COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE: FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION - CRITICAL THINKING IN COMMUNITY CONTEXTS

COURSE INFORMATION

Programme	**Empowering Community Engagement: Soft Skills Micro-Courses for Students and Staff**
University	**Marburg University**
Department	**Interdisciplinary**
Course name	**From Reflection to Action: Critical Thinking in Community Contexts**
Course code	**ECE1.4**
Credits/hours	**Non-credit micro course – 3 hours total**
Language of instruction	**English**
Course dates	**Alliance-wide, flexible access**
Course mode	**Asynchronous online**
Course coordinator	**Michael Groll**
Course instructor	**Katja Franz, Michael Groll**
Contact details	**eupeace@uni-marburg.de**

EUPeace
European University for Peace,
Justice, and Inclusive Societies

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This short, asynchronous online course introduces self-reflection as a core competence for meaningful community engagement. By strengthening learners' awareness of their own assumptions, values, and behavioural patterns, the course supports more intentional and responsible interaction with others—especially in diverse and complex social contexts.

Building on this foundation, the course develops critical thinking as a complementary skill for engaging with real-world challenges. Participants learn to analyse situations systematically, assess arguments with a rational and constructive scepticism, and evaluate information sources in contexts shaped by uncertainty, misinformation, and manipulation. These competences help learners identify personal strengths and limitations, clarify possible courses of action, and navigate community dynamics with greater ethical and strategic awareness.

The course combines short theoretical inputs with guided practice. Participants explore practical methods for developing reflective habits and applying critical analysis in everyday situations. These foundations are consolidated through a structured text-based exercise in which learners critically examine a sample text and reflect on both its content and their own interpretation and responses.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the purpose and value of self-reflection for everyday life and community engagement contexts.

- Explain how critical thinking supports informed judgement when navigating contemporary challenges (e.g., complexity, uncertainty, misinformation).

- Select appropriate reflection and critical-thinking methods and tools based on personal preferences, goals, and situational demands.

- Apply critical analysis skills to interpret and evaluate a sample text using structured guiding questions.

- Reflect on their own assumptions, reactions, and motivations in order to strengthen self-awareness and responsible decision-making.

COURSE CONTENTS

Unit	Description	Time
Unit 0	Brief introduction and framing of the soft-skill course	5 min
Unit 1	Short video on self-reflection	10 min
Unit 2	Written lecture input on "Learning how to reflect"	30 min
Unit 3	Short presentation on "Critical Thinking – what and why?"	30 min
Unit 4	Presentation of the exercise	5 min
Unit 5	Text-based exercise – reading and analyzing a given sample text	60 min
Unit 6	Brief self-assessment by writing a short reflective text and comparing it to a list of possible insights and talking points provided by the course	30 min
Unit 7	Wrap-up, brief automated test, and take home messages	10 min

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

This is an asynchronous online micro-course. The methodological approach is centered around a structured text-based exercise, combining theoretical foundations and practical application in several short instructional units, offering an experiential and self-regulated learning environment.

Student working hours (3h):

- Video lecture: 10 minutes

- Reading-based input (lecture materials): 70 minutes

- Sample text reading and text analysis: 60 minutes

- Written reflection and comparison with guiding insights automatically provided to the students after they submit their reflection: 40 minutes

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ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessment type	Assessment criteria	Overall weight
Individual reflection task	Critical awareness and self-reflection	100%

Additional notes

The use of AI tools is permitted for comprehension and reflection support, provided submitted work remains individual and original. This course is non-graded and assessed on a pass or complete basis.

STUDENT WORKLOAD (in hours)

Contact hours	Autonomous work	Overall
0 h	3 h	3 h

READING LIST / RELEVANT REFERENCES

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Randles, E. & Union of Students in Ireland. (2021). A student Guide to community engagement. In Institute of Technology, Tralee [Book; Print]. Institute of Technology, Tralee. https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Guide-Student-Guide-to-Community-Engagement.pdf

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