



**COH 111-004 CRITICAL THINKING
("Freshman Success Seminar")**

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2013

**TR 4-4:50 a.m., AG/IT Building, Room 214
August 27 - December 5, 2013**

Instructor: William Wadley, Ph.D., Professor of Art History

Office Location: Main Art Building 208 or 109

Office Hours: TR 12:30-1:45 p.m., and by appointment. *If I am not in my office (Art 208) during office hours, please check the Slide Library in the Main Art Building (room 109), or call 903-886-5204 or 903-886-5208 (Department of Art Office). E-mail is the most dependable means of contacting me.*

Office Phone: 903-886-5203 or 903-886-5204

Office Fax: 903-886-5987

University Email Address: William.Wadley@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

- Carter, Carol, et al, *Keys to Success*. 12th edition. Pearson, 2012. [ISBN-13 978-0-13-254171-8; ISBN-10 0-13-254171-8] Available at the on-campus Texas Bookstore, East Texas Bookstore (1606 Lee Street), and online.
- Academic planner/calendar
- Battery-operated alarm clock (available for under \$10.00 at most stores)

Course Description:

This course introduces students to theories of learning and critical thinking and provides a learning framework to apply them to their college and life experiences. Concepts studied include research and theory on how people learn, critical thinking, problem solving, perception, learning styles, memory, creativity, and how attitudes and values affect the learning and thinking processes. The course also shows students how to apply these theories and research findings to help develop practical skills in time management, reading, note taking, test taking, and other areas that will help them be more successful students and lifelong learners. (1 semester hour)

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. To gain an overview of the customs, organization, and academic disciplines within an institution of higher education.
2. To increase one's effectiveness in practical matters such as time management, organization, and planning.
3. To develop general skills in critical thinking, creative problem solving, and other necessary tools for success in college and beyond.
4. To learn and employ sound practices in research, study, and practice.
5. To gain a specific understanding of the conceptual and practical demands of study in the visual arts.
6. To familiarize oneself with the faculty and programs of study within the Department of Art at Texas A&M University-Commerce.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods:

Instruction will include lectures by the instructor, class discussions, field trips, group activities, and a series of guest speakers representing the art faculty and other divisions of the University.

Assignments, Grading Policies, and Calculation of Final Average:

1. READING THE TEXTBOOK AS ASSIGNED ON THE COURSE SCHEDULE

It is imperative that students in COH 111 read the textbook in accordance with the assigned dates. Information drawn from the textbook will be invaluable in acclimating you to college life, and topics covered in it will often frame the activities in class. Please do not ignore this important component of COH 111.

- 2. ATTENDANCE. (20 points)** Students in COH 111 will receive 20 points if they have 3 or fewer absences; conversely, they may risk failing this course when more than 4 unexcused absences are accrued. Please consult the Student Guide for the differences between excused and unexcused absences, as well as the heading in this syllabus entitled, "Course and University Procedures/Policies."

3. PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT IN ALL ACTIVITIES OF THIS CLASS (20 points)

Engagement, participation, and a positive attitude are important in a course of this kind, as they are in any area of college and life. It is especially important that first-year students begin the process of integrating into both the university and the department's community of scholar/artists.

- 4. STUDENT REPORTS (20 points).** Students will be assigned subjects to present to the class in 10-15 minute reports. Assignments will be distributed on or about September 19 and will be scheduled throughout the semester. The topics will be on the variety of academic, social, and cultural services and opportunities offered by the University.

5. THREE CRITICAL ESSAYS RESPONDING TO UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES (20 points each; 60 points total)

Students in COH 111-004 are expected to attend on-campus university events or activities as part of their first-year experience. They will write **three** critical essays on each, explaining what they learned from these events and how attending each event contributed to their being a more successful and educated college student. These papers are expected to demonstrate critical and analytical thought expressed in clear and proper language.

- **First critical essay due Thursday, September 19, at the beginning of class.** This essay must be an informed critical response to the Art Faculty Exhibit in the University Gallery from September 3-October 4. It must describe the show in general and focus critically on the work of at least three members of the faculty. You must discuss the content and intent of your chosen works, so it would be a good idea both to interview the faculty members and to research information about him or her. Please be sure to attend the opening on Tuesday, October 3, at 5:00 p.m. The essay must be in Word format, double-spaced in a font size of 11 or less, and a minimum of 3-4 pages in length. **(20 points)**
- **Second critical essay due Thursday, October 17, at the beginning of class.** The second essay must be chosen from the following kinds of events. It must record the specific name of the event, its date and time, and discuss in an informed and critical manner the enrichment it furnished you and other attendees. The essay must be in Word

format, double-spaced in a font size of 11 or less, and a minimum of 3-4 pages in length. **(20 points)**

- **Cultural events outside the visual arts**, including concerts, performances, plays, or other venues featuring the literary or performance arts.
 - **Athletic events** such as varsity or organized intramural activities.
 - **University-Wide academic events**, including guest speakers at university events, presentations at honor or learned societies, breakout entertainment, colloquia, symposia, etc. If you choose a university-sponsored social event, gathering, or club activity, it must be an organization that has open registration and enrollment.
- **Third critical essay due Thursday, November 14, at the beginning of class.** For the third critical essay you will select one of the faculty presentations in COH 111. In brief words you will summarize the intent of the talk and examine the ways in which the faculty member expressed ideas (content) in his or her work through visual means. Focus in particular on what you learned about the creative process. The essay must be in Word format, double-spaced in a font size of 11 or less, and a minimum of 3-4 pages in length. **(20 points)**

6. **ACADEMIC PLANNING AND TIME MANAGEMENT ASSIGNMENTS. (4 assignments; 10 points apiece; 40 points total)**

- **Academic planning assignment due Thursday, September 12.** Purchase or otherwise obtain an academic planner, preferably a planner with an academic year schedule (2013-2014) rather than a calendar year. Study carefully each of the syllabuses and handouts from your classes (art courses and other classes alike) and enter all assignments, exams, quizzes, term and research papers, final examinations, and deadlines for each and every one of your classes. Yes, it is understood that we live in a digital age and that many of us rely in part on our hand-held smart phones and similar devices to schedule our time. Still, the volume of assignments and deadlines involved in an academic semester is best committed to the large format and easy accessibility of an academic planner. Do not forget to put your name and contact information in the planner when you turn it in. Since I will have the planner in my possession from September 12-17, be sure that you have noted any assignments due within that period of time and a few days beyond. **(10 points)**
- **Degree plan assignment due Thursday, September 26.** Go online to myLEO and locate your current degree plan in Degree Works. Print it and submit it in class on September 26. You will receive in-class instructions on how to navigate myLEO. Be sure that your name is visible on the document so that I know whose plan I am looking at. **(10 points)**
- **“What if?” degree plan assignment due Thursday, October 10.** Go online to myLEO Degree Works and generate a “what if?” degree plan in a major that is different from your own. It does not matter what the major is, and generating the “what if?” analysis will not affect your current major. Print it and submit it in class on October 10, being sure that your name is clearly visible on the copy. **(10 points)**
- **Resume assignment due Thursday, November 21.** Students in COH 111 will prepare, print, and submit a resume that targets a profession in their chosen field and emphasizes their unique achievements and qualifications for such employment. Students may seek the help of the Office of Career Services (Student Access and Success Center) or use the office’s online templates.
[http://www.tamuc.edu/studentLife/campusServices/careerDevelopment/documents/CareerDevHandbook_2012.pdf.]
Other websites with free resume-building templates are:
 - Microsoft Office Resume Templates:
 - <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/resume-template-TC030004143.aspx>

- Google Docs Template Gallery:
- <https://docs.google.com/templates>

7. FINAL EXAMINATION/SUMMARY (20 points)

The final examination and summary of the course will cover various topics of COH-004, with special emphasis on the readings from the textbook, Carol Carter, *Keys to Success*.

8. OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

- **Participation in the Library Tutorial of September 5.** Students receive no grade for this requirement, but attendance and participation is mandatory.)
- **Attendance at any scheduled “field trips” to university offices, facilities, or events (refer to these activities on the syllabus)**
- **Reminder: no more than 4 unexcused absences from class or you risk failure.**

(Each additional unexcused absence will result in the loss of a letter grade; excessive absences will result in either being dropped from or **failing the course**.) Unexcused absences from class are defined in the *Student Guide* (consult by going to the university's homepage) and are understandable from a common-sense point of view. Students should immediately inform the instructor of any excused absences, either before or afterwards, and ask what material was missed and how to make it up.

- **Students in COH 111-004 must turn in all assignments in a timely manner.**

All assigned work must be completed and turned in on time to receive credit for this course. Incomplete assignments will result in failure of the course. Moreover, all work must be turned in at the assigned dates and times. It will be the instructor's prerogative to accept late work or not, and this will depend on cases of extreme and extenuating circumstances that can be documented to the instructor's satisfaction.

SUMMARY OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

September 12 (Thurs.):	Academic planner assignment due today. (10 points)
September 19 (Thurs.):	First critical essay due today. (20 points)
September 26 (Thurs.)	Degree plan assignment due today. (10 points)
October 10 (Thurs.):	“What if?” degree plan assignment due today. (10 points)
October 17 (Thurs.):	Second critical essay due today. (20 points)
November 14 (Thurs.):	Third critical essay due today. (20 points)
November 21 (Thurs.):	Resume assignment due today. (10 points)
December 5 (Thurs.):	Final examination and summary of the course. (20 points)
Student's Report:	20 points (Scheduling TBA).
Class Participation:	20 points maximum.

Attendance: 3 or fewer absences = 20 points.

Total Points: 180 points.

CALCUATION OF FINAL GRADE

180 - 162 points = A

161 - 144 points = B

142 - 126 points = C

125 - 108 points = D

107 - 0 points = F

EVENTS CALENDARS

When students claim there is nothing to do in Commerce, it is usually because they have failed to check the various calendars kept by university offices.

Always check the central calendar of the university for events and activities:

<https://ems.tamuc.edu/MasterCalendar/MasterCalendar.aspx>

Other divisions within the university keep calendars as well, including the Office of Career Development:

<http://web.tamuc.edu/studentLife/campusServices/careerDevelopment/calendarOfEvents.aspx>

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students must have access to the internet, word processing software, and a printer. A&M-Commerce provides several computer labs for these purposes. Students should possess basic skills in conducting research through library and internet sources, and they should be especially conversant with myLEO. Additionally, students should take advantage of www.artstor.org, a data base of digital images covering much of world art history. Artstor includes annotated images of nearly all works of art projected in this course and is accessible through the Gee Library home page (databases).

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

N/A

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

I encourage classes to interact with me as much as possible, especially if a student feels challenged by the academic content of a course or has missed classes. My office and conference hours are indicated at the top of the syllabus. If you cannot see me during my regular office hours, I will make every effort set up an appointment at a time that is mutually convenient. I often prepare for classes in the Visual Resources Collection (Slide Library) in room 109 of the Main Art Building, so that is a location where I might be found outside of ordinary conference hours. You may also stop by the main administrative office of the Department of Art (Main Art Building 104B) and inquire about my whereabouts. The office staff may know if I am on campus or otherwise available for consultation. Apart from speaking to me before or after class, e-mail is usually the best means of getting in touch with me when you are off-campus.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to stay abreast, without prompting, of all readings, projects, and assignments. Participation in class discussions is encouraged and will elevate the final grade. University guidelines on attendance are outlined in *The Student Guidebook*, available through the Office of the Dean of Students and by searching the University's web site, but the specific policies for this course are as follows.

Each student in this course is allowed unexcused absences amounting to two class periods. Unexcused absences require no explanation. Excused absences are defined in *The Student Guidebook* and various university policies, but the policy employed in this class is confined to the following: (1) Participation in pre-approved University activities such as athletic events, sponsored field trips, and travel for specific University-related academic reasons; (2) Verifiable legal proceedings; (3) Documented cases of illness, injury, or emergencies. All such excuses must be provided in original, written, documentary form within 5 days of the absence(s). (Please understand that simply showing the instructor an excuse of absence is unacceptable: an original verifiable excuse must be submitted to the instructor within 5 days of the absence.) In lieu of documentation, the absences become unexcused and are counted as such. **When a student accrues more than four unexcused absences the instructor has the prerogatives (1) to reduce the final letter grade for each additional absence and, for excessive absences, (2) to expel the student from class, drop the student from class, or assign the student a final grade of F.**

When an excused absence causes a student to **miss an assignment or exam**, it is the student's responsibility to inform--or to have someone else notify--the instructor within 2 days of the scheduled event. Missed assignments should be made up within one week of the originally scheduled due date. If a student has not requested, provided documentation of an excuse, and completed the missed assignment within 7 days of the original deadline, the grade will turn to zero and the student may risk failing the course.

Being tardy or leaving class early counts as one/half of an absence. Students are required to report tardies and early exits from class either to the instructor (in person) or as a notation on the sign-in sheet. Chronic tardiness and early departures may result in the consequences outlined above for excessive absences (including expulsion and failure) and will depend upon the instructor's judgment of the number of infractions. (Since it is sometimes the case that students try to slip in or out of a classroom without being noticed, the instructor will rely on his estimation of the number of infractions. In other words, do not test your luck!)

Academic dishonesty has zero tolerance in this class. Be sure that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on exams, theft of instructional material or exams, representing the work of someone else as one's own, misrepresenting absences or tardiness on sign-in sheets or roll calls, etc.). Academic dishonesty is a severe transgression in college and may result in referral to the Dean of Students, expulsion from class, and/or the University, and a failing grade.

Classroom Behavior and Protocol: Our classroom is a forum for learning, a place where all of us should feel safe, comfortable, and enlivened. Each of us should look forward not only to coming to class but to learning the fascinating history of art. Towards this end, all are expected to be courteous and respectful of each other. Common sense, professionalism, and the Golden Rule should prevail, but let it be known that the following activities will not be tolerated under any circumstance:

- It is forbidden to sleep, drowse, or close one's eyes during class.
- Cell phones, computers, pagers, and other personal electronic devices may not be used—or in sight—while class is in session.
- Please remove backpacks, pouches, purses and other items from your desks when class is in session; permissible items are pens, pencils, the textbook, notes, water, sodas, and similar beverages.
- No one will engage in disruptive or distracting behavior of any sort.
- Aggression, threatening behavior (whether implied or physical), disrespect, and needless argumentation directed at anyone in the classroom may result in immediate expulsion and/or failure of the course.

- No one may exit the classroom without prior permission or polite notification of the instructor.
- Neither chronic tardiness nor exiting the classroom early is permitted, and excessive infractions may result in expulsion from and/or failure of the course.
- Distracting consumption of food or beverages when the class is in session.
- For classrooms with front and back exits: Please avoid entering or exiting the classroom through the front doors after the class has begun.
- Whispering, talking to each other, or otherwise engaging in distracting behavior while the instructor is lecturing, answering questions, or involved in dialogue with students.

Please understand that violations of these protocols are taken seriously and may result in expulsion from the class and/or a final grade of F. Please also understand that the instructor will not hesitate to summon the University Police when student conduct is deemed threatening or belligerent to the instructor or other students.

Cell phones, pagers, computers, and other electronic devices: Unless there is a verifiable disability necessitating their use, there is a complete ban on the use of electronic devices in this classroom while class is in session. First violations will result in a warning; continued violations will result in expulsion from the class, that is, **failure of the course**. Students who must take an emergency call will leave the classroom to do so.

Grading: All exams and assignments must be completed if the student is to pass the course.

Extra Credit: A maximum of five points will be added to the student's final average for volunteer work in the University Gallery. Two hour's work will be equal to one point. During summer terms, when the University Gallery is closed, extra credit may be earned by special projects or assignments arranged in consultation with the instructor. Please understand that when you sign up for extra credit, there is the full expectation that you will show up at the designated time and place. If you cannot show up at your scheduled time, you must notify the Department of Art office in advance so that someone else can be found to take your place. **If you are a "no-show," then the points you expected to earn towards the final grade in this class will instead be deducted from it. Further, as a "no show" you will be ineligible to receive any other extra credit, even if you have already put in voluntary time.**

Grades of Incomplete ("X"): University guidelines on Incomplete Grades have recently changed, as described in *Student's Guidebook* and *Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures* (Supplements System Policy 13.02). In short, students are eligible to receive an "X" only if they been unable, because of circumstances beyond their control, to attend classes during Finals Week or the preceding three weeks. If a student meets these criteria, he or she must still petition the instructor and the instructor's department head by filling out and submitting a "Plan for Completing the Grade of X." Whether or not a petition is valid will be determined by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 or Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. For questions about these matters please visit the university's home page and link to the Code of Student Conduct in the *Student Guide*.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

- 8/27 (Tues.)** Greetings and introduction to the course.
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 1 ("Welcome to College") and Chapter 2 ("Goals and Time")
- 8/29 (Thurs.)** Class topic: FAQs, strategies for success, time management, and planning.
- 9/3 (Tues.)** Ms. Marty Marsh Jacobs, Licensed Counselor, will discuss the services of the A&M-Commerce Counseling Center.
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 3 ("Learning How You Learn")
- Opening Reception, A&M-Commerce Art Faculty Exhibit, University Gallery, 5-7:00 p.m.** Exhibit runs from September 3-October 4, 2013.
- 9/5 (Thurs.)** **Meet in Room 230 (2nd floor) of Gee Library for the Library Research Tutorial.** Ms. Megan Beard, Research and Instruction Librarian, will demonstrate the online resources for research at Texas A&M University-Commerce.
- 9/10 (Tues.)** Faculty Speaker Series: Chad Smith, Associate Professor of Photography
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 4 ("Critical, Creative, and Practical Thinking")
- 9/12 (Thurs.)** **Academic planner due today. (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading "Course Requirements.")**
- Class topic: Selecting majors, understanding degree requirements, and using Degree Works in myLEO
- 9/17 (Tues.)** Art Faculty Speakers Series: Joseph Daun, Head of the Department of Art
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 5 ("Reading and Information Literacy")
- Optional activity outside class: Introduction to LinkedIn. Learn about this important tool that can be used to increase your network and aid in your job search strategy. 7-8:00 p.m., BA 345
- 9/19 (Thurs.)** **First critical essay due today (Faculty Exhibit). (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading "Course Requirements.")**
- Class topic: Explanation and assignment of the individual student reports.
- 9/24 (Tues.)** Class topic: Intelligences and Learning Styles
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 6 ("Listening and Note Taking")

Optional activity outside class: Introduction to LinkedIn. Learn about this important tool that can be used to increase your network and aid in your job search strategy. 7-8:00 p.m., BA 345

- 9/26 (Thurs.) Degree plan assignment due today. (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading “Course Requirements.”)**
- 10/1 (Tues.)** Class topic: TBA
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 7 (“Memory and Studying”)
- 10/3 (Thurs.)** Class topic: student reports.
- 10/8 (Tues.)** Art Faculty Speakers Series: Casey McGarr, Assistant Professor of Visual Communication
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 8 (“Test Taking”)
- 10/10 (Thurs.) “What if?” degree plan assignment due today. (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading “Course Requirements.”)**
- Art Faculty Speakers Series: Michael Odom, Interim Instructor in Painting
- Optional activity outside class: Fall Career Fair. 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Rayburn Student Center, Suites ABC. Dress professionally in business attire, even if you are attending as an observer, and bring resumes. This is an excellent opportunity to meet prospective employers. The list of employers attending the fair is located on HireALion (formerly Lion Tracks).
- 10/15 (Tues.)** Art Faculty Speakers Series: Barbara Frey, Professor of Ceramics
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 9 (“Diversity and Communication”)
- Optional activity outside class: Digital Identity Workshop. Learn about your digital identity, and what you can do to clean it up. Registration will be from Sept. 30th to Oct. 9th. 7-8:00 p.m., BA 345.
- 10/17 (Thurs.) Second critical essay due today at the beginning of class. (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading “Course Requirements.”)**
- Class topic: student reports.
- 10/19 (Sat.) Optional activity outside class: Major Fair. Explore college majors; meet departmental faculty and advisors, great place to have your degree related questions answered. (Free food.) 1-3:30 p.m., Rayburn Student Center, Suites ABC.
- 10/22 (Tues.)** Art Faculty Speakers Series: Josephine Durkin, Associate Professor of Sculpture
- Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 10 (“Wellness and Stress Management”)
- 10/24 (Thurs.)** Class topic: student reports.
- 10/29 (Tues.)** Class topic: student reports.

Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 11 (“Managing Money”)

10/31 (Thurs.) Class topic: student reports.

11/5 (Tues.) Art Faculty Speakers Series: Hsiu Ching Yu, Interim Instructor of Drawing and Design

Readings for the week: Carter, *Keys to Success*, Chapter 12 (“Careers and More”)

11/7 (Thurs.) Class topic: TBA

11/12 (Tues.) Class topic: TBA

11/14 (Thurs.) **Third critical essay due today at the beginning of class. (For this assignment please see the instructions above under the heading “Course Requirements.”)**

Art Faculty Speakers Series: Vigil Scott, Associate Professor of Visual Communication

11/19 (Tues.) Art Faculty Speakers Series: Lee Whitmarsh, Director, Visual Communication, Universities Center at Dallas

11/21 (Thurs.) Art Faculty Speakers Series: Joshua Ege, Assistant Professor of Visual Communication

11/26 (Tues.) **Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class**

11/28 (Thurs.) **Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class**

12/3 (Tues.) Class topic: TBA

12/5 (Thurs.) **Final examination and summary of the course**