Critical Thinking Outcome Rubric

Criteria	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
Identify: distinguish reasoning from other expository tasks, and understand the role of reasoning in context.[1]	Demonstrate a firm grasp of the content, motivation, and significance of an argument in the context of a passage, case study or conversation.	Identify the main argument and distinguish it from supporting elements, such as assumptions, tributary arguments,[2] background, excessive detail, and illustration.	Partially able to identify the argument of a passage and distinguish it from supporting elements, such as background, excessive detail, and illustration.	Unable to identify the main argument from related expository tasks or tributary arguments. Confuses background assumptions, premises, conclusions and their rejected contrast, explanation and inference.
Analyze: employ a model to distinguish the "parts" of an argument (e.g., assumptions, support, conclusion, rivals).	Schematize the main argument of a passage in a way that demonstrates a mastery of form, the model or apparatus of the course, as well as the limits of the model.[3]	Schematize all of the main argument, clearly labeling assumptions, premises, other forms of support, the conclusion and its rejected contrast, using the model or apparatus of the course.	Schematize part but not all of the main argument. Basic understanding of the structure, form, or model of an argument.	Cannot schematize reasoning using the model of an argument developed in the course.
Evaluate: distinguish deductive from inductive reasoning, and good from bad arguments,[4] including fallacies, given differences in knowledge and values.	Correctly distinguish good from bad arguments, and demonstrate a sensitivity to motivation, context, and the limits of reasoning, given differences in values and background knowledge.	Adept at identifying inductive from deductive claims. Understand and accurately employ evaluative concepts, such as validity, soundness, strength, plausibility, and fallacy; or is able to rank the conclusion against its rivals, given differences in values and background knowledge.	Understand that there is a difference between inductive and deductive but cannot reliably distinguish between them. Understand evaluative concepts and more often than not correctly evaluate an argument or rank the conclusion against its rivals.	Cannot recognize inductive from deductive, valid from invalid, sound from unsound, strong from weak, plausible from implausible. Does not recognize fallacies.

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Criteria	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
Construct: formulate original arguments to support one's own position.	Compellingly develops one's own position by presenting overwhelming evidence, a sensitivity to relevance, objections, and gaps in one's reasoning.	Provides an argument with clear structure, adequate evidence, and without any fallacious or otherwise faulty reasoning.	Presents an argument with vague structure, inadequate support, or some fallacious reasoning.	Does not clearly develop one's own view in the form of an argument.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Undergraduate Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO #2) Critical Thinking: Mount graduates will be able to identify, analyze, evaluate, and construct arguments. (GE 3B)

Performance Goals:
- Freshmen/Sophomore Students - 65% of students will be at a 3 or higher on the 4-point rubric
- Junior/Senior Students - 75% of students will be at a 3 or higher on the 4-point rubric

Graduate Institutional Learning Outcome (GLO #2) Critical Thinking: Mount graduates will be able to assess, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information effectively.

Performance Goal:
- Graduate Students - 85% of students will be at a 3 or higher on the 4-point rubric

Rubric Development Process:

The Critical Thinking Rubric was adapted from the original General Studies Critical Thinking Rubric. When that rubric was utilized for an assessment in Spring 2018, the Philosophy department requested to completely rewrite the rubric to better reflect the diversity of teaching pedagogy among their faculty. During the Fall 2018 semester, the Philosophy department worked with the Assessment and Curriculum Committees to rewrite the rubric. The updated rubric was approved by the Curriculum Committee in February 2019.

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1 The phrase "expository task" refers to any form of direct communication that describes, explains, illustrates, interprets or evaluates something. Excluded, for example, are fiction and poetry.

2 By "tributary arguments," we are referring to secondary or tertiary arguments whose conclusions contribute premises to the main argument.

3 An important difference between a course dedicated to logic or critical thinking, as opposed to all other courses which exercise a student's critical thinking skills, is that the former develops a systematic way of schematizing and analyzing arguments, a model that articulates the general form or
structure of an argument, in order to develop an objective or intersubjective way of evaluating arguments.

4 Given differences in the evaluative concepts across instructors and courses, we leave the difference between "good" and "bad" here vague on purpose. Depending on the course, "good" and "bad"
can refer to valid/invalid, sound/unsound, strong/weak, cogent or fallacious, justified/unjustified.

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