General Education Critical Thinking Rubric
Northeastern Illinois University

Quality / Macro Criteria	No/Limited Proficiency (D&E)	Some Proficiency (C)	Proficiency (B)	High Proficiency (A)	Rating (a,b,c,d)
1. Identifies & Explains Issues	Fails to identify, summarize, or explain the main problem or question. Represents the issues inaccurately or inappropriately.	Identifies main issues but does not summarize or explain them clearly or sufficiently	Successfully identifies and summarizes the main issues, but does not explain why/how they are problems or create questions	Clearly identifies and summarizes main issues and successfully explains why/how they are problems or questions; and identifies embedded or implicit issues, addressing their relationships to each other.	
2. Distinguishes Types of Claims	Fails to label correctly any of the factual, conceptual and value dimensions of the problems and proposed solutions.	Successfully identifies some, but not all of the factual, conceptual, and value aspects of the questions and answers.	Successfully separates and labels all the factual, conceptual, and value claims	Clearly and accurately labels not only all the factual, conceptual, and value, but also those implicit in the assumptions and the implications of positions and arguments.	
3. Recognizes Stakeholders and Contexts	Fails accurately to identify and explain any empirical or theoretical contexts for the issues. Presents problems as having no connections to other conditions or contexts.	Shows some general understanding of the influences of empirical and theoretical contexts on stakeholders, but does not identify many specific ones relevant to situation at hand.	Correctly identifies all the empirical and most of theoretical contexts relevant to all the main stakeholders in the situation.	Not only correctly identifies all the empirical and theoretical contexts relevant to all the main stakeholders, but also finds minor stakeholders and contexts and shows the tension or conflicts of interests among them.	
4. Considers Methodology	Fails to explain how/why/which specific methods of research are relevant to the kind of issue at hand.	Identifies some but not all methods required for dealing with the issue; does not explain why they are relevant or effective.	Successfully explains how/why/which methods are most relevant to the problem.	In addition to explaining how/why/which methods are typically used, also describes embedded methods and possible alternative methods of working on the problem.	
5. Frames Personal Responses and Acknowledges Other Perspectives	Fails to formulate and clearly express own point of view, (or) fails to anticipate objections to his/her point of view, (or) fails to consider other perspectives and position.	Formulates a vague and indecisive point of view, or anticipates minor but not major objections to his/her point of view, or considers weak but not strong alternative positions.	Formulates a clear and precise personal point of view concerning the issue, and seriously discusses its weaknesses as well as its strengths.	Not only formulates a clear and precise personal point of view, but also acknowledges objections and rival positions and provides convincing replies to these.	

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Quality Micro Criteria	No/Limited Proficiency (D&E)	Some Proficiency (C)	Proficiency (B)	High Proficiency (A)	Rating (a,b,c,d)
6. Reconstructs Arguments	Fails to identify the major components of the main arguments at stake and to show their logical relations.	Identifies a few of the premises but confuses the conclusion of the main argument in support of the position under consideration (his or her own, or that of others)	Correctly analyzes the arguments and theories; restates its component propositions and reconstructs their relationships correctly.	Not only correctly reconstructs the main argument but does the same for subsidiary arguments and theories, and correctly identifies the kind or status of each of them.	
7. Interprets Content	Fails to identify and choose between the possible meanings of the key terms and propositions included in the arguments and theories in use.	Clarifies the meaning of a few but far from all of the key terms and propositions involved.	Convincingly explains the meaning of all the key terms and main propositions involved in the arguments and theories involved.	Offers fined-grainned and original interpretations of a crucial term or proposition involved in the issue.	
8. Evaluates Assumptions	Fails to identify and evaluate any of the important assumptions behind the claims and recommendations made.	Identifies some of the most important assumptions, but does not evaluate them for plausibility or clarity.	Identifies and evaluates all the important assumptions, but not the ones deeper in the background – the more abstract ones.	Not only identifies and evaluates all the important assumptions, but also some of the more hidden, more abstract ones.	
9. Evaluates Evidence	Fails to identify data and information that counts as evidence for truth-claims and fails to evaluate its credibility.	Successfully identifies data and information that counts as evidence but fails to thoroughly evaluate its credibility.	Identified all important evidence and rigorously evaluates it.	Not only identifies and rigorously evaluates all important evidence offered, but also provides new data or information for consideration.	
10. Evaluates Inferences	Fails to identify and explain mistakes in the reasoning of others and fails to avoid them in his or her own reasoning.	Successfully identifies and avoids some common mistakes of reasoning but misses less common ones, and does not explain why or how they are mistakes.	Identifies and avoids all mistakes of reasoning and explains some of them.	Not only identifies and avoids all mistakes of reasoning but gives clear explanations of why they are mistakes.	