.
- This course will produce some lively discussions. We will not agree with each other. But it is important that we respect each other's right to express opinions. Please demonstrate the ultimate respect for your peers.
- Every day of our lives, we are confronted with issues that demand us to engage in critical thinking. This course is designed to help you understand the elements of that process in both public and private settings.
- An excused absence is a documented absence. If you are representing the University at an event, a conference, or a competition, then you should be able to secure a note from a University official. If you miss a major assignment because of illness, then must secure documentation from a medical official.
- Students with a documented disability who wish to discuss academic accommodations should contact the instructor and a the Disabled Student Services Office immediately.
- Students whose religious obligations will require them to miss class any time this semester should inform the instructor as soon as possible.
- During class time, TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES AND PAGERS.

The daily schedule is subject to change. These changes relate to dates when plenary speakers are available.*

	Topic	Assignment
8/23	Introduction to Honors 101A	
8/25	Introduction to Class	
8/30	What is an argument?	M & P, Ch 1.
9/1	Plenary session. Class meets in Humanities 123.	
9/6	Labor Day – no class	
9/8	Critical writing	M & P, Ch. 2
9/13	The role of credibility in critical thinking	M & P, Ch. 3
9/15	The role of credibility in critical thinking	M & P, Ch. 3
9/20	What makes an argument a “good” argument?	M & P, Ch. 7
9/22	What makes an argument a “good” argument? (continued)	M & P, Ch. 7
9/27	Deductive argument	M & P, Ch. 9
9/29	Deductive argument; First written analysis due	M & P, Ch. 9
10/4	Deductive argument	
10/6	Deductive argument (continued); Review for examination #1	
10/11	Examination #1	
10/13	Inductive argument	M & P, Ch. 10
10/18	Inductive argument	M & P, Ch. 10
10/20	Causal argument	M & P, Ch. 11
10/25	Plenary session. Class meets in Humanities 123	
10/27	Causal argument	M & P, Ch 11
11/1	First oral presentations	
11/3	Plenary session OR First oral presentations*	
11/8	Plenary session OR First oral presentations*	
11/10	Research Day	
11/15	Begin discussion of fallacies; Review for examination #2	
11/17	Examination #2	
11/22	Fall Recess – no class	
11/24	Fall Recess – no class	
11/29	Continue discussion of fallacies	M & P, Chs. 4- 6 and appendix 2
12/1	In class work day for second oral presentations	
12/6	Second oral presentations	
12/8	Second oral presentations	

Wednesday, December 15th: 5:00 – 6:50 p.m. Attendance is mandatory. The final examination period will be used to complete final oral presentations.

Please complete the following exercises. These exercises can be found in your textbook. You may write the answers out. Please make sure to answer the “why” question. For this assignment, you should work on your own.

Due: September 1, 2004

Where: Find the instructor at the back of Humanities 123. Remember, assignments are due at the start of class.

p. 22/exercise 1-3/#5

Is there an argument to be found?

Why/why not?

p. 23/exercise 1-4/#3

What is the claim?

What reasons are offered in support of the claim?

p. 23/exercise 1-4/#5

What is the claim?

What reasons are offered in support of the claim?

p. 25/exercise 1-5/#1

What is the primary issue? Why?

p. 25/exercise 1-5/#2

What is the primary issue? Why?

p. 29/exercise 1-5/#17

What is the primary issue? Why?

First Written Assignment.

10% of final grade

Due Date: 9/29

For this assignment, you should work on your own.

The first written assignment is designed to help you get started on your first oral assignment and your final project. Your goal is to develop an argument about a problem. The specific topic area must relate to an idea presented in *Fast Food Nation*.

General information about written assignments: Unless otherwise specified, all papers must be typed (double-spaced) on 8 1/2 X 11 inch paper. Papers must be turned in on time, clearly identified by your name, ID number, and course number. When turning in an assignment, put the paper/brief in a file folder (Do not use a plastic binder.). Your written work should clearly and specifically address the issues outlined for particular assignments. Excessive stylistic errors will result in the lowering of your grade. At a minimum, the grade will be lowered by one letter. Late papers are penalized one full grade per day. Finally, for your own protection, please keep a copy of each paper that you complete.

The following steps should help you with the completion of the first written assignment.

Identify a “problem” that is found in *Fast Food Nation*. This topic should be one that you are interested in researching for the semester. I do recognize, however, that your interests can change!

Define the problem.

How do the “experts” define the problem?

What is your interpretation of the problem?

Establish the significance of the problem.

What is the quantitative significance of the problem?

What is the qualitative significance of the problem?

Establish the relevance to the general public.

Who does the problem affect?

What does the problem affect?

You have probably already noticed that the “steps” are the main points for your essay.

You will need to consult “outside” sources to provide additional evidence to support your claims.

The evidence should come from “expert” sources of information.

The evidence should meet the basic tests of evidence.

You will need to develop an introductory paragraph that includes a specific thesis statement.

You will need to develop a concluding paragraph that restates the thesis.

You will need to include a reference page. That reference page should include sources that you cite in the analysis.