

Learning and enabling critical thinking

Instructor Biography

Tim Kenyon is Vice-President, Research, of Brock University. His research includes critical thinking pedagogy; he is the author of the critical thinking text Clear Thinking in a Blurry World (Nelson, 2008). His paper 'Critical Thinking Education and Debiasing' (co-authored with Dr. Guillaume Beaulac) won the 2014 ALLACT Essay Prize. Prior to joining Brock, he held appointments at St. Andrews, Aberdeen, and Waterloo, where he won the University of Waterloo Distinguished Teaching Award. He has published work on topics in social epistemology, language pragmatics, epistemic logic, and academic metrics.

Seminar Description

Governments, businesses, educators and economic development organizations frequently stress the desirability of critical thinking in the workforce and in society. Everyone recognizes the value of reasoning competently, reliably, and open-mindedly, minimizing the distorting effects of biases. So how does one acquire or refine the traits associated with critical thinking in a business or work context? What makes this so difficult, and how can we mitigate the difficulties? An important perspective here is the importance of social and organizational infrastructure in critical thinking, both for individuals and for the organization overall.

Topics Covered

- Critical thinking: some core principles
- If everyone's already teaching and learning critical thinking, why do we need more?
- The underemphasized social and organizational bases of critical thinking
- Teaching, learning, and implementing critical thinking in an organization

Learning Outcomes

- Understanding the significance of critical thinking, including in work contexts
- Recognizing and refining some key antecedents to critical thinking skills
- Developing a systemic or organization-level understanding of critical thinking

Key Coaching and Follow up Questions

- How has my understanding of critical thinking changed?
- What social habits and emotional skills can promote critical thinking for me?
- What practical changes can I make to my environment and actions to make myself and others more reliable and effective in our reasoning?