



# Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills Course Syllabus



## Developed by

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## Authors

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## I. Course Description

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### Course Overview

The purpose of the Assessment of Critical Thinking course is to provide nursing educators a comprehensive guide for writing and evaluating items that measure higher-level thinking. The safe practice of nursing requires all practitioners to develop, and then consistently use, higher-level thinking skills. Higher-order thinking includes analyzing, evaluating and creating appropriate client and community-centered, direct and indirect care processes. Nurse educators enrolled into this online course already have a background in assessment strategies. They are familiar with many of the tools and methods for planning, encouraging, assessing and grading student thinking, in relationship to the attainment of the learning objectives outlined in the curriculum design of their respective nursing programs. However, when it comes to measuring higher-level learning outcomes, additional knowledge may be necessary. The educator may need to learn more about higher-level cognitive process categorization. With its advanced focus, this course will provide information on concepts, principles and the mechanics of assessing theoretical and performance-based course objectives through instruction in writing higher-level items.

The course consists of a preface, an introduction, 7 course sections, a glossary, a reference list, Links to Knowledge, and a posttest. Also, within the course there are several reflective and interactive exercises, where learners can assess their understanding of the material.

### Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to enable the learner to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the foundation for writing higher-level items
- Integrate assessment of critical thinking into course design
- Utilize content classification/taxonomy criteria in item design
- Judge components of a well-designed item
- Apply criteria for writing higher-level items
- Increase the ability to critique higher-level items
- Use criteria for converting good items to higher-level items

### Logistics

#### *Course type*

This course is subscription-based, self-paced, and not mediated by an instructor.

#### *Time and schedule*

Learners have immediate 24-hour access to the course materials for the entire subscription period of 6 weeks. Learners can access the course from anywhere with an Internet connection and a computer that meets the specified technical requirements by simply entering their username/password to access the course materials.

The course should take no more than 16 hours to complete in total. Learners should follow this syllabus as a guide to the amount of work to be completed each week. However, NCSBN Learning Extension recognizes that some learners may have inflexible schedules due to work or family commitments. This course schedule may be adjusted to meet the needs of the learner.

Extra time will not be given to complete the course.

### *Continuing Education (CE) Credit*

Learners will be given 15.6 continuing education contact hours upon successful completion of the final exam.

## Course Materials/Tools

Although an instructor does not facilitate this course, users will find this course highly engaging and interactive. All course materials and exercises are divided by lesson and can be accessed by clicking the “course menu” button on the left side of the screen. Course materials are listed and explained below.

### *Lesson Content*

Readings are presented online. Throughout the text, users will find key glossary terms, reference links to outside resources (referred to as “Links to Knowledge”), and visuals/graphical aids to assist the learner’s understanding of concepts presented.

### *Downloadable Workbook*

This workbook should be printed on the first day of study. The workbook download is found under the course “Features” button.

The workbook includes questions related to each lesson of the course that prompt learners to reflect upon learning concepts. This workbook may be required to meet state board of nursing requirements. Since any changes to the workbook are NOT saved online, learners should remember to print the document or to save the file to their computers.

### *Posttest*

In multiple-choice format, this test is the final indicator of the learner’s understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings. A certificate of completion will be issued once a score of 75% or higher is achieved on the posttest.

### *Course Evaluation*

NCSBN Learning Extension is always looking for ways to improve the course and feedback is extremely important in this effort. Please remember to fill out the [course evaluation form](#) after course completion.

## Prerequisites

Learners should be nursing faculty who have completed the Test Development & Item Writing online course or a similar item writing course.

It is assumed that the learner is familiar with Internet techniques, such as navigating between pages, following hyperlinks and closing browser windows. Learners must have the appropriate hardware and software in order to fully utilize the course features.

## Technology Overview

NCSBN Learning Extension online courses were designed to make learning fun and interactive. Having the appropriate software and hardware will allow the learner to utilize all of the great features of this course.

The GreenLight system requires using Internet Explorer Web browser to access and purchase courses. Pop-up blockers should be turned off and other Internet security software may need to be changed in order for the course to work properly. If necessary, review [technical requirements](#).

## II. Course Policies

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### Privacy Policy

Learners are required to read and abide by the course [end-user license agreement](#), which outlines policies, including the policy regarding usernames and passwords. Specifically, learners are not allowed to distribute their username and password to give others access to the course. Also included in the [end-user license agreement](#) is NCSBN’s notice of ownership of copyright and the prohibition against distributing course materials to others.

## Extension Policy

Learners are allowed 6 weeks of access to the course materials. Extra time will not be given to complete the course. Technical problems should be resolved by contacting [technical support](#). Refer to the [Help](#) section for more information.

Contact Customer Service at [elearning@ncsbn.org](mailto:elearning@ncsbn.org) or call 312.525.3749 for questions regarding these policies.

## III. Assignments & Grading

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Learners are expected to complete the reading assignments, tests, and workbook exercises as listed on the course schedule. In order to receive continuing education credit, learners must only complete the posttest, which is in multiple-choice format. This test is the final indicator of the learner's understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings. A certificate of completion will be issued once a score of 75% or higher is achieved on the posttest. The workbook and online interactive quizzes will not be recorded. Learners are strongly encouraged to utilize all of the features of the course to maximize the learning experience.

## IV. Course Schedule

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Learners will complete the course materials and accompanying exercises in the order presented below. NCSBN Learning Extension recognizes that some learners may have inflexible schedules due to work or family commitments. This course schedule may be adjusted to meet the needs of the learner.

### Get Started

Take a mini tour of the course site. Start by reviewing the "Course Tree" on the left. To access a lesson page or test, simply click on its link.

### Introduction and Lesson 1: Historical Perspective

The goal of these sections is to allow the learner to review the basic concepts of the Test Development and Item Writing course. A historical overview of basic tenets for the assessment of higher-level thinking will also be provided. Lesson 1 provides information on understanding the foundation for writing higher-level items.

#### *Reading*

Complete the reading for the Introduction (5 pages) and Lesson 1 (9 pages).

### Lesson 2: Critical Thinking Behaviors and the Curriculum

This section will help the learner determine how an educator can produce students who can demonstrate that the anticipated level of learning has indeed taken place and how to integrate critical thinking into course design.

#### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Section 2 (15 pages).

#### *Workbook Exercise*

Exercise #1: Complete workbook exercise #1.

### Lesson 3: Content Classification Categories and the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

This section will provide an overview of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy, as well as goals classification.

#### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Lesson 3 (15 pages).

### Lesson 4: Components of a Well-Designed Item

This section will provide a review of the salient points of item types and item writing. The learner will also ascertain how to judge components of a well-designed item.

#### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Lesson 4 (9 pages).

## Lesson 5: Criteria for Writing Higher-Level Items

This section will explain why the revised Bloom's taxonomy should be used when coding items. It will also explain how to apply the criteria for writing higher-level items.

### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Lesson 5 (17 pages).

### *Workbook Exercise*

Exercise #2: Complete workbook exercise #2.

## Lesson 6: Critiquing Higher-Level Items

This section will provide assistance on to how to use the revised Bloom's taxonomy to critique items.

### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Lesson 6 (10 pages).

### *Workbook Exercise*

Exercise #3: Complete workbook exercise #3.

## Lesson 7: Converting Good Items to Higher-Level Items

This section will explain how to take "good" items from an item bank and convert them to higher-level items.

### *Reading*

Complete the reading for Lesson 7 (6 pages)

### *Workbook Exercise*

Exercise #4: Complete workbook exercise #4.

### *Complete the Posttest*

In order to receive contact hours, learners must complete this multiple-choice exam that tests understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings.

### *Complete the Course Evaluation*

NCSBN Learning Extension is always looking for ways to improve the course and feedback is extremely important in this effort. Please remember to fill out the [course evaluation form](#) after course completion.

## V. Getting Help/Office Hours

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### Technical Support

Technical support is available 24/7:

Live Chat: <http://www.learningext.com/help/chat.asp>

E-mail: [IS5668\\_21000@is.instant-service.com](mailto:IS5668_21000@is.instant-service.com)

### Customer Service

E-mail: [learning@ncsbn.org](mailto:learning@ncsbn.org)

Phone: 312.525.3749 (for general course related or billing questions)

Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm Central