CORE 300 - Values and Critical Thinking
On The WEB

4 Units

Instructor: Dr. Dan Campana

Textbook: One E-Book created from:

Sections from: Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues, 6th edition, by Vincent Ruggiero
And sections from: Critical Thinking, 7th edition, by Moore & Parker

Description:

Guides students to critically evaluate their own values and the value systems of other persons, groups, and nations through readings, discussions, and written critiques.

Goals:

This course aims to increase students' awareness of their social context, nurture their appreciation for the pluralisms of that context, and develop skills to enable them to think and express themselves clearly about value choices.

Specifically, this course is designed to increase students' awareness: a) of the diversity of world-views which have formed our history and current world, b) that value judgements are embedded in these larger views about how the world is, c) of one's own world-view and value judgments, d) of the various pressures exerted on one to adopt beliefs and attitudes into one's own world-view.

Further, the course seeks to nurture students' appreciation for pluralism itself, yet also for the necessity to make appropriate distinctions and value judgments within this context as a matter of everyday life.
Finally, the course will enable students to reflect on their own world-view and value system, to think critically about their own assumptions and biases, and to clearly express their views about the value judgments they are faced with daily.

Outline

Section 1 of this course is designed to give students a sense of the role this course plays in the history and mission of the University of La Verne as well as the strategic importance it has for the overall curriculum.

Section 2 of this course involves exercises in Intercultural Awareness: becoming aware that others have/do experience a very different world on many levels.

Section 3 leads students through a process of reflecting upon their own perspectives and the processes by which they gain those perspectives.

Section 4 helps students to develop their critical thinking skills with regard to the kinds of information they are surrounded with each day through the media and a multitude of special interest groups.

Section 5 offers students a method for thinking about moral decision making and leads them through some critical reflection on that method.

Section 6 introduces students to key issues in the dialogue over moral perspectives and prepares students for their final integrative project.

Activities:

Students will proceed through the six sections of this course. In these sections, students will be reading articles and textbooks and viewing videos as they would in a classroom setting. In addition, hot links will take students to written lecture material and other WEB resources. Students will also be involved in e-mail discussions with other students through a class Discussion Board. Approximately 85% of the assignments for the class are small papers responding to specific questions regarding the readings, videos or exercises. The remaining 15% of the grade is based on a 5-7 page final project integrating the various elements of the course and applying them to a specific issue relevant to the student's field.

Assessment:
Thinking critically is a skill that requires on-going development throughout the semester and beyond. For this reason, the most important aspect of this course will be the student's response papers and involvement in the e-mail discussions. Assessment will therefore be weighted toward consistent performance throughout the time of the course rather than upon one or two exams. Because integration and practical application are important goals of this course, significant weight is also placed on the final project.