

Critical Thinking



Learning Outcome: Palo Alto College students exhibit habits of mind characterized by inquiry, analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, creative thinking, and innovation.

Criteria	Advanced Exceeds Expectations	Developing Outcome Met	Emerging Outcome Not Met
1. Explanation. Summarizes the issue.	Issue to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue to be considered critically is stated, but not necessarily clearly. There is an attempt to describe the issue, but the description may be ambiguous, leaving terms undefined, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue to be considered critically is misstated or not stated.
2. Evaluation. Determines relevant evidence and viewpoints to more fully understand the issue.	Evidence is gathered and logically sorted allowing for a comprehensive and successful analysis. More than one viewpoint or perspective is considered, thoroughly questioned and addressed, when appropriate.	Evidence is gathered to better understand the different aspects of the issue. Analysis is attempted but is not necessarily successful. More than one viewpoint or perspective is considered but not thoroughly questioned and/or addressed, when appropriate.	Evidence is accepted without any interpretation or no evidence is gathered - repeats info without question or dismisses evidence without justification. Other viewpoints or perspectives are not considered.
3. Results/Conclusion. Makes an informed judgement.	Results and conclusion are logically organized and based on sound evidence. Results are innovative and/or integrate multiple viewpoints.	Results and conclusion are tied to evidence, but the evidence may not be sound, and/or the results are not logically organized. Innovation and/or integration of multiple viewpoints is attempted, when appropriate.	Results are not tied to the evidence discussed. Alternative viewpoints are not integrated.

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Critical Thinking Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts in this rubric only.

Ambiguous: Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.

Analysis: An examination by deconstructing an issue into its component parts.

Innovation: New thoughts, ideas, or outcomes.

Issue: A topic to be discussed or analyzed.

Logically Organized: Reasoning is clearly presented.

Viewpoint: Any theoretical, individual, cultural or other appropriate perspective.

The institution recognizes that integrating 'alternate or multiple viewpoints' and/or 'innovation' into critical thinking key assignments in the STEM fields may not be possible or appropriate.