

Note: lettered responses represent the same individual across the questions, so that all “a)” responses come from the same person, and so on.

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**1. Start with an evaluation of yourself. What were your personal goals in taking this course? Did you achieve them? How would you have proceeded differently if you were doing this course again? What have been your major personal obstacles to learning more from this course?**

- a) My goal this course was to figure out where I stand in regards to critical thinking and how to improve my skills in it, and I believe I have met that goal. If I had to take this course again, I would try to focus more on further elaborating on the points I make and give specific examples to help compliment and enhance my writings.
- b) I felt that I expanded my ways of understanding critical thinking and how I'd like to go about fostering critical thinking in myself and others. It's been difficult to access the materials/directions at times in order to be most functional.
- c) I felt the urge to move quickly through this course and at times felt the need to hurry through assignments instead of explore. I saw the course as a baseline to getting to the classes that were more exploratory and personal. However, about three quarters into the semester, I felt myself slow down and dig into the material a more intentionally and the benefits and engagement really shifted in a positive direction.
- d) My personal goals in this course were to get a better sense of what the classes would be like in the CRCRTH program. I had not been accepted to the program when I began these classes, and I wanted to see if the program was something I would be interested in applying to. I don't feel there were any major obstacles to learning from this course. Initially, the technology was a little confusing because there was a lot of online material that needed to be reviewed from the syllabus and even the class meetings online were a little different for me. However, I quickly got the hang of things and this was not a problem for me.
- e) I had a personal goal of learning new tools I could use in my personal and professional life. I did learn new tools, but i think its a continuous journey of adding tools to your tool box. I would become more comfortable in asking questions. I am still improving on my reading skills so many readings took me longer than an average student in class.
- f) My main personal goal in taking this course was to build my confidence in sharing my thoughts, especially when they diverge from others' thinking. I believe the course has helped me continue on a path toward achieving that goal (it is a continuous process). There were certainly times during the semester that I felt unsure, but our class sessions in which we each took turns sharing our thinking helped me break through uncertainty and trust that what I had to share was valuable. One obstacle to learning more from the course was spending time dwelling on uncertainties rather than pushing through, and if I could go back I would reach out to the professor and other students more often for support to move forward with my thinking instead of staying stuck in uncertainty.
- g) My personal goal in CrCrTh 601 was to gain a broader understanding of what critical thinking is, who is able to think critical and what the value of critical thinking is. I feel that I did achieve those goals. I now have a more robust understanding of a very diverse field. If I were doing this course again I would not spend time reading the course materials ahead of time because the flow of this course was more organic and based on an unfolding of exploration which I would have experienced differently had I not read the majority of the articles and materials prior to the 3rd class. My personal obstacles were finding a rhythm and dealing with significant personal distractions which made it harder for me to focus than I anticipated. In the past I have been able to compartmentalize my academic work. This is the first time that I had this level of difficulty focusing. I think that was a combination of challenges in and outside of

the course. Other courses I have taken are either more independent study based or more specific curriculum based. This course requires stretching and working independently while still handling several details like making blog posts and submitting plus deltas but it's not a consistent rhythm of making x number of posts a week or completing a plus delta after every class which felt disruptive and unpredictable (challenging) to me.

- h) I started the course wanting to understand how to better foster critical thinking and to learn the tools that will help me to guide others. I did achieve them and I managed to gain a deeper understanding to the direct and indirect methods to encourage critical thinking in others and myself. If I had to do this course again, I would be more involved in the peer reviews and feedback. One of my major personal obstacles was that I had a difficulty in speaking up during discussions. I wish that I had better fluency to properly describe my thoughts.
- i) One of the main goals in taking this course was to further develop my critical thinking, by acquiring tools and skills I did not possess. Also, to work on building confidence through group dialogues, in order to improve my oral communication. Yes, I feel that I have made progress, but will need to continue working on it, since it's a continuous process. If I were doing this course again, I would definitely take more advantage of all the resources offered through the various readings, which I didn't get to do in its totality, due to time constraints. So a Delta for me, would be to work on distributing time more appropriately, in order to maintain a balance between work and school demands.
- j) I am doing the MA in CrCrTh so it's fair to say this was an essential component. I was particularly interesting in seeing how critical and creative thinking are related and the course delivered on this. If I was doing the course again...it's always a case of finding enough time to give the course the time that it deserves/requires, but apart from that I would not have done anything differently. I missed a few of the classes because of the time difference which was a bit annoying, but not much I could do about it.

**1. Self-evaluation (continued). What have you learned about what you have to do to make a course stimulating and productive (with respect to the format of this course: face-to-face, online, hybrid)?**

- a) This hybrid format was a great help in regards to my learning, as it allowed me to get to know my instructor and fellow students, as well as allow me to work at my own pace without overly worrying about deadlines.
- b) Engaging with the CEs in a deep way was most useful to keeping me engaged (this made me enjoy the dialogue hours and other conversations as tools towards my own process).
- c) Read. Participate and engage in the live classes. Take my time with in and out of class activities and assignments. Ask questions.
- d) I really liked the face-to-face online version of the class. While I have taken many online courses, I have not taken any where we were actually in class with each other via video conference. I thought see people's facing and being able to engage with them directly was very helpful. It was also very interesting to see us all engage despite some of us being from different parts of the world.
- e) I enjoyed the format of this course and Peter's indirective approach towards critical & creative thinking. Be able to listen, digest and react allowed me to open my mind to new ideas.
- f) I have learned that a course is most stimulating and productive when all students are actively engaged. The different methods of interacting with each other kept the ideas flowing and made each class productive and interesting. I learned that it is essential to give students space to direct their own learning within the course and pursue avenues that are significant to them. It is also necessary to provide feedback along the way to guide students to expand thinking and dig deeper.
- g) I took the class as an online student and I felt that participating in live class is less flexible than other online programs but the value is well worth the commitment. I enjoyed the class being a hybrid course with a few face-to-face students in the class room even though that causes some tech challenges. The diverse cultural perspective of students around the world adds texture to the discussions and encouraged me to make a concerted effort to search out non-American research from diverse fields as I researched various topics.

- h) I learned that for an online course to be stimulating and productive, there is a need for frequent engagement, either in terms of writing, commenting or discussion. (That being said, I hope the blog remains open)
- i) This type of hybrid course has been great in terms of getting me to participate more, since it gives every student the opportunity to have their voice heard, without being judged or criticized.
- j) I was really impressed with the format of the course (free writing, plus-delta) built up a rhythm and conversation despite us all being online. I think the trick is to stay in time - ie do the responses straight after the class for example, so you stay in the headspace that the online interaction creates.

**2. General Evaluation of course. What was special about this course (+positive and/or -negative)? How did the course meet or not meet your expectations? In what ways do you think this course could be improved?**

- a) This course was very informative and helped open my mind to the concept of critical thinking and how anyone can become a critical thinker. The instructor was very personable and was always available to help me when I needed it.
- b) I liked the themes. I struggled with the nebulous nature of directions and assignments and the length of time for listening to lectures (I find these to be a particularly ineffective tool for getting people to think critically).
- c) This course felt slow at times. I do understand that is part of the process. It was a large class and felt impersonal at points because we only had a few minutes to share throughout each dialogue hour or presentation. My preference is for a class to get personal. When it does, everyone's work suddenly has more weight and matters to the group. I do understand the limitations of time and numbers and allowing everyone to have equal space to begin their journey in the CCT program. Peter does encourage collaboration and feedback as values in the class, but I would love to have asked follow up questions of my classmates or real time engagement on their work. Sometimes I was left to put the pieces together myself or move on. I found the basic frameworks, tools and conceptual ideas shared to be very relevant and practical.
- d) Meeting via video conference was special for me because this was the first time I experienced a class in this way. Because it gave people from various locations and walks of life the ability to attend the class, I felt I learned a lot about the experiences of others in the class. I can not think of any ways this course can be improved at this time. I think initially, the layout of the course was a little confusing for me as far as knowing what was due and when and where we needed to post assignments, but that could have been because of my lack of experience with this type of online class.
- e) Although I was in a condition to show up to a classroom I really liked the hybrid feature of the course. It also allowed for a better discussion having people from all over the world. I would suggest doing mini CE's or something similar.
- f) This course was special in that it provided an opportunity to think about my own thinking and develop a framework and plan for practice to continue applying concepts from the course once it is over. I am left feeling that my critical thinking skills have been strengthened and that I am better equipped to help others think critically. I came into the course not knowing what to expect but one thing I did not anticipate was how open-ended it would be. There was much less direction than I had expected, and at first I was uncomfortable with that, but as weeks went on I became more comfortable with being in charge of the direction of my own learning. Part of me wants to say the course should include more direction from the professor (I may have said that at the beginning) but now at the end I feel that I understand the value in the absence of instructed direction: it gave me freedom to decide my own direction.
- g) The overall result of the course met my expectations and I feel that I grew as a student and as a person during the semester. The course is very dense and I would highly encourage people to carve out enough time and space to thoroughly experience the course. I do however feel that it took a lot of work during the first 5 or 6 weeks of the course to feel like things were on track. At times it feels like the professor is

more focused on working through his own process than guiding us through ours. It would be an improvement for the course to feel like the professor is taking the journey along with us more than us following along as he takes his own journey.

- h) I think this course did an amazing job in fostering my growth as a critical thinking practitioner. Because it focused more on reflection than assignments and grades, it allowed me to reevaluate what I understood about critical thinking and opened the doors to more avenues of exploration. I was more willing to take risks. If I had to give a delta, it would be that the arrangement of to-dos was a bit overwhelming and perhaps could be paced more evenly.
- i) A positive aspect about this course was the sense of collaboration it promotes; through dialogues and activities through which students get to share their insights, knowledge, and experiences with others, in order to learn from one another. The course did meet my expectations, since I feel I made a lot of progress in regards to achieving my goals.
- j) I really liked how the course explored indirect and direct ways of learning. I thought that surfacing what we know about critical thinking from our own histories was a really good way of bringing critical thinking to life. I was less keen on the blog format for interaction - I prefer blackboard and also the requirement for you to comment on other people's work - this is easier to track in blackboard.

**2. General evaluation (continued). In what ways did your attitude to doing the course change through the semester? How does it compare with other graduate courses? What would be your overall recommendation to prospective students?**

- a) At first, I was unsure about this course as I was unsure if critical thinking was for me. Now, however, I find myself engrossed in the concept, and am looking forward to pursuing this degree further.
- b) I'd suggest the course to prospective students.
- c) I embraced the pace after roughly midterm. It felt on purpose and organized. I would tell prospective students to be open minded, engaged and unafraid. There is something for everyone in the course and everyone will walk about with new thinking.
- d) This was the first graduate course I have taken. My attitudes throughout the course didn't change much. I was eager when I began and I am eager to continue, which is a good thing. For prospective students, I would recommend being prepared to explore a lot on your own while the teacher facilitates your learning. You can not be on learning autopilot in this class. You must always be engaged and thinking.
- e) This is my first graduate course since undergrad (4year). this is a great transition course to get back in the college mindset.
- f) My attitude of discomfort at the beginning of the semester shifted to security in directing my own learning. I am new to the CCT program so I do not have many other grad courses to compare this one to, but my impression is that it is more open-ended than most. I would recommend prospective students embrace initial discomfort and trust that clarity will come as the course progresses.
- g) My recommendation to prospective students is to budget your time as if this is two courses so that you can really dig in and fully experience the journey. The first few classes I felt disoriented and even frustrated but that gave way to being very appreciative and fulfilled by the journey.
- h) Towards the end of the semester, my interest towards critical thinking publications and references grew and I began to enjoy reading and writing more. It became more than a compulsory course that I had to take but it was a community of practice. I would recommend prospective students to enjoy the journey.
- i) I felt a bit overwhelmed at times, and felt like not continuing with the course. However, every time I thought of dropping or withdrawing, I thought of all the positive aspects of the course and the program in general; and how much I want to keep learning from it, to further develop my thinking in ways that will positively change my personal and professional life. My overall recommendation to prospective students would be to put in the work that the course requires, and to be confident that although it does require a lot of work and dedication, the value gained from the lectures and the collaborative experience makes it all worth it.
- j) So, having done a few of these courses now I am more comfortable with how they come together. At first this course could easily be disorientating - you are constantly being asked to do stuff that you don't

necessarily understand until you do it and start to talk about it (eg pulling your hair out exercise), but this brings home how much we have been taught to find the 'right' answer that the teacher wants, rather than explore alternatives that are meaningful to us.

**3. Evaluation in relation to the course description. Read the course description/goals below. Comment on how well the goals expressed in the syllabus were met. Make general and specific suggestions about how these could be better met.**

*By the end of the semester, you will have:*

- *a set of tools, experiences, activities, knowledge of publications, and an enhanced disposition to self-directed lifelong inquiry around:*
- *your own critical thinking, i.e., scrutinizing the assumptions, reasoning, and evidence brought to bear on an issue-by others and by yourself, where such scrutiny is enhanced by placing ideas and practices in tension with alternatives; and*
- *what is needed to teach or guide others re: the above in ways that might depart markedly from your previous schooling and experience.*
- *a critical understanding of collaborative explorations and allied approaches to project-based learning in relation to participants re-engaging with themselves as avid learners and inquirers*

- a) Thanks to this course, I was able to determine my own critical thinking skills and became determined to continue to grow them, while also helping others do the same. I learned how important empathy and kindness are to me, and how they can help critical thinking and arguments.
- b) These goals were met through the activities and discussions with peers. I do not think we directly addressed "a critical understanding of collaborative explorations". I wished we had explored "alternatives" more.
- c) Professionally I have found the course incredibly reassuring. The tools provided and methodology is immediately applicable. Elbow is a great resource as well as Peter's models.
- d) In relation to the course material, I feel that the class did not cover what many might consider fundamentals to critical learning. However, the approach the instructor took was different than I expected but helped me understand critical thinking in a way that I had not expected. I feel that I truly learned how to branch out of my comfort zone and apply these new ways of thinking to my personal and work life.
- e) I believe Peter's approach in teaching critical & creative thinking met my needs and goal pertaining to this course.
- f) I think the course very closely met the description and goals. At the end of the course I do feel that I have many resources to draw on to continue developing my own critical thinking and fostering it in others. CE3 really pulled everything together for me and helped me visualize my future as a critical thinker and critical thinking fosterer.
- g) These goals were met and the course succeeded at the items listed. I don't feel like there was much collaboration or opportunity to share and engage with other students but it was very useful to hear everyone's thoughts and reports about what they were doing.
- h) This course had equipped me with the knowledge I needed to be more focused on my growth as a critical thinking practitioner. I feel confident enough to have a discussion with others about it. I think what could be considered as future suggestions would be to individually keep a blog to record the use of the tools and experiences we have learned and apply in our own lives so that we might improve upon it.
- i) I feel that the goals of the course were met through the varied readings, activities, and support from the instructor and classmates throughout the semester. In regards to the syllabus itself, the wording and the design were a bit confusing and difficult to understand at the beginning; so making the layout a little simpler would probably help.
- j) Your own critical thinking - I like (as I am sure most do) to think that I am a critical thinker, but some of the tools (belief and doubt for example) have been really useful to my thinking. Teaching others - I am

not a teacher so I am not sure how much it applies. I have learned to listen better to others and notice how so much of critical thinking shows through in conversations where others take the opposite view and how resistant we are to having our viewpoints challenged."

**4. Synthetic statement (1 or 2 paragraphs). Building on your comments from Qs 1-3, compose a synthetic statement (1 or 2 paragraphs) evaluating this course. (Imagine readers who might not be willing to wade through all the answers to Qs 1-3, but are willing to read more than simply the numerical averages of standard course evaluations.) Please make comments that help the instructor develop the course in the future and that enable some third party appreciate the course's strengths and weaknesses. Among other things you might comment on the overall content and progression of classes, the session activities, and the use of mentors to support the learning in the course.**

- a) This course was very well put together. The meetings were informative and helpful, the class atmosphere was friendly and open, and all the assignments were clearly stated and explained. The instructor returned submitted work in a timely manner, and was always willing to explain to us how we could do things better next time. The activities were interesting, varied, and uniformly helped us to better understand critical thinking as a concept.
- b) This is a useful foundational course in the CCT program and challenges students to engage with the ideas of critical thinking and ways of fostering critical thinking via a series of independent, mainly self-directed activities. At times, the directions and structure of the course are too nebulous to be deciphered easily by the individual student, which can be particularly confusing when it comes to the feedback one receives on the products. That said, overall it is a course that leads students to new ways of knowing and thinking that are exciting and innovative.
- c) This course is an opportunity to be introduced to a baseline in critical thinking, but also a true reflection of the CCT Master's program. The collaborative nature of the course allows for engagement and exploration in your own work and the work of others. Whether you are interested in developing and deepening your own thinking or planning to facilitate others, this course allows for reflection, opportunities to strengthen thinking practices and tools to initiate the critical thinking process. There is something for everyone and applicable to many lifestyles, professions and needs.
- d) This class, while not using as direct of an approach as I initially thought, encourages students to expand their critical thinking horizons. The class makes a student feel like they are on their own unique path to critical thinking enlightenment and that their path is not the same as the other students.
- e) the tools you learn in this class are practiced every day, which allows us the opportunity to understand how to use them and begin to put them into practice immediately. this course allows for discussion of a wide arrange of topics allowing to open up you mind and explore alternatives.
- f) This course provides an opportunity to explore your own thinking and apply elements of the course to your personal and professional growth. It requires you to be actively engaged and decide what you want to gain and how you wish to develop and improve after the course.
- g) CrCrTh 601 is a foundation exploration into the very complex universe of critical thinking. This is not a course to skim through, you do yourself a disservice by not carving out twice as much time as you expect to need but the engagement is well worth it.
- h) One of the main takeaways that I experienced in the Critical Thinking course is to question my own understanding of critical thinking. This formed an important foundation to my learning process and enabled me to use the tools and knowledge from this course and localize it in a way that will be useful for my intended professional purpose. I believe that individuals who enjoy the process of collaborative learning would widely benefit from this. The course is conducted in a way where dialogue and exploration is encouraged and for the learner who is willing to critically reflect, would provide many new insights.
- i) This has been a very valuable course, which I am glad to have taken. One of the main positive aspects about it is the sense of community and collaboration it offers; in a way in which we all share and learn from one another, finding support from the instructor and classmates. The highlight of the course itself is the fact that regardless of your background, field of work, or topic of interest, everyone is able to take

advantage of it in ways that suit their specific needs. The course entails a lot of work, reading, writing and dedication over all. Consequently, there will possibly be times when you will question your decision about having registered for it. However, the value of the course itself, and the knowledge and experiences gained, makes it all worth it.

- j) Critical Thinking delivers tools that help you with your own thinking around issues. It's surprising how much of a class environment can be built up on an online course through the use of the same techniques and processes week in, week out. It's not an easy course for people that are uncomfortable with ambiguity and self-learning, but nothing good comes easily!

**I give permission for my response to Question 4 to be included anonymously in the compilation posted to the CCT wiki (and thus viewable to the public).**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Yes
- d) Yes
- e) Yes
- f) Yes
- g) Yes
- h) Yes
- i) Yes
- j) Yes

**Using the scale below, overall, how would you evaluate this course?**

**1. Very Poor   2. Poor   3. Average   4. Good   5. Excellent**

- a) 5. Excellent
- b) 4. Good
- c) 4. Good
- d) 4. Good
- e) 5. Excellent
- f) 4. Good
- g) 4. Good
- h) 5. Excellent
- i) 5. Excellent
- j) 4. Good

**Using the scale below, overall, how would you evaluate this instructor?**

**1. Very Poor   2. Poor   3. Average   4. Good   5. Excellent**

- a) 5. Excellent
- b) 4. Good
- c) 5. Excellent
- d) 4. Good
- e) 5. Excellent
- f) 4. Good
- g) 4. Good
- h) 5. Excellent
- i) 5. Excellent
- j) 4. Good