



Critical Thinking Rubric

Assignments and assessments that develop critical thinking skills require problem solving of some kind. This means that the student is required to answer an open-ended question, make an argument or interpretation, take a position on an issue, make a reasoned evaluation or a recommendation, produce an original work that satisfies specific requirements, etc. To help create assignments that prompt critical thinking, instructors can use the rubric below to plan the specific critical thinking skills they want their students to perform. Instructors are encouraged to design assignments that test at least three (3) criteria in each of the four categories below. The rubric can then be used to assess the student artifact—as Excellent, Good, Minimally Competent, and Deficient—according to the number of criteria demonstrated divided by the number of criteria required by the assignment.

1. Knowledge

- Demonstrates understanding of the terms, concepts, and principles of the subject matter.
 - Demonstrates understanding of the assigned material.
 - Documents texts and resources appropriately (avoiding plagiarism).
 - Communicates in language appropriate to college contexts; or, if appropriate, communicates effectively in the language (or equivalent means) of the discipline.
 - Exhibits insight and independent thinking/original ideas.
 - Applies theoretic concepts/schema to varied contexts.
- ___ Subtotal

2. Reasoning

- Uses analytic and inquiry methods appropriate to the discipline.
 - Makes a coherent argument or adheres to a controlling idea/thesis.
 - Makes/Identifies salient points and arguments, such as pro/con, reasons/claims, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.
 - Organizes information/ideas into appropriate and coherent patterns.
 - Interprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc., in fair/accurate ways.
 - Supports stance/position with relevant reasons and ample evidence.
- ___ Subtotal

3. Questioning

- Asks/Answers important questions.
 - Raises/Identifies debatable issues.
 - Critiques key questionable assumptions.
 - Recognizes ambiguity and, where possible, provides clarity.
 - Acknowledges/Clarifies relevant contrary opinions, competing interpretations, or alternative points of view and, where appropriate, accepts multiplicity (rather than black and white thinking).
 - Evaluates validity and credibility of sources and material used for support or as evidence.
- ___ Subtotal

4. Consequence

- Addresses an appropriate audience.
 - Generates warranted, judicious, non-fallacious conclusions or evaluations.
 - Hypothesizes important implications and consequences.
 - Synthesizes/Reconciles ideas, opinions, and information from various sources.
 - Assesses/Solves a problem within the discipline or posed by the assignment.
 - Applies knowledge and skills of the discipline to increased social awareness or self-perception.
- ___ Subtotal

_____ **Criteria Demonstrated**

_____ **Criteria Required by the Assignment**

Note: In their application of this rubric, faculty readers without discipline-specific expertise cannot ascertain the accuracy of the factual content and foundational material of each student artifact.